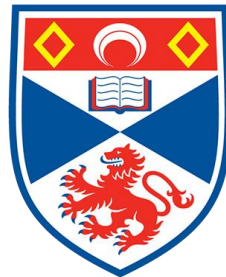# Volunteer Tourism: A Path to *Buen Vivir*?

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This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

at the University of St Andrews

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I, Steven Owen, do hereby certify that this thesis, submitted for the degree of PhD, which is approximately 76,551 words in length, has been written by me, and that it is the record of work carried out by me, or principally by myself in collaboration with others as acknowledged, and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

I was admitted as a research student at the University of St Andrews in September 2013.

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Volunteer Tourism: A Path to *Buen Vivir*?

Abstract

The popularity of volunteer tourism stems from its discursive positioning as fostering mutually beneficial relations between volunteer tourists and the host destination. Despite extensive scholarly work, the outcomes of this activity for host communities and volunteer tourists are still unclear. This study examines how volunteer tourism is interpreted across a range of stakeholders in two indigenous communities in Ecuador - one Kichwa community in the town of Chilcapamba and one Tsa'chila community near the town of Santa Domingo. Employing qualitative research methods of interviews, focus groups, participant observation, document analysis and diary analysis, this study makes multiple contributions to existing literatures. Through the inclusion of host community members, it provides new insights into a tourist practice, predominantly understood from the perspective of volunteer tourists from the Global North. Moreover, it provides an alternative reading of volunteer tourism by framing this activity through a worldview and political discourse originating from the Global South - *Buen Vivir* or 'good living'.

The study argues that volunteer tourism functions through and reinforces the structures and imaginaries of an unequal and uneven global economic system. Chapter Four contextualises the study, deducing that despite using the discourses of *Buen Vivir* the Ecuadorian state employs practices typical of the neoliberal agenda. Chapter Five illustrates how host community members adopt and negotiate knowledge and practices from the Global North, to satisfy the demands of the volunteer tourism industry. Following this, Chapter Six argues that marginalised community members mobilise the discourses of *Buen Vivir*, to challenge neoliberal practices, which perpetuate existing inequalities in the communities. Finally, Chapter Seven proposes that volunteer tourists demonstrate a neoliberal subjectivity in how they manage and narrate their experience in the host communities. The study concludes that volunteer tourism embodies the spirit of neoliberal development models, whilst *Buen Vivir* provides a critical avenue for unsettling this agenda, by providing a framework through which alternative possibilities can be imagined.

1 Introducing Volunteer Tourism and *Buen Vivir*

Tourism is an important means through which to understand the nature of both contemporary society and the global political economy (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). This thesis investigates one of the fastest growing, and most contested, segments of the tourism industry – that of volunteer tourism (Burrai and Hannam, 2018). Volunteer tourism is the increasingly popular phenomenon of citizens travelling to destinations, predominantly in the Global South[1], to spend all, or part of their time working in these areas (Benson and Wearing, 2011). The type of work undertaken varies; typical examples include conserving the natural environment, teaching and construction projects, and also conducting research (Rattan, 2015). Indeed, volunteer tourism has become such a popular activity that it has been described as something of a 'rite of passage' for today's youth (Butcher and Smith, 2015), with estimates indicating that as many as ten million people now participate in this form of tourism annually (McGehee, 2014). Its enduring appeal stems from the premise that it can foster reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships for both volunteer tourists and hosts (Wearing, 2001; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012).

The thesis arose from a broad interest in the outcomes of this tourist practice for host communities, and a desire to understand how community members interpret the actions of volunteer tourists. This is an important area of research because, although host communities are integral to volunteer tourism, the voices of host community members tend to be absent from existing studies (Bargeman *et al.*, 2016; McGehee, 2012; Lo and Lee, 2010; Butcher and Smith, 2010; Lyons *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, as a form of mobility, volunteer tourism results in a geographical flow of volunteer tourists that is extremely uneven on a global scale (Keese, 2011). Although it can involve participants travelling internally within countries, internationally between countries of the Global North, or to a lesser extent between countries of the Global South (Laurie and Baillie Smith, 2017), it overwhelmingly involves people from the Global North travelling to the Global South (Lyons *et al*, 2012). The interpretation

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[1] The terms Global South and Global North are used throughout this thesis to indicate a country's position in the global political economy. However, I recognise that these categories remain problematic for some scholars, as they homogenise diverse and stratified countries, through frames of reference originating from the Global North.

of this form of tourism by host communities, particularly in the Global South, therefore needs further examination.

Employing a qualitative ethnographic approach, this study is situated in the Latin American country of Ecuador, one of the world's most popular destinations for volunteer tourism projects (Keese, 2011; Tomazos and Butler, 2009). Ecuador is also a country, which has positioned itself as rejecting the orthodoxy of the neo-liberal development model. As a result, it forms part of the 'Pink Tide', a term used to characterise the rise of left wing progressive governments across Latin America (Beasley-Murray *et al.*, 2009). Instrumental in this 'Pink Tide' has been indigenous people, who traditionally have been marginalised and discriminated against within Latin American political processes. In Ecuador, despite indigenous people consisting of 20-30 percent of the country's total population, consecutive governments have followed the hegemonic Western model of development, focusing on modernisation and growth, and excluding indigenous knowledge-based systems (Walsh, 2010; Radcliffe and Pequeno, 2010). However, the election of President Rafael Correa and his Citizens' Revolution promised an alternative, and an "end to the long night of neo-liberalism" (Fatheuer, 2011: 9). To signify this, in 2008 the concept of *Buen Vivir* was incorporated into the Ecuadorian Constitution, being heralded as the re-founding of the State and the beginning of a post-neoliberal period for Ecuadorian society (Radcliffe, 2012; Walsh, 2010). Ecuador's positioning as providing a progressive alternative to the neo-liberal capitalist system, whilst also being a popular destination for volunteer tourism, results in it being an ideal study for this thesis. The thesis explores how key stakeholders interpret volunteer tourism in two indigenous communities – one Kichwa community in the town of Chilcapamba, and one Tsa'chila community near the town of Santa Domingo. Using a qualitative ethnographic approach, the study provides valuable insights into how the global tourism industry is interpreted and manifests itself, in relation to locally embedded practices and knowledges.

1.1 Thesis Premise

Initial reading of scholarly work, framed my understanding of volunteer tourism as an alternative tourism practice (Conran, 2011; Barbieri *et al*, 2012; Lyons and

Wearing, 2008). I interpreted this phenomenon as a response to the perceived ills of mass tourism, with its characterisation as having positive outcomes for host communities (Conran, 2011; Sin, 2009; McGehee and Santos, 2005), as indicated in the mostly widely cited definition of volunteer tourism, which describes it as referring to:

> "those tourists who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society and environment" (Wearing, 2001: 1).

I was particularly drawn to the study of volunteer tourism because of this positioning of participants as 'agents of change' who aim to directly ameliorate the conditions of marginalised people in the Global South. My understanding was framed by statements such as Barbieri *et al.* (2012: 509) that volunteer tourists are "devoted to poverty alleviation and to ameliorate social and environmental conditions within local communities". This positioning of volunteer tourism distinguishes it from other alternative tourist practices that engage with a pro-poor tourist agenda, albeit in a less direct manner. I was, however, aware of a broad body of work which questions the contribution of volunteer tourism to host communities. These issues include volunteers' short-term presence in communities (Callanan and Thomas, 2005), their lack of adequate skills and experience (Sin *et al.*, 2015), their preference for immediate gratification (Cousins *et al.*, 2009), their undertaking of unsatisfactory or incomplete work (Guttentag, 2009), and their potential to reduce the dignity and curtail self-sufficiency in host communities (McGehee and Andereck, 2008; Wearing, 2004). Interestingly these judgements tend to reflect the assertions of scholars or volunteers, without incorporating the voices of host community members (Barbieri *et al.*, 2012; Palacious, 2010; Simpson, 2004). Therefore, I was eager to explore how host community members interpreted volunteer tourism and its contribution to their community.

1.2   Shifting Thesis Focus

During the empirical research, I soon recognised that my agenda – with its focus on the volunteers' work – had little relevance to the indigenous community members. As will be explored in more detail later, this is because the indigenous members interpreted volunteer tourism as a business enterprise, and focused on its financial rewards. As a result, there was little concern expressed regarding the attributes of the volunteers, or the work they completed during their time in the community. Instead, indigenous members provided passionate responses in relation to the distribution of financial rewards, specifically their concentration in the hands of a community elite and their confidants. Recognising that the focus of volunteer tourism on 'doing good' and 'making a difference' (Wearing, 2001), increased inequalities and discord within communities challenged my preconceptions of this type of tourism. Given how these practices constructed a particular subject of the host and the volunteer, within a commodified volunteer tourism experience, I became progressively aware of the neo-liberalisation of particular volunteer tourism practices. Furthermore, residing in Ecuador, with its particular cultural and political emphasis on *Buen Vivir*, I consequently began to consider if it was possible to re-conceptualise volunteer tourism through this alternative value and knowledge system. This took the thesis in a new direction to existing scholarly work, which tends to be critical of the neo-liberalisation of volunteer tourism, without exploring if it can be conceptualised through an alternative knowledge system originating from the Global South.

1.3   Introducing *Buen Vivir*

Through further study I became increasingly interested in the concept of *Buen Vivir* or 'good living', which is a Spanish term encompassing a variety of indigenous 'cosmovisions' originating within the Andean region of Latin America. In Ecuador, it stems from the *Kichwa* knowledge of *Sumak Kawsay*, broadly defined as:

> "a system of knowledge and living based on the communion of humans and nature and on the spatial-temporal-harmonious totality of existence" (Walsh, 2010: 18).

Buen Vivir's premise of 'living well' rather than 'living better' rejects the linear model of capitalist exploitative growth, striving instead for a harmonious existence

through an ongoing process of construction (Deneulin, 2012). As Villalba (2013: 1431) observes:

> "for indigenous peoples, to 'live well' is to live in solidarity, equality, harmony, complementarity and reciprocity. It is contrary to the consumerism, competition, opulence and profiteering that are the hallmarks of capitalism."

Buen Vivir therefore rejects the capitalist doctrine that to live in the world an individual should continually strive for greater material wealth. In its place, it advocates achieving spiritual wealth through living as part of a community and with the environment: that is, replacing individualism with solidarity (Thompson, 2011; Acosta, 2010). *Buen Vivir*, then, is a development imaginary representing an epistemological and ontological break with western neo-liberal capitalist imaginaries.

In addition to this, *Buen Vivir* is a political discourse distributed by indigenous actors to challenge neo-liberal development models. It emerged following popular mobilisations of indigenous groups in Ecuador throughout the 1990s, as they sought to overcome historic political and social marginalisation, to become powerful actors at the regional and state level (Deneulin, 2012). As a result, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) became one of the most well-organised social movements in Ecuador and an important force in shaping the political agenda (Vanhulst and Beling, 2014). CONAIE actively encouraged indigenous people to resist neo-liberal policies through protests, and a new political party, Pachacutik, formed in 1996, espousing the alternative political doctrine of *Buen Vivir* (Deneulin, 2012). The politicisation of *Buen Vivir* resulted in its adoption by President Correa and his Allianza Pais party, culminating it its inclusion in the Ecuadorian Constitution in 2008. This act signified the inclusion of indigenous knowledge, which up until then had historically been actively excluded from state policies and discourses, as the central principles on which the Ecuadorian state would function into the future (Vanhulst and Beling, 2014; Radcliffe, 2012; Walsh, 2010).

In this way, *Buen Vivir* has become discursively important, both as a development imaginary and a political discourse within contemporary Ecuador. As a result, I came to consider it a valuable concept for framing my understanding of alternative

development and alternative tourism. I do not claim that indigenous communities are struggling to reconcile *Buen Vivir* and their harmonious practices, against the impositions of the global capitalist system. Although appealing, I found no evidence of *Buen Vivir* operating alongside existing neo-liberal agendas and indigenous practices. That indigenous communities are heterogeneous and stratified, with complex and messy social relations, is clearly problematic to *Buen Vivir*. This is unsurprising, however, because the notion of a homogenous indigenous community reflects historic tropes of the 'noble savage', as propagated by colonial explorers. According to Redford (1991: 1) such explorers provided accounts such as:

> "the land belonged to all, just like the sun and water. Mine and thine, the seeds of all evils, do not exist for those people...They live in a golden age... in open gardens, without laws or books, without judges, and they naturally follow goodness."

The utopian imagery constructed by the western gaze therefore fails to recognise the fluidity and hybridity of indigenous subjects. As a result, I work to reject essentialised conceptualisations of indigeneity, and instead aim to recognise that there are different and contested cultural values within indigenous communities. In reassessing my empirical evidence in relation to *Buen Vivir*, I realised that multiple constructions of volunteer tourism existed within the indigenous communities I was studying. Through further analysis, it was possible to identify differing value sets framing the discourses and practices of these constructions. These reflected those that were based within a neo-liberal capitalist system, namely individual rationality and market-based valuations of all aspects of volunteer tourism. Conversely, an alternative was also evident that questioned the existing system, emphasising non-market values such as the importance of complementarity and reciprocity. Therefore, I argue that the importance of *Buen Vivir* emerges through indigenous members mobilising its discourses as a critique of certain volunteer tourism practices. The result of this for different groups and individuals within the indigenous communities is explored in the empirical chapters of the thesis.

1.4 Thesis contribution

This thesis contributes to the debates and academic literature on volunteer tourism by providing a novel exploration of how this tourism practice functions within the Global South. Embracing *Buen Vivir* provided an opportunity to analyse empirical data on volunteer tourism in Ecuador by focusing on how this form of tourism is entangled within complex relationships between the Global North and Global South. Post-colonial analyses emphasize how countries in the Global South are able to embrace modernity in a globalised and interconnected world, whilst also maintaining their own principles and knowledge systems. Although volunteer tourism flows across geographical boundaries, grounding itself predominantly in the Global South, research to date has overwhelmingly relied on frameworks developed in the Global North. Therefore, analysing volunteer tourism through a Global South framework of *Buen Vivir* allows this thesis to offer a novel and contemporary account of this growing tourism practice.

The thesis focuses on tourism stakeholders from across the range of volunteer tourists, NGO representatives, volunteer guides and host community members. This allows for a detailed exploration of the processes occurring when volunteer tourism touches down in specific communities. Particularly important is the inclusion of host community members, as existing studies appear to reflect what Smith (2013: 44) terms "research through imperial eyes" with host community members tending to be ignored (Simpson, 204), spoken for (Palacious, 2010), or confined to a narrow pre-defined research agenda (Zahra and McGehee, 2013). Incorporating the voices of host community members therefore, provides a challenge to hegemonic narratives of volunteer tourism originating from within the Global North. This is an important and timely contribution, as despite being integral to the positioning of this tourism practice, the knowledge and lived realities of host community members, are largely absent from existing studies.

The thesis has the following research aim and research questions:

1.5 Research Aim

To critically assess volunteer tourism in Ecuador using the lens of *Buen Vivir*.

1.6   Research Questions

1   How is *Buen Vivir* discursively constructed at the national level in Ecuador, and how does this relate to tourism development in the country?

2   How is an indigenous community in Ecuador constructed as a site for volunteer tourism?

3   How do different indigenous members interpret volunteer tourism, and what factors shape this interpretation?

4   How do volunteer tourists interpret their experience in the indigenous communities?

These research questions are central in achieving the aim of this thesis. RQ1 explores the discursive construction of tourism and *Buen Vivir* in Ecuador, thereby providing an understanding of how the Ecuadorian state positions tourism and development at the national level. RQ2 provides an analysis of how volunteer tourism functions as part of the tourism industry, providing an account of the processes and negotiations that occur between this global consumptive industry and local producers of the experience. RQ3 and RQ4 provide an exploration of how key stakeholders in indigenous communities interpret volunteer tourism and the influences shaping this interpretation. The result is a detailed analysis of volunteer tourism through the lens of *Buen Vivir* in Ecuador.

1.7   Structure of Thesis

The resulting thesis takes the following structure:

Chapter Two analyses the genealogy of the literatures relating to development and volunteer tourism tracing their shifting patterns. It argues that both literatures have their origins in modernisation theory, with a focus on addressing perceived deficiencies in the Global South. However, it also identifies the emergence of post-colonial critiques, questioning the Western construction of progress framing both literatures. As a result, the chapter highlights calls for alternatives to the western conceptualisations of development, and introduces *Buen Vivir* as one such approach. It indicates how critiques of volunteer tourism have led to calls for a shift from notions of normative development, to inspiring feelings of global citizenship within

the volunteer tourist. This chapter concludes with a conceptual framework situating the current understanding of volunteer tourism and that of development, pointing towards avenues to be explored in the empirical chapters.

Chapter Three provides an explanation of the methodology employed in the thesis. It outlines the epistemological and ontological stance adopted, as well as the data collection methods utilised. The decisions made throughout the thesis are justified in relation to theoretical arguments and practical considerations.

Chapter Four answers RQ1, tracing the genealogy of *Buen Vivir* and tourism at the national level in Ecuador. It argues that the Ecuadorian state has both enshrined *Buen Vivir* as a national political objective, and designated tourism as an important means for its realisation. As a result, the Ecuadorian state discursively associates tourism with *Buen Vivir*. It achieves this by emphasising tourism's ability to create small-scale development, which improves the livelihoods of citizens whilst avoiding negative environmental and social externalities. The chapter proposes that despite utilising the discourses of *Buen Vivir*, the Ecuadorian state employs practices typical of the neoliberal agenda. It focuses on tourism as a means to facilitate economic growth, rather than adopting policies to achieve the more holistic aims of *Buen Vivir*. To support this assertion, the chapter highlights how the Ecuadorian State focuses on attracting inward investment, and judges success via economic indices, whilst being ambivalent to the desires of individuals or groups in society, who do not support this model of development. The chapter highlights how the discourses of *Buen Vivir* are used by the Ecuadorian state to create an image of Ecuador as a harmonious country, making it appealing to international tourists and businesses. Moreover, *Buen Vivir*'s appropriation results in the Ecuadorian state framing its policies within counter-hegemonic discourses, thereby diluting critiques, particularly from indigenous actors. The chapter concludes by arguing that, through the lens of tourism, it is possible to see how the Ecuadorian state has adopted a prescriptive top-down approach to achieving *Buen Vivir*. This involves redistributing the proceeds of growth to fund social programmes aimed at reducing poverty and inequality within the country (Calisto- Friant and Langmore, 2014). As a result, it removes the space for alternative conceptualisations and understandings of *Buen Vivir*, including through tourism, to

emerge. This is an important conceptual alteration as the term *Buen Vivir* was conceived as a pluralistic concept; as Gudynas (2011) notes, its true pronunciation should be '*Buen Vivirs*', recognising that differing socio-cultural settings require different policy formulations (Villalba, 2013). Chapter Four therefore outlines how the state has adopted a deliberate strategy, often instantiated through tourism, which co-opts and empties the radical potential of *Buen Vivir* to create new possibilities for Ecuador.

Chapter Five answers RQ2 through an analysis of the processes and negotiations which occur when an indigenous community becomes a site for volunteer tourism. It argues that volunteer tourism incorporates indigenous communities into the global tourism industry, thereby transforming it from a place of residence into a commercial volunteer space. The resultant volunteer space is co-produced by indigenous members, tourist practitioners, and volunteers, to satisfy romanticised notions of indigeneity within the confines of western determinations of comfort. Moreover, the creation of the volunteer space results in the professionalisation of community members, who manage themselves and their environment to create an appealing product for the volunteer tourism industry. The chapter argues that the volunteer space materialises an indigenous community in which *Buen Vivir* is internalised and practiced. Social and environmental relations are thus presented as devoid of capitalistic motivations, and instead framed within holistic notions of reciprocity and complimentary. Chapter Five argues, then, that the volunteer space has undergone a process of 'disneyfication' (Bryman, 1999), creating what is in effect a hyperreality (Baudrillard, 1986), an indigenous community that never existed beyond western imaginaries. As a result, the complexity of achieving *Buen Vivir* in a society composed of indigenous subjects with fluid and hybrid identities is unaddressed, replaced with static and timeless subjects living in harmony within their community. The transformation of *Buen Vivir* into a product to be sold within the global volunteer tourism market, therefore results in it becoming an empty signifier of an imagined ancient past, rather than a concept under construction, offering an alternative to the neo-liberal capitalist system.

Chapter Six answers RQ3 by offering an analysis of indigenous members' participation and interpretation of volunteer tourism within their community. It

argues that the requirements of the global tourism industry result in certain indigenous subjects being valued, whilst others are excluded from its operations. Framing this analysis, the chapter utilises forms of capital, specifically social, financial, cultural and human capital, to illustrate the likelihood of community members' involvement in volunteer tourism projects. It contends that volunteer tourism rewards those indigenous members most attuned to the neo-liberal capitalist system, whilst excluding and marginalising those less adaptable to this system. This chapter subsequently proposes that volunteer tourism can exacerbate existing socio-economic divides within the indigenous communities, perpetuating, rather than addressing, inequalities.

Through its analysis, **Chapter Six** brings to the fore the different cultural sets framing indigenous members' interpretation of volunteer tourism in the communities under study. It argues that individuals involved in the project frame volunteer tourism practices according to neo-liberal discourses. For example, they valorise the importance of individual responsibility and self-management, through risk taking, acquiring new skills and working hard. Maintaining that individual rewards reflect their status as enterprising individuals seizing available opportunities, whilst marginalisation from the projects reflects an individual's failure to develop themselves. Conversely, indigenous members excluded from the volunteer tourism projects critique its practices through an alternative cultural construction, which Chapter Six aligns with the principles of *Buen Vivir*. Illustrating this, these community members question the concentration of financial rewards in the hands of the elite, at the expense of the majority of citizens. Moreover, the chapter identifies calls for alternative practices to facilitate community well-being over the individual.

Chapter Seven answers RQ4 by deconstructing the volunteer tourists' identities within both indigenous communities. It argues that volunteer tourists have a fluid, ambivalent identity, through their role as both volunteer and tourist. It identifies specific moments in which this ambivalent state dissolves and a clear volunteer or tourist identity is acknowledged. Specifically, moments signifying their positioning as outside western modernity with non-capitalistic interactions are deemed to be signifiers of the volunteer experience. Conversely, their separation from wider

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Steven Owen

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews
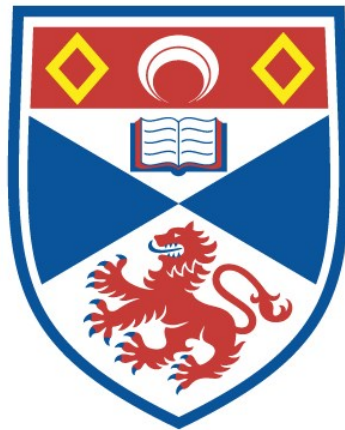
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community members and the reality of community life results in a tourist identity being acknowledged. Chapter Seven subsequently argues that volunteer tourists strategically manage and narrate their experience in the indigenous communities to achieve desirable outcomes. This analysis indicates how the volunteer tourist is a neo-liberalised subject, who self-manages their time to maximise return-on-investment. It concludes by arguing that there is little evidence to support volunteer tourism providing a means for unconstrained cross-cultural communication between volunteers and hosts or instigating a form of global citizenship in the volunteer tourist. This is because both volunteers and host adopt a performative role to present their desired self to the 'other', whilst the lack of critical pedagogy in the volunteer tourism projects results in preconceptions being reinforced rather than challenged.

Chapter Eight takes stock of the major arguments of this thesis, its contribution to the existing literature, and points to possible avenues of future research. In this final chapter, I argue that volunteer tourism is emblematic of the neoliberal model of development instigated in countries of the Global South. This is because through grounding itself across geographical boundaries, volunteer tourism hooks communities of the Global South into the global tourism industry. The structure of this industry results in knowledge and practices of the Global North being prioritised, limiting the space for alternative world views such as *Buen Vivir* to be realised. As a result, rather than framing how the volunteer tourism projects function, the discourses of *Buen Vivr* are mobilised by marginalised community members as a means of resistance to existing practices. I also argue the importance of recognising host community members' agency in their engagement with volunteer tourism. This is because rather than be passive recipients, as frequently portrayed in the volunteer tourism literature, indigenous host members have their own interests and priorities for engaging with volunteer tourism. These interests reflect both capitalistic motivations and a desire to challenge negative stereotypes propagated within Ecuadorian society. This chapter concludes by reconfirming the important contribution of this thesis. Namely, that it provides an understanding of volunteer tourism away from frames of reference originating from the Global North, to one framed through the voices of citizens and political theory originating from the Global South.

1.8   Summary of Chapter

This chapter has outlined how my initial understanding of volunteer tourism has been unsettled during this thesis, and my journey to re-conceptualising this tourism practice through the alternative worldview of *Buen Vivir*. The next chapter outlines this journey further, by situating the thesis's understanding of volunteer tourism within the shifting patterns of both the volunteer tourism and development literature.

2 Development and Volunteer Tourism: From Origins to Re-conceptualisation

2.1 Shifting Discourses of Development

The concept of development has been fiercely contested in academic literature over the last sixty years, reflecting differing perspectives on key issues relating to its purpose, outcomes, and interpretation. As a result, a large body of scholarly work has been produced, representing the particular hegemonic and emerging thoughts of the time. This chapter will demonstrate the existence of many similarities between shifts that have occurred in the development literature, and those relating to volunteer tourism. To illustrate this, the genealogies of both these literatures are interrogated, demonstrating how both have been heavily influenced by neo-colonial perspectives and subsequently critiqued by post-colonial approaches. In addition, this chapter brings to the fore the influence of neo-liberalism on both development and volunteer tourism, addressing an intersection which, despite growing interest, has received only limited academic scrutiny (Baillie Smith and Laurie, 2011).

The chapter argues that shifts in the development and volunteer tourism literatures allow both to be re-conceptualised away from their colonial roots. In terms of development, this reflects interest in 'alternatives to development' rather than the 'alternative development' (Escobar, 2011) with which *Buen Vivir* – the focus of this thesis – aligns. Similarly, the volunteer tourism literature has shifted from being shackled to immediate normative development, to a perspective whereby it is seen as an instrument for structural change via the instigation of feelings of global citizenship. The inter-relationships and potential conflicts between these two re-conceptualisations are explored in order to establish a framework for the subsequent empirical chapters. Finally, the chapter is divided into two sections: the first focusing on shifting notions of development, and the second on the notion of global citizenship.

2.1.1 **Modernisation Theory and Development**

The end of the Second World War signalled a period of decolonisation, with countries of the Global South gaining independence from European powers. Simultaneously, this period also demarcated the beginning of the concept of development, underpinned by modernisation theory (Leys, 1996; Preston, 1999). Modernisation theory positions countries on a spectrum relative to their level of development, with countries depicted as moving in a linear fashion from a traditional society to one of high mass consumption. The underlying assumption is that variances between countries of the Global North and South reflect differing historical stages of economic development rather than geographical and cultural differences (Acosta, 2010). Modernisation theory therefore discursively positions countries of the Global North as enlightened and progressive, whilst positioning countries of the Global South as primitive and backward (Kiely, 1999). Integral for development theory is the belief that through external intervention, such as capital or expertise, countries can be moved along this spectrum (Hettne, 2008). The precise origin of development is credited to the speech given by Harry S. Truman at his United States presidential inauguration, in which he stated:

> "We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve suffering of these people." (President Truman, 1949)

The perception that development was not only natural but could be guided and planned radically altered the way in which the world was viewed, within both the Global North and Global South (Rist, 2007). Moreover, it resulted in a development industry that was "steeped in social engineering and the ambition to shape economies and societies" (Pieterse, 1998: 182), the influence of which continues to this day.

The underlying assumption of Truman's modernisation model of development is that capitalist growth provides the greatest quality of life for a country's citizens.

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Moreover, this capitalist growth requires and produces Western cultural and societal norms, thereby equating modernisation with Westernisation (Walsh, 2010). This reasoning is evident in an early publication by the United Nations:

> "Ancient philosophies have to be scrapped; old social institutions have to disintegrate; bonds of caste, creed and race have to burst; and large numbers of persons who cannot keep up with progress have to have their expectations of a comfortable life frustrated." (United Nations, Department of Social and Economic Affairs, 1951 cited in Escobar, 1995: 3)

The modernisation model of development therefore fitted into a colonial imagery of there being 'backward' and 'primitive' societies, situating these as unproductive and hence unsuitable for the modern world (Kothari, 2005; Nustad, 2001). As a result, Western intervention was deemed not only desirable, but a moral duty (Cooper, 2004). This model of development therefore reflected the setting of the agenda of what constitutes progress by Western countries, and ultimately how societies should function.

The belief in the superiority of Western knowledge has a long history. As Said (1978: 32) notes, the English justified their right to govern Egypt as being "for their benefit" because they "know their civilisation better". The modernist development agenda presents Western society as a universally desirable state, rather than simply one of many ways in which societies can function (Wilson, 2011; Kiely, 1999). It thus fails to recognise the multitude of perspectives formed within differing realities, which make any claim to universal knowledge a construction of hegemonic voices (Eyben, 2000). This can be seen throughout the development literature, in which scholars such as Fergusson (1994) and Escobar (2011) identify how the apparatus comprising development is framed in such a way that local concerns are not considered valid, as they do not fit into the way development should operate. As Escobar (1997: 87) notes, development is a "discursive practice that sets the rules of the game: who can speak from what point of view, with what authority and according to what authority."

The result is that citizens of the Global South are considered passive recipients, or 'a problem to be solved' for the development industry. This supposedly objective and universal approach therefore deems the subjective desires of individuals or local communities to be irrelevant or inconsequential for development practice. The imposition of Western political theory on the Global South continued with the emergence and adoption of neo-liberal developmental practices.

2.1.2 Rise of Neo-liberal Development

Development theory shifted with the rise of what has come to be known as the 'neo-liberal agenda' in the 1980s, which espoused the virtues of the market over government intervention (De Vries, 2007). Development orthodoxy subsequently reflected policies based on reducing government expenditure and intervention, whilst promoting economic liberalisation and international trade (McCleery and Paolis, 2008). Neo-Keynesian policies aimed at limiting vulnerability to the global market, such as the import substitution policies employed in Ecuador, were subsequently deemed ineffective and an impediment to economic prosperity (Portes and Hoffman, 2003). As a result, Ecuador shifted from interventionist policies to neo-liberal practices: promoting austerity, open markets, foreign investment, privatisation, non-traditional products and relaxed labour codes (Hey and Klak, 1999). Facilitating this shift, international institutions such as the World Bank and IMF imposed structural adjustment programmes on countries of the Global South. The pretext being to make countries of the Global South more efficient, and thus according more with the 'successful' Western model (Petras and Velmeyer, 2002). Neo-liberal policies therefore operate in a similar manner to colonialism, in constructing a core and periphery, with the periphery being forced or coerced to embrace globalisation and open markets (Roberts, *et al.,* 2003). The result is the creation of an environment that facilitates the extraction of wealth from the Global South to north via transnational corporations. The uptake of neoliberalism also reflects its potential to map onto existing class structures, thereby allowing the elite to maintain and expand their economic position. As Harvey (2005: 19) notes:

"Neo-liberalization has succeeded remarkably well in restoring or in some instances creating, the power of an economic elite. The theoretical

utopianism of neoliberal argument primarily working as a system of justification and legitimation for whatever needed to be done to achieve this goal."

The adoption of such policies in the Global South cannot therefore be characterised as solely being imposed against the will of the populous, but rather by appealing to the elite to protect and enhance their economic position. Nustad (2001) similarly reflects upon this, noting that hegemonic discourses such as development work through human agency in recipient counties, rather than via an all-powerful external imposition. Kellogg (2007) similarly notes that 'consent' for neo-liberalism was achieved in Latin America via a complex web of national governments, transnational corporations and economists. This chapter will further argue that modernisation theory and the neo-liberal developmental agenda are important for contextualising tourism's prominence amongst the priorities of national governments and development practitioners alike.

2.1.3 Tourism Modernisation and Capitalist Expansion

Tourism as an industry is particularly attractive for the capitalist growth model as espoused by modernisation theory (Williams, 1998). This is because it is credited with creating employment and infrastructure development, the wealth from which then 'trickles down' throughout the economy (Butcher, 2005) whilst also demonstrating 'modern' ways of life to traditional societies (Spenceley and Meyer, 2012). As an industrial strategy, studies have shown tourism development to also possess a number of appealing properties for countries of the Global South and development practitioners. Firstly, it is one the largest industries in the world which has proven itself resilient to economic downturns and global recessions (Crick, 1996). Secondly, it is suited to the outward-looking growth model of neo-liberal development, operating relatively freely across state boundaries (O'Byrne, 2001) and therefore deemed by Spenceley and Meyer (2012: 300) to be a means by which countries can "trade their way out of poverty". Thirdly, countries of the Global South have a comparative advantage in the global market, with their 'unspoilt' 'exotic' environments and relatively low cost, appealing to the Western consumer. The result is that tourism is understood as an essential element in the developmental matrix for

stimulating economic growth (Spenceley and Meyer, 2012; Brohman, 1996) and advancing countries upwards through Rostow's (1960) linear scale of industrial development. Therefore, for international institutions such as the World Bank, as well as for many development practitioners, tourism has become somewhat of a panacea for development in the Global South.

The appeal of tourism to international organisations and development practitioners is also its ability to open up new markets for economic and geopolitical expansion. As MacCannell (1992: 1) notes:

> "In the name of tourism, capital and modernized peoples have been deployed to the most remote regions of the world, farther than any army was ever sent. Institutions have been established to support this deployment, not just hotels, restaurants, and transportation systems, but restorations of ancient shrines, development of local handicrafts for sale to tourists, and rituals performed for tourists".

Tourism development therefore, through the commodification of culture and the natural environment, integrates areas of the Global South into the global economy. This, however, results in these areas being susceptible to the tastes and desires of Western consumers, whilst also frequently providing low-paid and unskilled employment (Crick, 1989). The focus on tourism's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and economic growth during the 1980s was representative of development's focus on macro-scale initiatives (Bianchi, 2017). This focus on economic indices however frequently failed to improve quality of life for the majority of the citizens of the Global South (Kay, 2006; Hyden, 2006). Moreover, the focus on maximising economic returns tended to result in environmental and social concerns not being valued (Brohman, 1996). In constantly searching for new areas for economic expansion (usually for the benefit of the West), with little concern for environmental and social consequences, mainstream tourism has clear parallels with what has been termed the 'colonial mind set' (Crick, 1989). It therefore perpetuates and reflects the unequal and uneven status of countries and people within the global economy (Reid, 2003; Mowforth and Munt, 2003). Recognition of the limitations of development initiatives and mainstream tourism, however, led to the emergence of

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alternative conceptualisations. These shall be the topic of discussion in the next section.

2.1.4 Alternative Conceptualisations of Development and Tourism

The failure of top-down prescriptive development policies to tangibly improve the lives of people in the Global South resulted in the emergence of alternative development in 1980s. While a myriad of approaches can be construed as fitting within such an 'alternative' approach, each is underpinned by a shift away from the macro, growth-based initiatives which characterise mainstream development. This involves focusing on the local, with the aim of empowering the subjects of development, so that interventions are responsive and representative of differing socio-cultural settings (Pieterse, 1996). As Tandon (2000: 320) describes:

> "The alternative development approach relied substantially on conscientisation and the collective mobilisation of the marginalised themselves. Non-formal education, community organising, and local leadership-building were the kinds of interventions that this alternative development approach of NGOs signified. This contrasted with the mainstream development paradigm which focused on growth in GNP and macroeconomic development".

Alternative development, as such, has been highly influential with international development agencies, NGOs and development practitioners (Kapoor, 2002; Kamat, 2004), representing something of a new orthodoxy. Examples of such approaches include 'development from below', 'human well-being' and 'participatory approaches' (Leys, 1996; Esteva and Prakash, 1998). These approaches aim to put at the forefront "local contexts, needs and realities" (Banks and Hulme, 2012: 12) by empowering people to use their local knowledge to achieve equitable and relevant outcomes (Berkes, 2004). This focus on the local, resulted in increasing interest in instigating development practices at the community level, with community driven development being "amongst the fastest growing mechanisms for channelling development assistance" (Mansuri and Rao, 2004: 1) . However, it must be noted that there is little consensus on what is meant by the term 'community', with

understandings ranging from geographical or administrative boundaries, to qualities based on shared identity and norms (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003; Bhattacharyya, 2004). Mansuri and Rao (2004: 8) note the difficultly in adopting a clear definition when they reflect:

> "Defining the geographic or conceptual boundaries of a community is not always straightforward. Administrative boundaries can be meaningless where settlement patterns are distinct from such boundaries or where increasing mobility or temporary migrations have transformed the community boundaries. In many cases, factional, ethnic, or religious identities may further complicate the picture. Second, an unqualified use of the term often obscures local structures of economic and social power that are likely to strongly influence project outcomes".

It is evident that any notion of a simplified community is frequently nothing more than "an ideal masquerading as social fact" (Blackstock 2005:42). This has an important influence on how alternative development strategies manifest in practice, once they touch ground in the Global South, which I will now address.

One of the strongest advocates and key architects of alternative development was Robert Chambers (1997: 188), who pioneered Rapid Rural Appraisal and the need for participation in development practice. Chambers described his approach thus:

> "In an evolving paradigm of development there is a new high ground, a paradigm of people as people...On the new high ground, decentralization, democracy, diversity and dynamism combine. Multiple local and individual realities are recognized, accepted, enhanced and celebrated. Truth, trust, and diversity link. Baskets of choice replace packages of practices. Doubt, self-critical self-awareness and acknowledgement of error are valued...For the realities of lowers to count more, and for the new high ground to prevail, it is uppers who have to change."

The premise of Chambers' approach is the importance of participation to empower communities to take control of their own development. It therefore is an appealing

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solution to the failure of traditional development approaches, offering an opportunity for a more inclusive means of development. As Dumaru (2010:753) notes it is essential that:

> "Care is taken to ensure that the decision-making process… [is]… driven by the community and is beneficial to their interest, in particular those with the least power"

Moreover, Chambers challenged development practitioners to immerse themselves in communities they aimed to help; that is, to understand the lives of local people through "having fun" and "being nice to people" (Chambers, 1997:207), whilst utilising this knowledge to encourage culturally appropriate forms of development. This approach, although appealing as a panacea for failed development initiatives, must however be viewed as a continuation of the flawed logic that underpins Western led development. This is because the premise of participatory approaches is that development is an apolitical challenge that can be solved through improved knowledge and expertise. In implementing these ideas in communities of the Global South, however, they come up against existing socio-economic structures that reflect political choices and outcomes. As Mowforth and Munt (1998: 240) note in relation to participatory tourism development:

> "The push for local participation comes from a position of power, the first world: It is easier to promote the principles of local participation on paper, from a distance, than to practice them."

Mowforth and Munt (1998) elude to how participatory approaches are imbued with idealistic notions of democracy which struggle in the messy and uneven reality of community life. This is because, despite the enduring imagery of communities in the Global South as being harmonious and homogeneous, such communities are often stratified and heterogeneous (Berner and Phillips, 2005). As Leach *et al.*, (1999: 230) note communities tend to consist of actors of varying "gender, caste, wealth, age, and origins". The uneven and unequal power of actors that makeup of a community tends to be overlooked by the idealism of participatory development, but is essential in

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understanding its failure to achieve its expected outcomes. This is because although participatory development aims to achieve consensus on decisions for the community, the diverse array of priorities and opinions, means it may not be possible to reconcile competing community members' interests. Moreover, despite the mantra of 'putting the last first' (Chambers, 1983), evidence suggests that those marginalised in the communities may not have equal involvement in the process. As Leach *et al.*, (1999) note, "different social actors have very different capacities to voice and stake their claims", the result being the entire process can become co-opted by local elites to protect their own priorities (Kapoor, 2011). In addition, the scope of community involvement can also be limited by the nature of the development apparatus. This is because the requirements of foreign donors tend to ensure that community members are only empowered to make decisions that fit within a small pre-defined remit (Fergusson, 1994). The result is that external agencies take on the paternal role of outlining the available options, silencing radical voices within the community (Tosun, 2000). Goldman's (2001) analysis of the World Bank is a prime example of this form of co-optation. He highlights how the Bank changed its procedures to incorporate more local voices in its assessment of a project's viability, yet only incorporated certain types of knowledge while dismissing others as illegitimate or irrational. These critiques indicate how, despite their popularisation, participatory methods can also become little more than a spectacle to satisfy external donors and in turn do not automatically challenge the structural causes of poverty or inequality.

The difficultly in transforming the rhetoric of alternative approaches into reality, can further be seen from the example of community natural resource management. Community natural resource management aims to empower local people to use their own knowledge systems, to conserve their local resources, whilst satisfying their livelihood needs, therefore offering an alternative to Anglo-European conservation policies, which relied on restricting local access to natural resources in order to ensure their preservation, so called "fortress conservation" (Dressler, 2010: 6). However, despite its appealing rhetoric, a review of the literature reveals frequent disappointment with its outcomes for development and conservation. For example, Kellert *et al.* (2000) examined five case studies in Nepal, United States and Kenya using six social and environmental indicators: equity, empowerment, conflict resolution, knowledge and awareness, biodiversity protection and sustainable

utilisation. This analysis concluded that there was little evidence of traditional knowledge systems being incorporated into these projects and that power and economic benefits tended to fall into the hands of community elite. Dressler *et al*,.(2010) similarly note through six case studies, how rather than reflect diverse local social and environmental contexts, its implementation takes the form of a technical exercise to achieve policy makers desired outcomes. Conclusions such as these appear frequently in assessments of alternative development approaches. This is because notwithstanding the change of emphasis, alternative development represents a continuation of the belief that development is an apolitical problem with technocratic solutions (De Vries, 2007). As a result, rather than empower local communities and embracing local knowledge systems, communities tend to be incorporated into a bureaucratic development apparatus, which reinforces existing power structures (Dumaru, 2010; Kothari, 2005). The ability of a knowledge system from the Global South to influence, or find space, within such development processes, is the subject of exploration in this thesis.

It could be argued that the appeal of alternative development approaches to some development practitioners is that they can be seen as fitting into dominant neo-liberal understandings. This is because they encourage individuals to find solutions to their own livelihood needs, rather than focusing on the role of the State (Walsh, 2010; Kamat, 2004). Moreover, they further empower NGOs, which, as civil society actors, position themselves as being ideally suited for bottom up localised development. However, despite the appeal of localised development, there is considerable evidence that rather than benefit all community members, these are often in fact captured by a community elite. As Dasgupta and Beard (2007: 233) note:

> "Community governance is particularly vulnerable to elite capture because participants enter the process from unequal positions of power: they have asymmetrical social positions, disparate access to economic resources, varying levels of knowledge of political protocols and procedures and different literacy rates"

The ability of particular individuals to capture the benefits of development initiatives for their own personal gain, indicates how even 'well-meaning' policies can result in disappointing outcomes for communities. The attributes of community elite that enable them to capture the benefits of development programmes are explored further in Chapter Six. It uses 'forms of capital' to explain individuals' involvement in volunteer tourism projects and the benefits they receive from these.

2.1.4.1 Social Capital

Interest in the human side of development led to a recognition of the importance of social relations to economic development. Influential work in this area is Robert Putnam's (1993) book '*Making Democracy Work'*. In this, he argued that there is a positive correlation between economic performance and social capital, which he defines as the "networks, norms and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam 1995: 66–67). The valuing of traditional societal structures and relationships as a development tool represented a radical shift in development orthodoxy, which up to this period considered these features an impediment to economic prosperity (Agrawal, 1995). Subsequently, social capital has been referred to as the "missing link in development" (Harriss and Renzio, 1997: 921) and quickly established itself in the lexicon of the World Bank, its appeal stemming from its ability to act as a bridge between sociological and economic perspectives on development (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).Thereby providing an alternative to the World Bank's failed development policies, whilst not challenging its existing governing structures (Bebbington, 2002). The emergence of social capital as a development tool was of particular interest to development practitioners in indigenous communities (Bebbington, 1997). This is because cultural features associated with these communities, such as "extended-family networks, norms of reciprocity and dense associations" were now classified as important for economic development (Andolina *et al*., 2009: 11). The incorporation of social capital into the lexicon of development therefore significantly shifted how development practitioners perceived indigenous societal structures. The concept's growing importance to understandings of indigenous development is therefore worthy of detailed consideration, and is explored further with the aid of empirical evidence in Chapter Six of this thesis.

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The utility of social capital as a development tool is highly contested within academic discourse. Its advocates identify it as a means of enhancing collective empowerment (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000; Adger, 2003), as Bebbington (1997: 195) indicates in his study in the rural Andes. He credits social capital with creating the conditions that allow rural farmers to manufacture high-value products for market, creating what he terms 'islands of sustainability', stating:

> "the social capital inherent in indigenous organisations, in both their traditional and modern forms, allowed forms of collective action and economies of scale that the brokers' networks alone would have been unable to do anything about".

However, critics of the utility of social capital as a development tool, such as Harriss and Renzio (1997), highlight how it fails to recognise the exclusive nature of some network groups and romanticises the community level. It also often underplays the manner by which certain social movements have more political power than others. Moreover, the concept of social capital is critiqued as a tool of the neo-liberal agenda, with a focus on social relationships which fails to challenge the structural causes of poverty and inequality (Fine, 1999; Cleaver, 2005). Supporting this assessment, Cleaver (2005) draws on ethnographic work in Tanzania to argue that, despite its popularity, social capital is overly simplistic and does little to help the poorest in society. The focus on the 'personal' and 'local' as a form of alternative development is one that is embraced by volunteer tourism, which in turn packages these aspects and sells them to the consumer, as will subsequently be discussed.

2.1.5 Origins of Volunteer Tourism

The classic definition of volunteer tourism provided by Wearing (2001: 1) refers to volunteers "aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society". This positioning aligns with modernisation theory, albeit often packaged within terms such as 'making a difference' (Simpson, 2004). As a result, volunteer tourism maps onto existing global imaginaries of there being an 'under-developed' and 'developed' world. In line with the alternative development apparatus, volunteer tourism focuses on the community and individual, with the volunteer taking on the role of the development practitioner and "being the agent of change" (Crossley 2012: 236).

There is a long history of citizens from the Global North volunteering in the Global South in the desire to instigate change (Raymond and Hall, 2008). For example, Peace Corps in the United States and Voluntary Service Overseas in the United Kingdom emerged in the 1960s as a form of State sponsored volunteering. These organisations placed skilled volunteers for a year or more in communities of the Global South, in a desire to contribute to their development and modernisation. The State's support for these programmes reflected cold war politicking, with volunteerism an important means to secure influence and encourage countries to follow their development model (Butcher and Smith, 2015). Volunteer tourism emerged in the 1990s and offered a more flexible approach, with there being few restrictions on who could participate and less stringent development goals (Tomazos and Butler, 2012). As a result, the typical participant volunteers for less than two months, and has little training or experience relevant to the needs of communities in the Global South (Callanan and Thomas, 2005). Volunteer tourism therefore provides a means for the personal and societal benefits traditionally associated with volunteering to be gained through a single tourism product. However, this is not a homogenous product, wide variations exist in the nature of volunteer activities, the structure of facilitating organisations and the motivations of volunteer tourists (Coghlan, 2007; Wearing and McGehee, 2013). Similar to state sponsored volunteering, the majority of volunteer tourists tend to come from Western countries and travel to destinations in the Global South (Mostafanezhad, 2013). However, volunteer tourists tend to pay for the experience and visit places that offer additional tourist attractions, whether this be cultural or environmental, with popular destinations including Ecuador, Thailand and South Africa (Keese, 2011).

Early scholarly work was highly optimistic about the ability of volunteers to make a difference in the Global South, now seen as representing the advocacy stage of volunteer tourism research (Wearing and McGehee, 2013). These uncritical works simply profiled volunteers and attempted to understand their motivations for engaging in, what was assumed to be, an altruistic activity (Broad, 2003; Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004). The description by Wearing (2001: 1) of volunteer tourism being "mutually beneficial for volunteer and host" is representative of the weak and idealist scholarly imaginary prevalent when research in this field first emerged.

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The volunteer tourism literature has since shifted to incorporate a more critical analysis of the ability of volunteer tourists to contribute to community development. A plethora of critiques emerged from the mid-2000s which focused on volunteers lacking the necessary skills or experience (McGehee and Andereck, 2008), them not having enough time to complete work adequately (Palacious, 2010), or being in places where they were not needed (Lorimer, 2010). Moreover, volunteer tourists have been associated with reducing local employment opportunities, by completing tasks without payment which local people could undertake (Guttentag, 2009), creating dependency and reducing the pride of local inhabitants (McGehee and Andereck, 2008). The general conclusion of scholars can be summarised by a quote recorded by McGehee and Andereck (2008: 21), obtained from a director of a project in the Appalachian Mountains, who stated:

> "Volunteers have been coming to this part of the country for thirty years…I honestly don't see a change in the community".

In response to concerns regarding the development potential of volunteer tourism, scholars have responded with typical technocratic solutions. This involved, firstly, attempting to improve the understanding of this activity by conceptualising different typologies to distinguish between its volunteering and tourist aspect. Examples include the designation of the 'volunteer minded' and 'vacation minded' volunteer tourist (Brown and Morrison, 2003), or characterising volunteers and projects as 'shallow', 'intermediate', or 'deep' (Callanam and Thomas, 2005). These typologies did not question the potential for positive outcomes, just that it was important to recognise that these would be more forthcoming if volunteering was the main focus of the activity. Notably, there was no consideration of the destination area within these typologies, and the complexity of the social relations therein, as the outcomes were based on how the volunteer undertook their task of 'helping'. Palacious (2010: 5) made such an observation when he reflected:

> "What has been at stake in most debates about volunteer tourism is not whether the help of Westerners has any relevance in the development of poor

nations, but whether these Westerners possess the necessary capacities and motivations to produce effective help."

Illustrative of this approach is the work of Guttentag (2009: 548), who produced a comprehensive critique of volunteer tourism, collating the observations and conclusions of relevant critical works in his paper, *The possible negative impacts of volunteer tourism.* After making a compelling case which highlighted such potential negative impacts, he notably concludes that these are "not necessarily inevitable, and can likely be mitigated when projects are properly planned and managed". Even after his analysis, then, he is unable to move away from the notion that volunteers *can* make a difference under the correct conditions.

The concerns most cited by scholars relates to the commercialisation of volunteer tourism by private enterprises and tour operators (Rattan, 2015; Lyons and Wearing, 2008). Commodified volunteer tourism is associated with exploiting the resources of host communities, as well as 'under-development' or 'primitive culture', for capital gain, rather than having altruistic motivations. This has resulted in calls for host-driven projects which are deemed more likely to follow the decommodified agenda on which volunteer tourism is premised (McGehee, 2014). This is supported by Wearing *et al*. (2005: 435) who note the importance of projects instigated by NGOs:

> "NGOs shift our view of tourism as an experiential commodity to be exploited under the banner of neo-liberal free market economics, to a decommodified experience of intrinsic value to both participant and host community…[and]…can be regarded as an example of best practice in decommodifying tourism."

The tendency in the literature to present a dichotomy between community and NGO projects as decommodified, whilst seeing those operated by transnational corporations as commodified, is appealing but needs problematising. This is because commercial and profit-seeking motivations may not be the sole imposition of transnational corporations, but may already be prevalent and enacted locally. The empirical chapters of this thesis focus on volunteer projects instigated by an NGO with a high level of local control, which scholars such as McGehee (2014) argue are

more likely to abide by the ideal or decommodified agenda of volunteer tourism. Determining how volunteer tourism operates in this context will provide valuable insights into the nature of this form of tourism, and its potential to act as an alternative to traditional tourism enterprises.

The volunteer tourism literature has provided a response to critics in ways that scholars in the development field would also recognise. This includes calls for greater accountability (Steele *et al.*, 2017; McGehee, 2014; Rattan, 2015), guidelines for best practice, and participatory approaches to ensure greater community involvement (Lorimer, 2010). McGehee (2014) calls for volunteer tourism to meet the gold standard of sustainable tourism, arguing that academics can help achieve this through their research. This body of work recognises the limitations of volunteer tourism; however, its conclusions suggest that these are not inevitable but simply reflect the need for improved knowledge and managerial techniques. It is evident that some understandings of alternative development continue to propagate a form of modernisation theory, placing the Global South in the position of 'needing' development, whilst aiming to incorporate these areas into the global capitalist system. Volunteer tourism similarly maps onto such imageries by commodifying development and selling the role of the development practitioner for community hosts, on the global market. A growing disillusionment with development outcomes, however, has resulted in a body of working questioning Western interference in the Global South (Escobar, 2011; Sachs, 1997; Esteva and Prakash, 1988)

2.1.6 Post-development Critique of Western Interference

Critical analysis of Western-led development has resulted in the emergence of a body of literature characterised as 'post-development'. This work encompasses a diversity of critiques of hegemonic theories of development. These include their failure to improve the lives of those in the Global South (Sachs, 1997), their claim to a universal understanding of progress (Ziai, 2013; Acosta, 2010), their failure to address Western overdevelopment and consumption (Slim, 1995), and their ultimate result of aiding capitalist expansion into new markets (Petras and Veltmeyer, 2002). Underpinning a post-development critique is the power of discourse in creating the dichotomy of the developed and under-developed world. Esteva and Prakash (1998: 282) note, for

example, how following President Truman's speech and the era of development "two billion people became under-developed overnight", a move which successfully continues the domination of the Global South following the end of colonialism. Rahnema (1997: 306) provides a similar critique of development stating:

> "Development, as it imposed itself on its 'target populations', was basically the wrong answer to their true needs and aspirations. It was an ideology that was born and refined in the North, mainly to meet the needs of the dominant powers in search of a more 'appropriate' tool for their economic and geographical expansion…In fact, the ideology helped a dying and obsolete colonialism to transform itself into an aggressive – even sometimes an attractive – instrument able to recapture lost ground."

The post-development position therefore interprets the entire notion of development as a form of neo-colonialism, constructing a world in which all other knowledges and practices are inferior to Western modernity. Moreover, it is more than simply a system by which the Global South is measured, but has also become the principle way in which these countries and their citizens come to measure themselves (Walsh, 2010). Rahnema (1997), for example, refers to development as a virus shaping how people in the Global South view their societies and knowledge systems. The requirement for a 'decolonisation of the mind' within the Global South, through a critical reflection of Western modernity therefore underpins this critique of Western-led development (Marglin and Marglin 1990). Advocates of post-development have called for "alternatives to development rather than alternative development" (Escobar, 1995: 215), as the latter stands accused of simply re-packaging modernisation theory in differing guises. Post-development critiques therefore represent a radical challenge to how knowledges and practices within the global system have been categorised and hierarchised over the last sixty years.

It is possible to discern evidence of a movement towards a post-development position within the volunteer tourism literature (Everingham, 2015; Simpson, 2004; Palacious, 2010). The framing of this shift is not so much in questioning the existence of poverty, but an acceptance that volunteers are unlikely to alter the situation during their placement. Scholars such as Palacious (2010: 25) argue that the "goal of development seems to not only be unrealistic in this context, but also undesirable,"

whilst Sin (2010: 991) describes it as being a "utopian dream". The inability of Western volunteers to make a difference in the Global South was recognised by Ivan Illich as far back as 1960, in a presentation to a group of volunteers titled, *To hell with good intentions*. In relation to the Peace Corps, Illich argued that the differential in power and the lack of understanding of the Global South resulted in American volunteers damaging rather than helping the citizens they came to serve. In failing to recognise such long-standing critiques of international volunteering, the early volunteer tourism literature illustrates the enduring appeal of modernisation theory and the ability of the West to make positive changes in the Global South.

In recent years there has been a shift in the volunteer tourism literature towards work encouraging volunteers to focus upon learning from the host community, rather than focusing on development. For example, in his paper *Give up Activism and Change the World in unknown ways*, Chatterton (2006) proposes that by performing an 'activist role' distance is created from the general public, which in turn reduces the ability for different actors to find common ground. He suggests that by being open to learning, it is possible to find commonalities and connectivity between parities that subsequently can have unexpected transformational outcomes. This reflects a similar proposition by Sin (2010), who notes how the notions of 'becoming a volunteer' and 'making a difference' create a particular power dynamic that impedes the emergence of an equal relationship and cultural understanding. The idea of mutual learning and understanding has always been an important pillar of volunteer tourism (Wearing, 2001); however, framing this as the sole focus or outcome, rather than 'development' itself, represents a paradigm shift in the literature.

Post-development thought has a particular resonance in volunteer tourism. There is considerable empirical evidence concluding that volunteer tourists express little desire for 'modernising' destination areas (Gray and Campell, 2007). The focus is instead on developing personal relationships and intimacy with their hosts (Conran, 2011) and bringing them happiness (Jakuiak and Bryant, 2017), rather than simply improving their material wealth. Moreover, volunteers tend to interpret traditional rural ways of life, and even poverty itself, as being a sign of cultural pureness and spirituality (Vrasti, 2013). The volunteer gaze therefore romanticises host

communities as a response to volunteers' own general dissatisfaction with Western modernity, with its focus on individualism and consumerism. This gaze also reflects volunteers' desires to re-create romanticised notions of past colonial explorers encountering undiscovered worlds (Mowford and Munt, 2003). Crossley (2012: 235) notes the influence of such imaginaries on volunteers, documenting how they create a "poor but happy" narrative to explain their encounters with the host community. Mowford and Munt (1998: 59) make a similar argument when noting the appeal of the 'distant other' within tourism, stating:

> "Other cultures and environments are everything that our cultures and environments are not. Thus Western lifestyle can be denigrated as empty, cultural unfulfilling, materialistic, meaningless, while on the contrary, Third World cultures can be bestowed with meaning, richness, simplicity and, of course authenticity"

Rosaldo (1989) explains this as a form of 'imperialist nostalgia' within Western modernity, which mourns and fetishises the people and places it helped destroy. This imagery of the pristine pre-contact indigenous community is positioned within volunteer tourism as allowing volunteers to reflect on their lives (Barbieri *et al*., 2012; Lepp, 2008), whilst the indigenous communities are presented as bounded or experiencing cultural loss. Volunteer tourists therefore view indigenous societies as a reprieve from modernity, whilst embracing the post-development position of cultural relativism in their desire protect the cultural purity of host communities. To date, however, there has been little exploration within the volunteer tourism literature of how host community members themselves respond to this imagery. In particular, there is a lack of work on how the desire of volunteers to uncover primitive traditional societies is reconciled with the continuous visitation of volunteer tourists over a sustained period. This position reflects Laurie and Baillie-Smith's (2017: 5) observation that scholarly research on volunteer tourism is overwhelmingly "defined by the temporal frame of the northern individuals and sending organisations, rather than those of host communities and their often sustained hosting over time."

Research by Carnaffan (2010) and Wang (2007), focused on homestay tourism, indicates that hosts strategically respond to the desires of tourists to appeal to Western

imaginaries. The basis of volunteer tourism as providing a non-tourist product (Wearing, 2001) suggests such strategic responses are unnecessary. A detailed exploration of Western imaginaries of indigenous communities and their response to such understandings of a 'product' is provided in Chapter Five of the thesis.

The concern for protecting a romanticised or idealised notion of indigeneity from what Cohen (1987: 15) terms "cultural pollution" has been a frequent focus for tourism scholars. For example, McClary (2008: 2)[2] coined the term the 'demonstration effect', which he defines as:

> "the occurrence of indigenous and rural communities and cultures adopting Western style and behaviour that they have observed in visiting tourists through demonstration and interaction."

This notion, that host community residents are vulnerable to the influence of volunteers, is evident within the volunteer tourism literature (Dillette *et al*, 2017; Simpson 2004). It is notable that in documenting their concerns of the demonstration effect, these scholars provide no empirical evidence to support their claims. Illustrative of this, Guttentag (2009: 547) states:

> "The demonstration effect is certainly a danger that volunteer tourism poses, and it is a phenomenon that projects will have to consider in order to avoid eroding local cultures or creating tension with host communities."

These works indicate a perception that communities in the Global South are bounded and under threat from Western modernity. As such, they reflect essentialised notions of culture that deny how societies in the Global South have experienced change and diverse conflicts long before the on-set of modernisation. Moreover, rather than simply being seduced or eroded by Western modernity, indigenous culture results in a form of hybridisation. As Romero (2001: 22) astutely notes:

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[2]

https://www.unbc.ca/assets/outdoor_recreation_tourism_management/new_courses/demonstration_effect.pdf

"notwithstanding the astounding development of capitalism, world markets, mass communications, and mass migration throughout the world, local cultures and ethnic differences continue to exist, struggle, and create novel lifestyles, which are, in turn, products of both 'tradition' and 'modernity'."

Supporting this position, Monterrubio *et al.* (2014) conclude from their study in Mexico that there is no evidence of residents' blindly copying tourist behaviours. Similarly, Picard and Wood (1997: 5) reject any notion of tourism being a destructive power flattening local cultures; instead, they argue that it is a social ingredient of a local culture. Tourism operates within communities, which have cultures that are constantly dynamic and fluid rather than frozen in a particular place or time.

Concerns over tourism development's impact on indigenous cultures reflects a particular post-development position that has also drawn severe criticism within academic discourse. It has been accused of romanticising communities in the Global South (Butcher and Smith, 2015), being anti-technology and modernity (Corbridge, 1998), and failing to offer an alternative to improve the lives of those in the Global South (De Vries, 2007). Others have argued that an unwillingness to speak for others is as bad as speaking for them (Kiely, 2007). This anti-post-development position clearly underpins Butcher and Smith's (2015: 329) critique of volunteer tourism, where they note that:

"Volunteers are not trying to impose an ideology or assert moral or any kind of superiority. They are not trying to develop the societies they visit, but to help the individuals they encounter and in the process engage in a form of self-help for themselves...[The] provision of basic needs is not a stepping stone to wider development opportunities and liberation from poverty, but is a path to a sustainable 'steady state' at a level of economic development marginally above where the community started out"

Butcher and Smith (2015) therefore question volunteer tourism for failing to provide, or even desire, real change in deprived communities.

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Thus far, this chapter has illustrated how many attempts at instigating change suffer the familiar failings of Western-led interventions, whilst, on the other hand, propagating a lack of desire to instigate real change, are met with accusations of perpetuating and romanticising poverty. This dichotomy, however, emerges from an analysis of volunteer tourism and development in political theories emerging from the Global North. This thesis focuses instead on an alternative potential avenue through this impasse, by focusing on *Buen Vivir,* a knowledge system which originated in the Global South. The chapter shall now focus on this topic.

2.1.7 *Buen Vivir*: An Alternative to Development?

Buen Vivir, or 'good living', emerged in Ecuador as a discourse in the late 1990s, as part of an indigenous movement which mobilised nationally against neo-liberalism and Western understandings of development (Vanhulst and Beling, 2014). As a concept, it encapsulates the broad theme of living in harmony with nature, the cosmos, and community. It is built from a number of different indigenous concepts, including the "Quechua concept '*Sumak Kawsay*', the Aymara '*Suma Qamana*', the Guarani '*Nandereko*', the Ashuar '*Shiir Waras*' and the Mapuche '*Kume Mongen*'" (Vanhulst and Beling, 2014: 56). These origins result in *Buen Vivir* constructing an alternative way of knowing about – and living in – the world, which contrasts with the Western-centric understandings that have been dominant since colonialism and the rise of development institutions. As Escobar (1995: 13) observes:

> "Development has relied exclusively on one knowledge system, namely, the modern Western one. The dominance of this knowledge system has dictated the marginalisation and disqualification of non-Western knowledge systems."

Buen Vivir represents a complete epistemological and ontological break with the Western neo-liberal capitalist system. Its significance is difficult to over-emphasise, as it represents not only an alternative to neo-liberalism, but also provides a means for channelling an indigenous knowledge system into the practices of a modern state. Furthermore, it gained ascendancy in a region in which state policies and discourses previously focused on the assimilation of indigenous people (Jackson and Warren, 2005), in which indigenous knowledge systems have been suppressed, leading to

marginalisation and discrimination of indigenous development actors (Andolina *et al.*, 2009). The contradiction and tension within this political reality is unpacked and analysed throughout this thesis. Table 1, below, distils the main difference between *Buen Vivir* and Western development:

Table 1. Comparison between Western notions of development and *Buen Vivir*

Western Development	*Buen Vivir*
Nature is considered as a resource external to humans (Anthropocentric).	Based on harmonious human-nature relationships, with the rights of nature being recognised (Biocentric).
Development is considered a linear process with a beginning, a desired destination, and constant progress.	There is no beginning or end in time, and so no preliminary state of under-development.
Based on living better through capitalism, based on consumerism, competition, opulence and profiteering.	Based on 'living well', involving solidarity, equality, harmony, complementarity and reciprocity.
Encourages Western-style liberal democratic political systems, based on individual representation, aggregated and expressed in votes and majorities.	Based on radical democratisation and direct participation in public and collective affairs.
Work is based on capital accumulation.	Work is happiness linked to the soil and community, and is creative, recreational, and satisfactory from infancy to old age.
Based on rationality and materiality.	There is a search for harmony between the material world and the spiritual world, from which no one is excluded. This also implies acceptance of the importance of emotions and their relational nature, affectivity and 'all that is beyond-the-rational'.

(Based on Villalba-Eguiluz and Etxano, 2017; Calisto and Langmore, 2014)

Table 1 indicates how *Buen Vivir* rejects the basic assumptions that have dominated development discourse to date, such as the search for continuous growth, living better, and the separation of humans from nature (Kothari *et al.*, 2014). It therefore represents a complete break from modernisation theory, and the view that '"Europe shows the world its common future" (Crush, 1995: 8). *Buen Vivir* answers the call from post-development scholars for alternatives to development, rather than simply an alternative development (Escobar, 1992).

The basic principles underpinning *Buen Vivir,* outlined in Table 1, are important, as there is currently no formal definition of this concept. Fatheuer (2011) proposes that this is inevitable, as its complexity and depth make the formulation of a clear definition elusive. This is both a strength, in allowing *Buen Vivir* to be continually under construction and adaptable to different social contexts (Villalba, 2013), but also

conversely a weakness. The lack of definition provides space for *Buen Vivir's* co-optation and ultimately the curtailment of its radical transformational potential, with the risk that it can become nothing more than a "empty signifier" (Teijlingen and Hogenboom 2016: 409).

Two different strands of research on *Buen Vivir* have emerged, relating to its conceptual positioning. The first interprets it as a purely indigenous concept, based on ancestral philosophies and cosmologies of life and living, in which there is no notion of development (Walsh, 2010). Thompson (2011: 450) describes pre-colonial indigenous societies as being based on "relationships of reciprocity", "complementary", "respect for pluarality", "coexistence and equality", which should be learnt from in contrast with "racist Western ideas" of development. This indigenous conceptualisation proposes recreating the harmonious living conditions of the past and recreating an ancestral identity outside of modernity. Hidalgo-Capitán *et al.*, (2017) note that this quasi-fundamentalist position is a radical reaction to the existing neo-colonial political and knowledge systems, which prioritise the non-indigenous elite in Ecuador. There is limited scholarly work in English which relates to this purely indigenous *Buen Vivir*, though Villalba-Eguiluz and Extano (2017) do situate the work of Choquehuanca (2010) and Huanacuni (2010) as two such examples. This conceptualisation is not drawn from within this thesis, as it positions *Buen Vivir* as part of a romanticised imagined geography, frozen in space and time, which has little relevance beyond – or likely even within – present-day indigenous communities. This interpretation is an important influence on political discourse, however, being frequently utilised to characterise any critic of government policy as the "infantile left" (Rosales, 2013: 1451), desiring a utopian past which has no relevance for today's society.

The second interpretation of *Buen Vivir* recognises its roots in Andean Cosmovisions, but positions it as evolving through the incorporation of knowledge by both indigenous and non-indigenous scholars, practitioners, and activists (Fatheuer, 2011; Giovannini, 2015). Critical discourses of Western development, as provided by deep ecology, biocentrism, and feminism, therefore complement rather than dilute *Buen Vivir* in this interpretation (Gudynas, 2011). Acosta (2013) sees this fusing of ancestral knowledge with universal thought as a vital process in the decolonisation

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of society. Gudynas (2011), further, highlights how Western critical thought advances *Buen Vivir* in a progressive way, an example being the use of feminist critiques to challenge gender roles and social hierarchy embedded within indigenous traditions. It is this interpretation of *Buen Vivir* as a fluid concept, embracing critical thought from post-development positions, which underpins this thesis. This understanding is line with the description provided by Calisto-Fraint and Langmore (2014: 65) who argue:

> "*Buen Vivir* is an inherently pluralistic concept. While its roots emanate from Andean cosmovision, it has evolved beyond native cosmology by incorporating alternative ideologies from the Western world. Mixing with ecological, poststructuralist, socialist and radical democratic voices, *Buen Vivir* is built on a rich diversity of ontologies and teleologies united in the creation of an alternative to hegemonic visions of development."

The radical nature of this conceptualisation therefore breaks with neo-liberal development models, in order to embrace reciprocity and harmonious living. This interpretation attracted considerable acclaim within scholarly work, following its inclusion in the Ecuadorian Constitution in 2008 (Kothari *et al.*, 2014; Calisto-Fraint and Langmore, 2014).

The initial excitement regarding the inclusion of *Buen Vivir* in the Ecuadorian constitution in the academic community has now given way to a somewhat more sober analysis. The initial hope was that, by helping to create "possibly the world's most progressive Constitution" (Kothari *et al*, 2014: 372), a radical new post-neoliberal, post-capitalist era would be born. For example, Fatheuer (2011) quotes Beau Breslin – the South African writer – in stating that "Constitutions matter", drawing the distinction between the EU, with its focus on growth and stability, with the focus of Ecuador's constitution on satisfying the basic needs of life. There have been concerns, however, that there a significant gap between the "rhetoric and delivery" of *Buen Vivir* (Radcliffe, 2012: 245). Merino (2016), for example, notes a distinction between *Buen Vivir* in the political sphere, which he associates with Neo-Marxism, and the intellectual sphere, which is more in line with post-development

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and deep ecology. This neo-Marxist approach prioritises the role of the state, excluding even those indigenous movements that first conceptualised *Buen Vivir* (Hidalgo-Capitán, 2017). A body of scholarly work now exists critiquing the enactment of *Buen Vivir* in terms of its actual political implementation. This focuses almost exclusively on Ecuador's continued reliance on extractive industries (Rosales, 2013; Villalba-Eguiluz, and Extano, 2017; Merino, 2016; Teijlingen and Hogenboom, 2016). The compatibility of Ecuador's other productive sectors in relation to *Buen Vivir* have not been critically analysed, however; rather, the positive association between activities such as ecotourism and *Buen Vivir* (Calisto-Fraint and Langmore, 2014) remain to be problematised. There is a clear shift within the literature from the optimism surrounding *Buen Vivir* to a predominantly critical discourse. Arguments put forward by Radcliffe (2012) are part of this trend, although she does provide optimism beyond the national level by highlighting ancestral knowledge being incorporated in a provinces educational curriculum, women's needs being incorporated into indigenous judicial systems, and indigenous knowledges being incorporated into intercultural education at the university level. Radcliffe's contribution points to the importance of taking a scalar approach to work investigating *Buen Vivir,* in order to unearth its emerging forms, and this thesis aims to follow this lead.

This section has situated *Buen Vivir* as offering a radical alternative to neo-liberal capitalist developmental model. Similarly, volunteer tourism is positioned as rejecting Western modernity and the traditional offerings of the tourism industry (Brown, 2005). The extent to which volunteer tourism simply offers a reprieve from Western modernity (Vrsati, 2013), however, or can in fact go further and instigate a new form of citizenship, challenging the capitalist economic system, is analysed in the next section.

2.2 Volunteer Tourism and Global Citizenship

The interconnectedness of places in the wake of globalisation, and the global nature of environmental and social problems, has resulted in political action at the global level taking on increased importance. As a result, terms such as 'caring at a distance' or 'geographies of responsibilities' have been popularised, reflecting what Smith

(1997) characterises as the 'moral turn' within geographical studies. A consequence of this turn has been growing interest in the notion of 'global citizenship', which involves citizens identifying with global humanity, rather than simply aligning themselves with local or national interests (Barnett and Land, 2007). The importance of instigating a change of consciousness reflects the well-documented phenomenon of humans displaying a greater propensity to care for those in close proximity than those more distant, be this geographically or culturally so (Barnett, 2005); or, as Smith (2000: 93) memorably quips, "distance leads to indifference". Integral to achieving a sense of global citizenship, then, is reducing the feeling of distance between citizens across geographical and socio-cultural space within the global system (Barnett, 2005). However, there is no agreed definition of what this means in practice, or its contribution towards a more progressive global political system. The result is that global citizenship is a slippery concept, one that encompasses notions of a globalised identity, 'being a citizen of the world', as well as signifying a form of human solidarity (Falk, 1993). As a form of globalised identity, global citizenship has been criticised for reinforcing the uneven and unequal balance of power in the global economic system. This is because of its predominant focus on the citizens of the Global North, who are encouraged to step outside their locality and to think globally. The result is the re-packaging of colonial discourses of these mobile citizens possessing universal knowledge, whilst those in the Global South are cast as static and reliant on local traditions and beliefs (Andreotti, 2014: 4). Furthermore, the usefulness of embracing global citizenship as a means to challenge a global political system that perpetuates poverty and inequality, is also questioned. For example, Butcher and Smith (2015) argue that the power to instigate change resides at the level of the State, rather than the global sphere. As a result, the notion that global citizenship can lead to a more progressive political-economic system is utopian and divorced from the realities of existing power structures. The central issue surrounding global citizenship is neatly summarised by Andreotti (2014:1) who notes it is:

> "whether and how to address the economic and cultural roots of the inequalities in power and wealth/labour distribution in a global complex and uncertain system"

To address such limitations advocates argue for greater human solidarity through a "radical form of global citizenship" (Shultz, 2007: 249) or what Parekh (2003:12) terms a "globally oriented citizen". This understanding of global citizenship is one that encourages critical engagement and reflection on one's own biases, assumptions and position in the global political economy. Moreover, it actively works to challenge global poverty and inequality by engaging with the political system at all spatial scales.

Instigating a form of global citizenship has become an important component of educational curriculums (Ibrahim, 2005) study abroad programmes (Tarrant, 2010) and increasingly volunteer tourism (Lyons *et al*, 2012). The nature of volunteer tourism, with volunteers predominantly from the Global North living and working in communities of the Global South, has resulted in such practices being associated with closing the spatial distance between people, and being a conduit for the emergence of global citizenship (Wearing, 2001; Lepp, 2008). Chapter Seven of this thesis provides a detailed examination, through empirical evidence, of the potential of volunteer tourism to instigate a form of global citizenship in the volunteer tourist. The next section begins by situating volunteer tourism within an historical analysis of tourism's relationship to cultural understanding between peoples. It then progresses to argue that global citizenship formed through volunteer tourism has taken a particular neo-liberal form.

2.2.1 Encountering the Host

The historical interpretation of travel reveals a close association with instigating greater cultural understanding whilst developing oneself. The origins of this can be traced to the 'grand tours' of the 17th and 18th centuries, the purpose being to gain educational and cultural enlightenment in an increasingly interconnected world (Vrasti, 2013; Frenzel, 2016), a practice soon copied by the emerging middle classes (von Buch, 2007). The extent that tourism leads to a greater understanding between people, and ultimately a more peaceful and equitable world, has been subject to much conjecture in the tourism literature. The theoretical basis for such an assertion has its origins in Gordon Allport's (1954) 'contact theory', which surmised that prejudice and conflict could potentially be reduced through different groups having direct contact with each other. As Higgins-Desbiolles (2003: 35) notes:

> "tourism can contribute to knowledge of other places, empathy with other peoples and tolerance that stems from seeing the place of one's own society in the world".

The temporal mobility of people facilitating contact between tourist and guest has therefore been of particular interest to tourism scholars. Important contributions to this debate have been provided by MacCannell and Boorstin, who concerned themselves with tourists motivation for travel and how tourism's apparatus catered for this demand. MaCannell (1973: 592) utilised Goffman's (1959) study of performance and the division of tourist spaces into front and back regions, to argue that tourists seek back regions as they allow access to a deeper, more intimate, connection with a place and its people:

> "Being one of them, or at one with them, means, in part, being permitted to share back regions with them. This is a sharing which allows one to see behind the others' mere performances, to perceive and accept the others for what they really are." (MacCannell, 1973: 592)

MacCannell (1976: 10) therefore views the practice of travel as based on the tourist desiring "a more profound appreciation of society and culture", which he argues can lead to a more progressive type of politics. He is, however, critical of the ability for tourists to achieve this, noting that in the search for profitability and the desire of local people to protect themselves from intrusive tourists, tourist settings are constructed to mimic the back stage, as a form of staged authenticity. This staged authenticity provides a tourist setting, a cultural product for consumption by the tourist gaze, and hides the true backstage, where meaningful or authentic cultural content resides. This desire of tourists for a deeper knowledge is rejected by Boorstin (1961), who proposes that tourists are obsessed with superficial consumption in the form of overly dramatised imitations or 'pseudo-events', reflecting their desire for shallow symbols rather than historic depth. The result is that, rather than pursuing a deeper understanding of places and cultures, tourists are content with inauthentic and staged attractions. In this way, the tourist experience reflects what Debord (1987) terms the '*society of the spectacle*' in which capitalist instruments have rendered

Western society preoccupied with the consumption of signs, images and representations, detached from any deeper meaning (Debord, 2004). The creation of such a spectacle in relation to volunteer tourism is the subject of analysis in Chapter Five of this thesis. MacCannell and Boorstin diverge on the motivation of tourists, but similarly position understanding as emerging only through real – or what they term an 'authentic' – experience.

The authenticity of the tourism setting has been of considerable interest in scholarly discourse (Wang, 1999; Hall, 2007; Brown, 2013). The notion that there is an objective community reality, which can be uncovered, fails to incorporate the multiple realities of host members. As a result, this thesis avoids utilising authenticity as a form of analysis, judging it instead to be a term that is constructed via Western discourse and hence of limited practical value. Taylor (2001: 9) provides an alternative by considering the host-guest encounter in terms of sincerity:

> "In 'sincere' cultural experiences, where tourists and 'actors' are encouraged to 'meet half way', authenticity may be more positively redefined in terms of local values. Rather than seeing value as the emanation of an 'authentic object', the moment of interaction may become the site in which value is generated"

This notion of sincerity is useful as it involves the host and guest being able to share the fluid and dynamic nature of their culture openly, rather than focusing on an exchange based on a romanticised past. It is this notion of sincerity that underpins the analysis of the volunteer host interaction in this thesis.

The contrived nature of typical tourist settings which is of such concern to MacCannell and Boorstin is well-documented in the tourism literature, and has become something of an orthodoxy. The result is a plethora of terms such as 'tourist enclave' or 'environmental bubble', that reflect how the tourism industry shields tourists from potential offensive or challenging situations (Edensor, 2001; Urry and Larsen, 2011), creating a home from home. As Urry and Larsen (2011: 127) note, this involves the creation of an "environment without the dangers and messy sensuous geographies lurking outside". Moreover, such enclaves reinforce "longstanding (neo)

colonial patterns of socioeconomic and spatial polarization" (Brohman 1996: 57), positioning the tourists in desirable areas occupied by the elite, whilst relying on labour provided from improvised areas. Bunton (2010: 290) provides an example of a contrived tourist setting representing indigenous culture, the salient features of which are:

> "its simplicity. It is inhabited by people who appear to be realistic members of the culture on display, according to tourists' expectations. These people wear somewhat traditional clothes, perform activities associated with their heritage, and share simplified information about their culture to visitors...[It is]...one of culture sanitized and neatly packaged so as neither to offend nor to overload the visitor with cultural information"

Traditional tourism products, with their presentation of a simplistic homogenous culture and contact between host and guest facilitated through market relations, are clearly a barrier for cultural understanding to emerge. The positioning of volunteer tourism, however, is one that moves beyond "pseudo-events" (Boorstin,1964: 77) or "staged attractions" (MacCannell, 1973), to one in which the volunteer and host can interact free from the capitalist system and market relations. It therefore channels the spirit of 'youthful rebellion' (Simpson, 2004), 'drifters' (Cohen, 1973), or 'neo-nomads' (MacCannell, 1992) in shunning traditional tourist practices in favour of an alternative experience. This counter-cultural type of travel, Cohen (1987: 14) argues is one that:

> "rejects his home society and culture and seeks in the strangeness of the world of others, at the very least experience of real, authentic life. At the most, he is in quest of an "elective centre" which will· become a new spiritual home to him, an alternative to that modern world which he has rejected"

The volunteer tourism literature has identified volunteer tourists as having similar desires in searching for the reality of a place (McIntosh and Zahra, 2008; Brown, 2005), and transforming themselves through this (Barbieri *et al.*, 2009; Lepp, 2008). The appeal of volunteer tourism, therefore, is in its positioning as providing a genuine

encounter between volunteer and host (McGehee, 2002; Zahra and McGehee, 2013). The volunteer tourism industry sells an alternative or bohemian lifestyle to the middle classes, indicating how neo-liberalism transforms non-market based activities into a commodity. Volunteer tourism, however, is often interpreted as an activity that is frequently positioned as operating beyond the market, based on notions of reciprocity and trust (Wearing, 2001). Sin (2009: 483) provides an atypical account of volunteer tourism within scholarly works, describing how:

> "In many instances, volunteer tourism destinations are the homes of locals, including those where volunteer tourists simply live with locals in homestay programmes. In these heterogeneous spaces, tourism becomes less of a standard routine where tourists are able to gaze from a distance. Instead, volunteer tourists need to continually perform their identities around interruptions and distractions – activities of locals that were often artificially excluded in conventional 'tourism bubbles'".

In this case, volunteer tourism is positioned as dissolving the barriers that traditionally exist between host and tourist (McDonald and Wilson, 2013), allowing for "unofficial situations" (Crabtree, 2008: 30) or "micro-scenarios" (Palacious, 2010: 872) in which volunteer and host can interact. Similarly, Conran (2011: 1459) refers to MacCannell's notion of stages to locate volunteer tourism as being "conducive to creating opportunities for back stage experiences". These descriptions situate volunteer tourism as providing access to what Bhabha (1994) refers to as 'third spaces'. These are hypothetical spaces, in which the dominant hegemony can be unsettled, through the reimagination of constructions of identity and identifications.

The positioning of volunteer tourism as breaking down barriers associated with traditional tourism activities received support in a broad body of early scholarly research (Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Lepp, 2008). Such work argues that volunteer tourism allows the participant to learn about other cultures and 'broaden their mind' through engaging in the life and work of those in the Global South (Lepp, 2008). The result is that it provides an opportunity for the volunteer to reflect and deconstruct their personal pre-conceptions of the Global South and the global political system. Ideally this reflection involves going beyond simply interpreting one's position in the

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global system as a "global lottery" (Simpson 2004: 689), to a situation where a tourist recognises their own complicity in global poverty and inequality. For example, Jones (2005) notes how volunteer tourism can break down prejudices, and challenge simplistic and uninformed perceptions about countries and communities in the Global South. As a result, it can instigate feelings of 'global citizenship' involving a deeper understanding of poverty and inequality, and a desire to engage with this in a progressive manner. Consequently, with the majority of participants being young or in a transitional period of their life, volunteer tourism has the potential to be an important conduit for a more peaceful world (Brown, 2005).

There is evidence of a more critical discourse in scholarly work that questions the cultural exchange that occurs between volunteer and host. For example, Simpson (2004: 688) analysed a group of volunteer tourists in Peru and noted the "lack of critical engagement" which resulted in "students [volunteers] being "able to confirm rather than challenge, that which they already know". This more critical work argues that mere contact between volunteer and host is unlikely to result in an encounter which challenges the volunteer to reflect on their position in the world, and the reasons for poverty and inequality. As Simpson (2004: 688) summarises from her study in Kenya:

> "Rather than finding commonality between the developed and developing worlds, students [volunteers] are emphasizing difference and establishing a dichotomy of 'them and us'. Poverty is allowed to become a definer of difference, rather than an experience shared by people marginalized by resource distribution. Poverty becomes an issue for 'out there', which can be passively gazed upon, rather than actively interacted with"

Work by Simpson (2004), followed subsequently by scholars such as Crossley (2012), highlights the need for greater critical engagement within volunteer tourism if a change in the volunteers' consciousness is to occur. The characteristics of this change in consciousness relate to a more empathetic state, with Pedwell (2012: 166), for example, noting the importance of such empathy:

"Through establishing empathetic identification with those who are differently positioned to themselves, the possibility exists that (privileged) subjects will experience a radical transformation in consciousness, which leads them not only to respond to the experience of 'the other' with greater understanding and compassion, but also to recognise their own complicity within transnational hierarchies of power".

The ability of volunteer tourism to instigate such a change of consciousness within the volunteer is now an important area of investigation. Consequently, the volunteer tourism literature has shifted from focusing on this activity as a form of charity, to one that examines its ability to create 'global citizens'. For example, Palacious (2010) notes how volunteers express an increased post-trip interest in activism, whilst McGehee and Santos (2013) argue that there is a correlation between volunteer tourism and social movement participation. There has also been increasing interest in the skills traditionally associated with International Service Learning, such as the need for volunteers to engage in experiential learning. This involves techniques that encourage critical thinking about global interdependence and social and environmental injustice, whilst developing skills and dispositions for positive interventions (Diprose, 2012). Examples suggested by Simpson (2004) include facilitators leading discussions with volunteers, encouraging them to reflect on their position within society both during and after trips. Furthermore, Raymond and Hall (2008) propose that volunteers should keep a field diary to encourage self-reflection. It is notable, within the analyses of global citizenship, that the focus is on the facilitator or the volunteer to create an environment in which cultural exchange can occur.

By contrast scholarly work has not focused on the role of the host, either in terms of changes in their consciousness or in their influence on how volunteers interpret and reflect on the encounter. Instead, the host community are presented as passive recipients of volunteer tourism, rather than active agents in shaping the experience. Wearing and McGehee (2013) suggest that the lack of focus on host communities reflects volunteer tourists being more accessible to the researcher, and the availability of funding for understanding a consumer of a product. However, the absence of the voice of the 'other' is indicative of Western constructions of the Global South, as

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Said (1978) noted in his critique of colonial productions of the Orient. Chapters Five and Six of this thesis therefore focus on the voice of the 'other' to unpack their role in the volunteer experience. This section has highlighted that while volunteer tourism is closely associated with instigating a progressive form of global citizenship, the evidence suggests that volunteer tourism is framed by a particular neo-liberal subjectivity. The next section will explore this further by linking the popularity of volunteer tourism to the growing interest in ethical consumerism.

2.2.2 A Form of Ethical Consumerism

The popularisation of volunteer tourism abides by the wider, growing interest in ethical consumerism. This is because concern over the perceived negative outcomes of mass tourism on recipient destinations has resulted in volunteer tourism positioning itself as a sustainable alternative. As Wearing (2001: 12) describes, volunteer tourism:

> "can be viewed as a development strategy leading to sustainable development and centring the convergence of natural resource qualities, locals and the visitor that all benefit from tourism activity."

Volunteer tourism is therefore indicative of how individual life choices and consumption practices have become imbued with the power to help distant others and/or the global environment. The blurring of the public and private spheres illustrates how individual action has taken on political dimensions. This moralisation of consumption (Clarke *et al.*, 2007) or life politics (Giddens, 1991) reflects how citizens in the Global North aim to address their societal concerns through market mechanisms, rather than challenge their structural causes. The result is that issues such as poverty and inequality are moral or ethical concerns, rather than reflections of political decisions and outcomes. Facilitating this shift has been the provision of knowledge to the consumer (Goodman, 2010), segmented products, and a general loss of belief in grand political ideologies (Butcher and Smith, 2015). Volunteer tourism is therefore the rational extension of 'caring capitalism', with the consumer directly participating in development initiatives.

These debates need to be placed in the wider context and analysis of the importance of ethical consumerism as a form of global citizenship more generally in the literature. Guthman (2007) credits this phenomenon with mitigating some of the most negative aspects of neo-liberalism, relating to unfettered capitalist intensification and exploitation. Moreover Clarke *et al.* (2007) argue that although ethical consumerism may not result in transformational change, its advocates do not view it as such; rather, they deem it simply to be one mechanism within a wider repertoire of tools that citizens can utilise to challenge global power and influence. Goodman and Goodman (2001) provide a more critical account, highlighting how ethical consumerism brings places and activities previously outside the market into the global capitalist system. It reinforces unequal power within the global system of the benevolent Northern consumer and a recipient Southern producer. Finally, it shifts responsibility for structural poverty and inequality from the state and global institutions to that of the 'heroic individual'. The perverse nature of 'caring capitalism' is summarised neatly by Ahmed (2014: 22), who notes:

> "The West gives to others only insofar as it is forgotten what the West has already taken in its very capacity to give in the first place, feelings of pain and suffering which are in part effects of socio economic relations of violence and poverty, are assumed to be alleviated by the very generosity that is enabled by such socio-economic relations. So the West takes, then gives, and in the movement of giving repeats as well as conceals the taking".

The focus of volunteer tourism on mitigating the outcomes of the global political system, rather than challenging its structural causes, indicates its conduciveness to the neo-liberal agenda.

The popularity of ethical consumerism and volunteer tourism also reflects the late stage of capitalism, where products and their consumption symbolise a desired identity. The neo-liberal subject is therefore one that utilises their freedom and autonomy via consumption to enhance a performance of self (Durning, 1992) and as a means of distinction (Barnett *et al.*, 2005). Ethical products are utilised by the consumer to demonstrate that they are virtuous in their caring for distant others, and recognise their own privileged position within the global economic system. In this

sense, it could be argued that volunteer tourism represents the latest example of travel being used as a means for the middle class to distinguish itself within society.

Travel, as noted above, has been an important means by which individuals can demonstrate their cultural refinement since the grand tours of the 17th and 18th Century. The emergence of mass tourism and Thomas Cook's desire for the 'democratisation of travel', however, challenged the notion that travel was the preserve of the elite, and thereby a means of cultural distinction. Butcher and Smith (2015: 23), for example, note how:

> "Thomas Cooks's critics castigated him for enabling the uncultured masses to partake in leisure travel".

The result is that tourism continues to be associated with negative connotations (MacCannell, 1992), which Week (2012: 186) describes as "a metaphor for shallowness, contamination, and inauthenticity". Indeed, the desire to maintain the allure of travel and 'not being a tourist' has resulted in alternative travel gaining wide appeal. For example, Munt (1994: 119) notes the middle classes denigrate mass tourism for its "crassness", subsequently desiring a means to distinguish themselves from the "golden hordes." Such perceptions of mass tourism are neatly summarised by Vrasti (2013: 6):

> "Package tourists have long been ridiculed as self-absorbed, hedonistic masses, with no understanding of local culture, no consideration for natural surroundings and no individuality beyond that which is sold to them through advertising and mass consumption."

Volunteer tourism, however, provides a means of distinction from those unable or unwilling to engage in this type of tourism. It therefore indicates one's ability and knowledge of travelling in the correct manner, or demonstrates "good taste" (Bourdieu, 1984: 190). This is because the cost of participating is higher than with traditional tourism products (Wearing, 2001), and it is increasingly associated with the elite in society. For example, Simpson (2005: 459) notes how members of the

British royal family have participated in volunteer tourism, symbolising how this activity is now considered valuable for a "future King"[3]. Similarly, Mostafanezhad (2013b), in her paper *Getting in Touch with your Inner Angelina*, identifies how volunteers re-create the actions of celebrities to create their desired self. Illustrating how volunteer tourism has profited from the growth of what Goodman (2010) terms the 'celebritization of development', she argues that citizens are able to see themselves as able to take the place of celebrities, imbuing themselves with their qualities.

The importance of the volunteer tourist identifying themselves as a volunteer rather than a tourist has been widely discussed within the literature (e.g. Sin, 2009; Palacious, 2010) and reflects a close association between volunteerism and altruism, rather than tourism connecting up with hedonism and shallowness. The importance of this symbolic identify has been further highlighted by Schwartz's (2016) study of the self-narratives of British volunteer tourists in Kenya. She noted that volunteers recognise the increasingly high profile given to negative stereotypes of volunteer tourism in popular media outlets, and as a response narrate their experience in particular ways in order to emphasise how they were volunteering in the 'correct' or 'authentic' manner. The popularisation of volunteer tourism has thus resulted in volunteers self-differentiating themselves within the market, to maintain their expected cultural capital derived from participating. In this way we can understand volunteer tourism as a 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1986) that is imbued with notions of elitism and prestige, which only certain classes of society can purchase to construct their ideal self.

2.2.3 A Response to the Individualisation of Risk

Tourism, as a practice, has tended to be situated in relation to its binary opposite: regulated and organised work (Urry, 1990). Although appealing for its simplicity, this characterisation fails to acknowledge the increasingly blurred distinction between work and leisure in contemporary society (Duncan *et al.*, 2013). Volunteer

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[3] Simpson (2004) notes how Raleigh International estimates they received a 200% increase in applicants for their Chile Programme after Prince William's gap year.

tourism is illustrative of this process, with volunteers not only engaging in work but also evaluating their experience in relation to their future economic prospects. Important for understanding the value of volunteer tourism is Bourdieu's (1984) conceptualisation of the interconnections between cultural and economic capital, because it explains how it is possible to convert cultural to economic capital at a later stage. This is because volunteer tourism is associated with developing the skills and attributes valued by employers in the global market (Jones, 2011). For example, Broad (2003) highlights how participating in volunteer tourism demonstrates and develops practical skills suitable for the workplace, such as being open to new cultures, the ability to work in a team or in different cultural and linguistic contexts. Moreover, beyond practical skills, the importance of the 'self' in the neo-liberal order has resulted in emotional competencies being of considerable value within the market place. Pedwell, (2012) notes that empathy is desirable as it demonstrates the emotional competency required of being a self-managing self-enterprising individual. As Sin *et al.* (2015: 122) similarly note, volunteer tourism is a means in which "subjects constitute themselves simultaneously as competitive, entrepreneurial, market-based, individualized actors and caring, responsible, active, global citizens".

There is also evidence to support the choice of engaging in volunteer tourism to build one's human capital. For example, Ramrayka (2001) highlights research that three-quarters of employers prefer applicants with voluntary work, and over half thought this experience was actually more valuable than that gained in paid employment. As a result, rather than constituting an 'act of youthful rebellion' and providing an opportunity to deconstruct frames of reference, volunteer tourism reflects a response to the 'individualisation of risk' (Beck, 1992). That is, it is used as an innovative technique by the entrepreneurial neo-liberal citizen to make themselves more attractive on the global market. Simpson (2005) summarises this in relation to the gap year, calling it the 'professionalisation' of an activity that previously operated beyond the sphere of the market. Taking this position forward, Smith and Laurie (2010) argue that the Global South has become the 'playground' for the northern volunteer to develop skills and experiences that can be performed in the Global North. Munt (1994) noted, at the onset of alternative tourism, that travel is a form of informal qualification that can be utilised at a later stage in their life. Volunteer tourism

therefore is the latest example of travel being utilised to gain a means of distinction, and a rational choice for the neo-liberal subject within contemporary society.

The influence of neo-liberal subjectivity can be seen beyond initial motivations of volunteers, extending to the actual practice of volunteering. Cousins *et al.* (2009) highlight how volunteers working on a wildlife project would assess how fulfilled they felt with the project, against the time and monetary cost of participating. This example indicates how the discourses surrounding volunteer tourism have resulted in 'making a difference', and the emotions imbued within this, being converted into a commodity to be purchased. As a result, volunteers assess their attainment of these feelings against the cost of their participation. This demonstrates how the neo-liberal rationality of making cost-benefit assessments is applied by the volunteer, even though this activity is not explicitly associated with the market. Similarly, in the slightly different context of a university volunteer scheme, Palacious (2010) noted that a strict selection process resulted in volunteers competing for places on the project. Moreover, once selected, volunteers on occasions competed with each other to demonstrate their ability to care and contribute. These examples exemplify how notions of 'caring' or 'giving back', traditionally considered outside the sphere of the market, are now being valued in the economic terms of 'return on investment', in which volunteers compete to maximise. The result is that rather than encouraging a progressive form of global citizenship which challenges existing inequalities, volunteer tourism develops citizens who are comfortable at working in the global market.

2.3   The Shifting Pattern of Development and Volunteer Tourism Literature

Figure 1, below, summarises how the shifting practices of development and volunteer tourism sit within the academic literature:
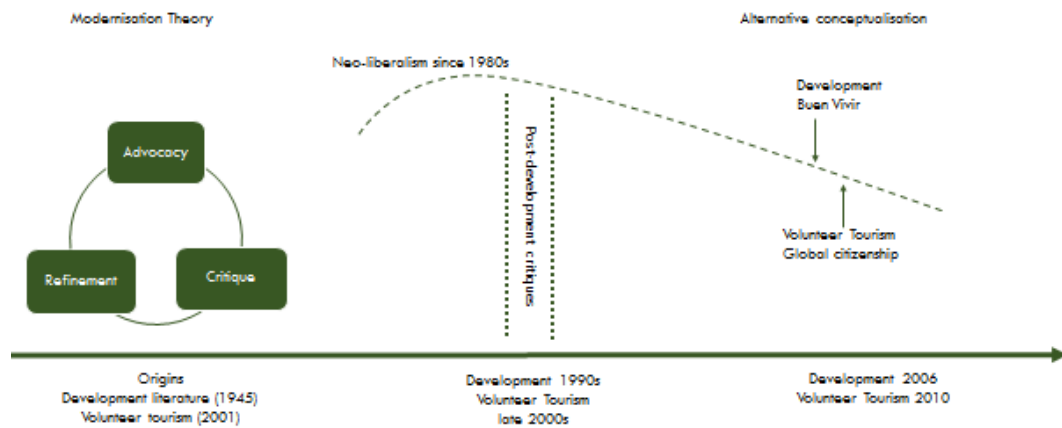
Figure 1. The shifting pattern of the development and volunteer tourism literature. (Source: Author's own compilation)

Figure 1 is not intended to imply that there has been a simple linear progression of the literature in this manner, but rather is used to signify the generally shifting trends, and the adopted position of this thesis. It indicates how modernisation theory continues to re-emerge in different guises, be this in development or volunteer tourism. As Kapoor notes (2005: 1211):

> "just as product differentiation is a corporate strategy to ensure the reproduction of consumerism and capital, so each new trend safeguards development's renewal and marketability".

The result is each new incarnation slightly differentiates itself from the last, before becoming the subject of critique, with the process repeating itself (Kapoor, 2005; Acosta, 2012). Figure 1. Illustrates this pattern with both development and volunteer tourism shifting through the circular stages of 'Advocacy', 'Critique' and 'Refinement'. This circular process indicates the enduring appeal of modernisation theory and the desire to intervene in the Global South through improved scientific knowledge or technocratic solutions (De Vries, 2007). Figure 1 also illustrates how the emergence of post-development critiques have allowed both development and volunteer tourism to be re-conceptualised as part of more progressive notions of *Buen Vivir* and global citizenship. However, it also shows that volunteer tourism is embedded within the neoliberal system, in terms of volunteers' practices and their facilitation by the global tourism industry. Conversely, *Buen Vivir* is positioned as a

radical alternative to the neo-liberal agenda, with its focus on harmonious living rather than economic growth. The extent to which there is space to overcome this divide, and for volunteer tourism to become an actual conduit for *Buen Vivir*, is explored in the empirical chapters of this thesis.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored existing literature regarding volunteer tourism and development, identifying numerous similarities in their shifting foci. The chapter has evidenced how volunteer tourism maps onto existing imageries of the under-developed Global South that is both 'needy' but 'spiritually purer' than the Global North. This position has led to a polarised debate between scholars advocating material improvement in communities in the Global South, and those who call for the protection of their fragile cultures. This thesis breaks out of this dichotomy by focusing on *Buen Vivir* – a system originating from within the Global South. It positions *Buen Vivir* not as a concept bounded in space and time, but as one offering a radically progressive alternative to Western notions of development. Furthermore, the chapter has highlighted how volunteer tourism is positioned as something that brings the volunteer and host together in a space outside of traditional tourism enterprises. The result is its association with instigating a sense of global citizenship within the volunteer tourist, leading them to a progressive understanding of the global system and the poverty and inequality it perpetuates. This chapter has argued, however, that this has taken on a particular neo-liberal form, which focuses on enabling the volunteer to participate – and be successful – within the neo-liberal capitalist system, rather than challenging it. The subsequent empirical chapters explore these positions, unpacking how they specifically occur in the context of volunteer tourism projects in Ecuador. The next chapter outlines the methodological approach taken and the methods employed to gather data for the empirical chapters of this thesis.

3 Methodology: Gathering Information and Turning it into Data

> *"Today I asked an elderly man for an interview and he nodded in apparent approval. He walked off through fields over hedges and under barbed wire, and we followed diligently. Once we got to the field he started digging. I spoke to him again and he ignored us and carried on digging. Trying to find our way back, I reflected on this apparent failure; how collecting empirical data may not be as easy as I first anticipated."* [Reflexive Field Diary Extract 18th May 2015]

3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the methodological approach that frames this research project. It begins by outlining the philosophical and theoretical positions that underpin the thesis, before introducing the communities studied and justifying their selection in relation to the volunteer tourism literature. The methods employed during the field-work are then discussed and justified, with details provided of the stakeholders encountered within the indigenous communities. The final section outlines the coding process through which the data obtained was analysed for the empirical chapters of this thesis. The shifting nature of this thesis, towards *Buen Vivir,* and how this influenced the subsequent analysis, is also outlined in this chapter.

3.2 Epistemological and Ontological Stance

How one understands the nature of reality and what constitutes knowledge is integral to interpreting and assessing any research project (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). As a result, ontological and epistemological clarity is essential for transparent and consistent research (Thomas, 2006). In this thesis, I work to avoid the positivist position that there exists an external reality, governed by universal laws and truths, which a researcher can stand outside of and make objective measurements and predictions of. Instead, I adopt the social constructivist position that social reality is

experienced and constructed by individuals. I therefore accept the existence of multiple such realities and acknowledge that all knowledge is situated and created rather than discovered by the scientific mind (Moon and Blackman, 2014). My understanding aligns with the description by Charmaz (2000: 510) whereby:

> "Constructivism assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects' meanings."

In line with this position, I contend that understandings of volunteer tourism are contextual and subjective at a particular place and time. I therefore make no claims to universal truth, acknowledging that my research account can only be considered partial and situated. Moreover, I recognise there is "a tendency for studies [by tourism researchers] to follow a template, repeating and reinforcing a specific approach" (Franklin and Crang, 2001: 6). As a result, rather than confine the thesis to exploring a particular theory in relation to volunteer tourism; such as has occurred with 'education theory' (Coghlan and Gooch, 2011); 'development theory' (Simpson, 2004), 'decommodification and feminist theory' (Wearing, 2001) or hypothesis testing regarding the role of community capital (Zahra and McGehee, 2013) or social change (McGehee and Santos, 2005). This thesis provides the space for participants to frame their understanding of volunteer tourism in their own terms, rather than being constrained within pre-defined research agendas originating from the Global North. As a result, it aims to step outside existing templates and understandings of volunteer tourism, to provide new insights of this tourism practice.

This is a qualitative ethnographic study from a social constructivist perspective. This approach allowed the thesis to go in new directions in light of new evidence, and provided the space to explore emergent areas of interest from multiple dimensions. For example, this approach provided the flexibility to incorporate an additional community into the study, thereby shifting the analysis from a single to a multi-site analysis. In addition, I continually made additions to the interview schedule in light of emergent issues of interest, and also increased the study's spatial scope from a purely community-level analysis, to one analysing tourism at the national level. I engaged with the volunteer tourism literature prior to commencing fieldwork.

However, it was only through noting trends in information gathered from fieldwork that that I engaged more comprehensively with the development literature, which subsequently became a key focus of this thesis.

3.3   Introducing the Study Areas

One of the most important aspects of research is the selection of the study area (Yin, 2009). In January 2015, I conducted an internet search of volunteer tourism projects that describe themselves as being focused on 'community development'. This reflected a desire to explore how host members and volunteers interpreted the notion of 'community development', rather than their opinion on a specific volunteer task or project. The focus on community development during the design stage was a result of unwittingly and uncritically abiding by an approach aligned with modernisation theory. Subsequently my research has been influenced by post-development thought and, in particular, an understanding of the concept of *Buen Vivir*. A consequence of this was an iterative shift between the design process and the ultimate analysis undertaken, and any inconsistencies resulting from this are acknowledged in the thesis. In seeking to identify a suitable community to study, I searched for the terms 'volunteer tourism' and 'community development' on Google. The result was a plethora of different projects around the world, operating with a variety of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and travel operators. The NGO Yanapuma, operating in Ecuador, was ultimately chosen. A description of Yanapuma, taken from a screenshot of its website, is provided in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Description of the Yanapuma Foundation

The appeal of the Yanapuma Foundation for this thesis is reflected in a number of properties highlighted on its website. Its status as a non-profit NGO was an important factor, as I wanted to avoid commercial initiatives operating solely with a profit motive. This was especially important because undesirable outcomes of volunteer tourism have tended to be credited to its commercialisation (McGehee, 2014; Lyons and Wearing, 2008). Espousing an alternative to its commercialisation, Lyons and Wearing (2008: 7) argue that NGOs "demonstrate best practice in alternative tourism, and volunteer tourism specifically". I hoped to understand volunteer tourism beyond its commercialisation by private organisations, and it was important to investigate a project facilitated by a non-profit NGO. Moreover, rather than study an international facilitator, Yanapuma's embeddedness in Ecuador, and its focus on working with local communities through grassroots initiatives, is an approach that tends to be supported uncritically within the literature (Wearing and McGehee, 2013). Finally,

Keese (2011) notes that Ecuador has one of the highest concentrations of volunteer projects in the world, with many of these projects focused on community development. Therefore, it seemed beneficial to conduct the study through the Yanapuma Foundation, as it operated in a country which is one of the most popular in the world for volunteer tourism and met the criteria for the research project.

3.3.1 Selecting the Study Community

An important decision in this research project was deciding whether to study a single or multiple communities during the investigation. In the volunteer tourism literature, there is evidence of empirical investigations relying on single communities (Barbieri *et al.*, 2011; Tomazos and Butler, 2012) and those incorporating multiple communities (Coren and Gray, 2012). Both approaches have particular advantages and disadvantages depending on the nature of the study. The limited time available for doctoral fieldwork, and a desire for an in-depth study, resulted in my initial decision to study one community. Inspecting Yanapuma's website revealed a number of volunteer projects based on the notion of community development. Following a more thorough examination, I selected the Kichwa community of Chilcapamba to be the subject of inquiry. The description of the Chilcapamba project taken from the Yanapuma website can be seen in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3. Yanapuma description of volunteer project in Kichwa community

Figure 3 indicates that this project locates volunteer tourism in the community rather than with a specific organisation. I was interested in how this organisational setup functioned, and how different community members interpreted volunteer tourism in their locale. In addition, I suspected that the array of tasks available to the volunteer tourists under the banner of 'Andean Community Development' would provide a rich environment for gathering empirical evidence. Finally, the description of volunteer tourists as staying with local host families, rather than a volunteer house, suggested that the volunteers are immersed in community life. I surmised that this organisational setup would provide an opportunity for close interaction between volunteer tourists and hosts, and subsequently a potential source of rich empirical

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data. I contacted Yanapuma via email to discuss the nature of the research project, and the organisation agreed that the Chilcapamba project would provide an interesting and viable community to study. I then travelled to Ecuador on the 12th of May 2015, meeting the director of Yanapuma two days later on the 14th of May. On the 15th of May, I travelled via bus to the Chilcapamba community, where I stayed for the proceeding two months.

On the 5th July 2015, I decided to alter the research plan by incorporating an additional study community. This is because recurring patterns were emerging from the empirical investigation, resulting in my belief that no new information was forthcoming, or that a 'saturation point' had been reached (Guest *et al*., 2006). Reaching saturation point at this stage of fieldwork was unexpected but reflected two factors. Firstly, although described as a 'community project', there was a clear divide between the small number of community members who were involved and had contact with volunteer tourists, and the large majority with much more limited, or no, contact. As a result, respondents in these two groups provided similar responses to volunteer tourism in their community, providing little space for new avenues of exploration. Secondly, I quickly identified as significant the project leaders' strong influence and power over volunteer tourism in the community. I was interested in exploring whether this was an anomaly confined to this community, or a trend in how volunteer tourism generally functions within indigenous communities in Ecuador. The flexibility incorporated into the design of this study, allowed an additional community to be purposefully selected at this stage.

To select the additional community, a discussion with the NGO director took place in July 2015, as I recognised that the director was an important gatekeeper with access to unique and privileged information. During this discussion the director suggested that the Tsa'chila community near the city of Santa Domingo could be of interest, as it offered a contrast to the Kichwa community in Chilcapamba. He implied that this contrast was a result of the Tsa'chila not letting their culture decline to the extent that had occurred in the Kichwa community. The suggestion of the director appears to be based on a predisposition in Western society to position indigenous people along a discursive hierarchy, based on their level of 'Indian-ness' or cultural authenticity. In

correspondence with my supervisor, I appeared to fall into this Western discourse too, stating in an email:

> "Following recommendations of the NGO director, I have decided to include a Tsa'chila community in my study. This community is supposed to be more traditional, in that they paint their hair and live more basically, and so should be an interesting addition to the research." [10th July 2015]

The correspondence indicates that, at this stage, my selection of an additional community was based upon an uncritical assumption relating to the level of 'indigeneity' of the community. Fossey *et al*., (2002) argue that it is important for a researcher to recognise and indicate how their own assumptions have developed during the research process, so the reader can assess the researchers' transparency. My view has subsequently shifted, to recognise that indigeneity is neither static nor able to be judged in relation to the prevalence of particular signs of indigeneity that fit within Western imaginaries. The additional community nevertheless proved very beneficial to the study. This is because it provides further evidence of the processes and negotiations, which occur when an indigenous community becomes a site for volunteer tourism, beyond one isolated example. The description of the Tsa'chila project provided on the Yanapuma website can be seen in Figure 4, below:

Figure 4. Yanapuma description of volunteer project in Tsa'chila community

Figure 4 indicates that the project in the Tsa'chila community has similarities with that in the Kichwa community. The volunteer tourists can be involved in a range of development projects, whilst also having the opportunity, if desired, to stay in the homes of indigenous members. There is greater emphasis placed on indigenous culture in this project, with Tsa'chila traditions and heritage given prominence in the project. Figure 4 illustrates this with its description of Tsa'chila culture as under threat, with its "rich traditions being lost". This concern abides by colonial discourses of the 'vanishing savage' (Rosaldo, 1989), which has the aim of enticing volunteer tourists before this 'pristine' culture is lost, and furthermore discursively positions

the Western volunteer tourist as having the ability to help protect this 'fragile' culture through their travel choices.

I spent two months in the Tsa'chila community, leaving Ecuador in September 2015. In total I spent four-and-a-half months in Ecuador conducting research in two indigenous communities, as well as interviewing the director of Yanapuma. I highlighted in Chapter Two how there is no agreed upon definition of a 'community'. In this thesis, I considered a community in-line with how it is interpreted in both projects – a spatial area consisting of indigenous members. As a result, indigenous people of Kichwa or Tsa'chila origin outside this spatial area are not included. The location of the selected communities are indicated on the map of Ecuador below:

Figure 5. Map of Ecuador with study communities highlighted

A summary of the two communities is available in Table 2 on the following page. The information presented is collated from the Yanapuma website, as well as being obtained from interviews with the director of Yanapuma and indigenous community members.

Table 2. Summary of study communities

	Kichwa	Tsa'chila
Geographical Location	3 hours North of Quito in the high Andes.	4 hours West of Quito at the base of the Andes.
Main Occupations	Small-scale farming, selling crafts to tourists.	Small-scale farming.
Demographic and Geographical Constitution	Mix of indigenous and Meztisos (Ecuadorians of European descent). It has a steep hill running through it dividing the community via economic status: Mestizos[4] living at the lower part, middle-class Kichwa members in the middle regions, with the poorest members nearing the summit.	Mix of Meztisos and Tsa'chila members. Covers a large geographical area, with members tending to use motorised transport for travel around the community.
Year Started to Receive Volunteers	2007	2007
Volunteer Tasks	Primary: water project Secondary: teaching English, farm work	Primary: upkeep of cultural centre Secondary: reforestation, teaching English
Accommodation Provided	Specially built volunteer houses. Occasionally houses of project members.	Cabañas in cultural centre. Option of staying in houses of project members.
Organisational Set-Up	Project leader, with help from close family members.	Originally 25 families, now 11 families involved in project.
Focus of Project	Community development	Community development and preservation of culture
Distribution of Income	Received by project leader, distributed at his discretion.	Split evenly between all project members.

The summary provided by Table 2 identifies a number of differences between the volunteer projects. One important difference is that in the Kichwa community, one family has considerable control over the project, whilst in the Tsa'chila community,

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[4] Mestizo emerged as a racial category referring to an individual of combined indigenous and European descent. However, it is now widely considered a social, class based category applied to individuals who speak Spanish, literate and engage in urban and market-based society (Radcliffe, 1999).

control is shared between eleven families. The leader of the Tsa'chila project encouraged community participation in the hope this would help preserve Tsa'chila culture. However, since its inception fourteen families have decided to leave the project. Conversely, the Kichwa project has placed less emphasis on community participation. Families who have left this project tended to have done so not of their own volition. The factors determining indigenous members' involvement and influence in the projects is analysed in Chapters Five and Six. A summary of the organisational set-up of the projects is provided in Figures 6 and 7, whilst the position of community members cited in this thesis can be seen in Table 3 and 4.
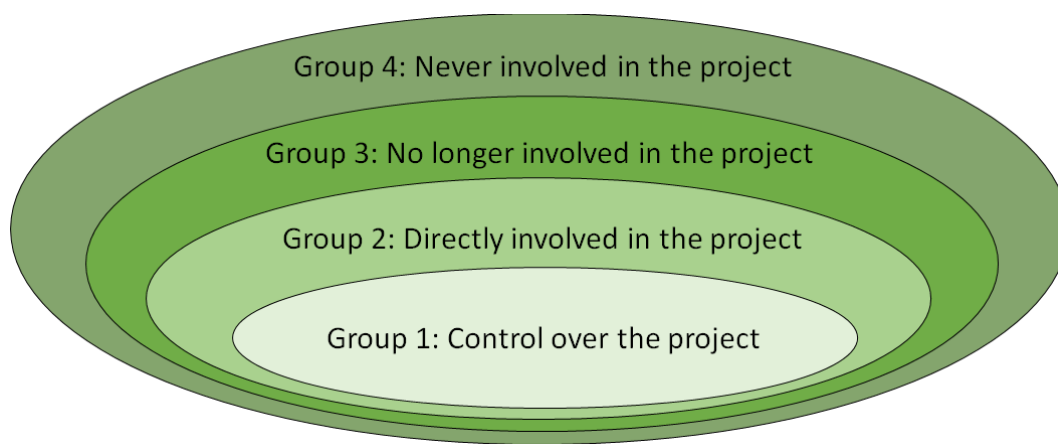
Figure 6. Organisational set-up of Kichwa volunteer project. (Source: Author's own compilation)

Figure 6 identifies four different groups of indigenous members' in the Kichwa community, relating to their involvement in the volunteer project. Those in group 1 having control over project, group 2 being involved but having little power in how it functions, group 3 no longer being involved, and group 4 who have never been involved in the project. The voices of community members from each of these groups is included in this thesis, identified with pseudonyms listed in table 3 below:

Table 3. Kichwa respondents position in volunteer tourism project

Position in Project	Pseudonym of Respondents
Group One	Samuel, Carolina
Group Two	Mariela, Stephanie, Veronica, Alexis,
Group Three	Leonardo, Carmen
Group Four	Marlene, Mary, Nicolas, Pedro, Gabriela

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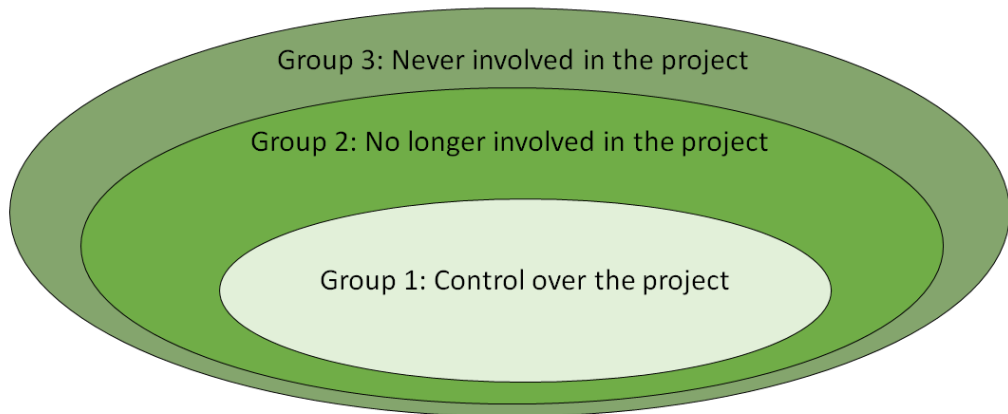
Figure 7. Organisational set-up of Tsa'chila volunteer project (Source: Author's own compilation)

Figure 7 identifies three different groups of indigenous members' in the Tsa'chila community, relating to their involvement in the volunteer project. Those in group 1 having control over project, group 2 no longer being involved, and group 3 who have never been involved in the project. The voices of community members from each of these groups is includes in this thesis, identified with pseudonyms listed in table 4 below:

Table 4. Tsa'chila respondents position in volunteer tourism project

Group One	Daniel, Diego, Jesus, Matias, Ricardo, Roberto, Rafael, Valeria, Samantha, Lionel
Group Two	David, Alejandro, Lucas, Tomas
Group Three	Adrian, Juliana, Mathew, Sebastian, Tadeo

3.4 Adopting an ethnographic approach

Ethnography is a method which involves spending considerable time in study communities, engaging in close personal contact with the 'other' with the aim of understanding their lived reality. It came to prominence in anthropology, and has subsequently been adopted by other social science disciplines. There is no consensus within the academy of what an ethnographic study consists of, although this thesis adopts the following understanding, described by Brewer (2000: 6):

"Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or fields by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner without meaning being imposed on them externally."

To answer RQ 2, 3, 4 of this thesis I adopted an ethnographic approach by living amongst participants to explore their lived reality in relation to volunteer tourism. An ethnographic approach traditionally involves the researcher taking on the role of a detached observer, making objective assessments of the 'other' through depersonalised accounts. This approach, however, has been widely critiqued, particularly by post-colonial scholars, for failing to consider the multiplicity of local voices and positioning the researcher as a neutral observer of reality. As Rosaldo (1981: 49) notes, such research propagates an imperial gaze of the 'other', as "the eye of ethnography is connected with the I of imperialism". Said's (1978) analysis of Western cultural representations of the Orient is illustrative of how 'objective' Western scholarship is embedded within differentials in power, constructing the other in relation to Western superiority. A reconfiguration of ethnography began in the 1980s with the growing recognition that "researchers created reality through their representational, textual, and interpretive practices" (Lincoln and Denzin 2003: 3). As a response, the personal voice of the researcher gained increased prominence, with greater emphasis placed on self-reflexivity to contextualise the socially constructed accounts provided by the researcher. As Rosaldo (1989: 37) notes:

"The once dominant ideal of a detached observer using neutral language to explain 'raw' data has been displaced by an alternative project that attempts to understand human conduct as it unfolds through time and in relation to its meanings and actors"

It is this understanding, of ethnography as a self-reflexive practice co-constructing knowledge in the field, which I adopt in this thesis. Ethnographic research has been subject to criticism epistemologically by positivist scholars, for its perceived lack of rigour. In line with the epistemology of this thesis I aim to ensure rigour, not through terms such as reliability and validity, but credibility and accuracy of representation

(Krefting, 1991), which are achieved by being as transparent as possible at all stages of the thesis. In order to gain a rigorous understanding of the subject of enquiry, Crang and Cook (2007) suggest that the ethnographer may have to utilise multiple methods. In line with this, a number of different methods were utilised, outlined within this chapter and summarised in Table 5 below:

Table 5. Summary of research methods used

	Semi-Structured Interview	Focus Group	Participant Observation	Document Analysis
NGO Director	4			
Kichwa Members	60	1	*	
Tsa'chila Members	50	2	*	
Volunteer Kichwa Community	29	2	*	
Volunteer Tsa'chila Community	43	3	*	
Outside actors Kichwa Community (Guide, Health worker)	4			
Online Content				*

3.4.1 Use of translator

The nature of the research project, and my intermediate level of Spanish, resulted in a translator being used in both host communities. I originally intended to use a translator provided by the NGO Yanapuma, but due to administrative difficulties this was not possible. As a result, through a personal contact, I selected a translator from the University of Quito, who had an excellent command of Spanish and English. The translator was a middle-class female in her twenties who had completed an MSc in tourism studies. The translator's knowledge of tourism resulted in her being interested in the project, and also resulted in her being able to provide interesting insights relating to tourism in Ecuador. It is recognised that the use of a translator is problematic but, as Temple and Young (2004) note, it is something that many researchers have to rely upon at some point. I was acutely aware of the challenges

that stemmed from conducting research with a translator, being particularly mindful of Phillmore and Goodson's (2004: 315) assertion that:

> "Working with translators is a haphazard affair, and their potential influence on the research interview cannot be overstated."

In line with the epistemological approach of the thesis, I recognise that there is no one true account of a social interaction, and therefore the translation of the interview cannot itself be considered an objective report of reality. Instead, I acknowledge that the translator interprets and co-creates meaning from the interaction. As Temple and Young (2004: 171) propose:

> "The translator always makes her mark on the research, whether this is acknowledged or not, and in effect, some kind of hybrid role emerges in that, at the very least, the translator makes assumptions about meaning equivalence that make her an analyst and cultural broker as much as a translator".

To avoid the translator being what Temple (2002) terms a 'shadowy figure' within the research process, it is fully acknowledged that the data gathered from host members has been filtered through the translator's interpretation of responses. To conduct the interview, I would ask a question which the translator would translate, and then subsequently translate the response. I recognised during this translation that some of the nuanced detail was being lost, with the translator summarising certain aspects when respondents provided long answers. As a result, I requested the translator provide her best translation in real time, so that I could ask follow up questions, but also at the end of the day to transcribe the interview verbatim, which I would then read. Post-interview and post-transcription, we would then discuss the information garnered in relation to its meaning, and in some circumstances additional information or clarification would be sought, through re-interviewing the participant. The strategy adopted was generally successful, although it did result in some instances where I felt almost a bystander in the interview, with the translator listening intently to the participant's response, before having the opportunity to translate. This was frustrating, but I had to be content with listening using my intermediate Spanish

skills, and studying the body language and emotions of the participant to gain insight into the conversation.

The language spoken by indigenous members, the translator, and myself was significant in terms of the power relations influencing the research. This is because my inability to communicate fluently in Spanish, and subsequent use of a translator, created a more formal environment, impeding my ability to form a close relationship with indigenous members. Moreover, my translator could only speak Spanish, and not *Quechua* or *Tsafiki*, the result of which was that the most marginalised indigenous members, who could not speak Spanish, were not included within this research project. As the indigenous respondents' first language was not Spanish, this again created a more formal interview environment than if conversation took place in *Quechua* or *Tsafiki*. I did consider recruiting a translator who could speak *Quechua* or *Tsafiki* to translate into Spanish, which could then be translated into English. However, I decided that such an approach would lose much of the nuance of the responses and therefore be of little practical value. The number of indigenous members who were not able or willing to communicate in Spanish was extremely small, although this demonstrates the difficulty of incorporating all community voices within a study of this nature.

There were however also advantages in using a translator. Firstly, the translator had a bubbly, friendly attitude, which resulted in her developing her own rapport with host members. This appeared to encourage certain residents to engage with the research process and divulge information that may not have been so forthcoming if I had been working alone. In addition, being female provided access to information that may not have been available, if I as a male was conducting research by myself. Secondly, each night the translator and I would discuss and reflect on the interviews we had undertaken during the day. This was a useful activity, in that it allowed me to think aloud my ideas, and also listen to her opinion of the community and the volunteer project. Thirdly, living in the communities could be quite isolating, and having a companion during this time made the experience more enjoyable.

3.4.2 Using Semi-structured Interviews

One of the most widely used methods within qualitative research is the interview (Fontana and Frey, 2000), of which there is a spectrum from the structured to the unstructured (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). I decided to use semi-structured interviews, as they tend to provide richer data than structured interviews and more focus than the unstructured interview (Fossey *et al*., 2002). This ensured the interview concentrated on the participants' opinions and feelings towards volunteer tourism, whilst also providing space for the interview to travel in unforeseen ways. The focus on opinions and feelings reflects the 'emotional turn' in geographical studies, which recognises that emotions are central for understanding public life, commercial activity, and consumption (Bondi, 2005). The understanding of a semi-structured interview applied within this thesis abides by Longhurst's (2003: 143) description in which:

> "Although the interviewer prepares a list of predetermined questions, semi-structured interviews unfold in a conversational manner offering participants the chance to explore issues they feel are important."

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the NGO director, indigenous community members, volunteer tourists, guides and a health worker. Prior to conducting the interviews, I produced an interview guide containing questions and prompts, utilised to encourage participants to narrate their opinions during the interview. The interview guide began with a broad open-ended question, which DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) propose is a useful technique for helping the participant ease into the interview. To achieve this, the interview with host members began with the question, '*what do you think about volunteer tourism in the community*?', whilst volunteers were asked, '*why did you decide to become a volunteer?*' I listened, letting the interview flow in a conversational manner, adopting what Polkinghorne (2007: 482) refers to as an "open listening stance", to allow the interview to go in whichever direction the participant desired. This resulted in the duration of interviews varying from under 10 minutes to over 2 hours; however, it also succeeded in allowing conversations to progress in sometimes unexpected and

valuable ways. For example, in the Kichwa community, one community member talked for considerable time about religion and family life in the community. This resulted in him recounting how, after one church service, a group of community residents confronted the project leader and his family over the organisational structure of the volunteer project. This important information therefore emerged from the flexibility provided by the semi-structured interview, allowing the conversation to flow naturally. Following analyses and reflection on the interviews, I added additional questions to ensure emergent themes could be investigated. For example, during one interview, the indigenous project member discussed the plethora of gifts she had received from volunteer tourists and the difference these had made to her life. As a result, I recognised volunteer gifts as an important influence on indigenous member perception of volunteer tourism. I subsequently added questions such as '*have you ever received gifts from volunteer tourists?*' and '*what do you think about volunteer tourists giving gifts?*' to the interview plan.

3.4.3 Selecting Participants

Interviews took place with the director of the NGO four times, once prior to entering the community, twice during, and once on completion of the study. It was felt that this would provide an opportunity to listen to the director's initial opinion of volunteer tourism and also his reflections of the preliminary results of the investigation. There is little evidence of such follow-up interviews within the volunteer tourism literature, however, with studies tending to present a snap-shot of participants' opinions without incorporating their reflections of gathered empirical data. On arrival in both communities, interviews were conducted with those indigenous members directly involved in the project. The limited amount of research which exists on host opinions has focused on such members, an example being McIntosh and Zahra's (2007) inclusion of Maori members who were directly involved with volunteer tourists. Desiring a more expansive study, I subsequently interviewed members of the Kichwa and Tsa'chila community with no involvement in the volunteer tourism projects. This allowed the voices of community members not engaged with the project, and excluded from the existing literature, to be incorporated into the thesis. This is an important addition to existing literature, as research relying on certain host members raises questions of who is speaking for the

non-homogenous community (Wallerstein and Duran, 2006). It also follows a tradition of post-colonial thought that "challenges the presentation of singular narratives and instead seeks to include multiple voices in works" (Sharp, 2008: 7). To achieve this, myself and my translator would traverse the community, visiting the homes of community residents whilst also stopping and talking to any resident we met in the street. I approached potential participants, explaining the nature of the project, and asked if they would like to be interviewed or, if they were busy, arranged a suitable time. As a result, interviews took place in a diverse range of environments from the office of the NGO director, to the houses and farms of indigenous members. This approach ensured the comfort of the participant and resulted in a 100% acceptance rate for the interviews. The richness of the information retrieved during interviews varied widely. There were participants who were interviewed multiple times at length, whilst others' apparent disinterest or limited knowledge of volunteer tourism resulted in a shorter interview. The compact nature of the Kichwa community allowed myself and my interpreter to conduct the research independently; however, the dispersed nature of the Tsa'chila community resulted in us being accompanied by a member of the volunteer group. The project member would introduce myself and the interpreter to potential participants and would then leave us alone to conduct the interview. This reliance on the project member was not ideal, as their introduction may have influenced the participants' subsequent responses. However, it was necessary due to the large distances involved. Interview responses suggest that, despite this level of gate keeping, participants spoke freely, with many openly criticising the project and certain members within it. A summary of the Kichwa and Tsa'chila community member's interviews can be seen in tables 6 and 7 below:

Table 6. Kichwa community member's interview details

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Age	No. of interviews	Duration of interviews	Location of interviews
Alexis	Male	Indigenous	21-50	2	2 hours	Walking around community
Carmen	Female	Indigenous	>50	1	2 hours	Outside her house
Carolina	Female	Indigenous	>50	3	2 hours	Volunteer house
Leonardo	Male	Indigenous	<21	1	1 hour	Side of road
Mariela	Female	Indigenous	21-50	1	50 minutes	Outside house
Marlene	Female	Indigenous	>50	1	1 hour	Outside her house
Mary	Female	Indigenous	21-50	1	2 hours	Outside her house
Nicolas	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 Hour	In his house
Pedro	Male	Indigenous	<20	1	1 hour	Side of road
Cynthia	Female	Indigenous	<21	1	30 minutes	Alongside road
Samuel	Male	Indigenous	>40	5	4 hours	Volunteer House, side of road, in his car
Stephanie	Female	Indigenous	21-50	2	1 hour 30 minutes	Outside her house
Sarah	Female	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Side of road
Veronica	Female	Indigenous	>50	10	7 hours	Volunteer house

Table 7. Tsa'chila community member's interview details

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Age	No. of interviews	Duration of interviews	Location of interviews
Adrian	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Side of road
Alejandro	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Outside his house
Daniel	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Outside local school
David	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Outside his house
Diego	Male	Indigenous	>50	6	5 hours	Cultural centre
Jesus	Make	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Cultural centre
Juliana	Female	Indigenous	21-50	1	1	Outside her house
Lucas	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Outside his house
Mathew	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hour	Outside a cafe
Matias	Male	Indigenous	21-50	2	3 hours	In his house
Ricardo	Male	Indigenous	21-50	5	4 hours	Cultural centre Walking around community
Roberto	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	2 hours	Cultural centre Walking around community
Rafael	Male	Indigenous	21-50	4	3 hours	Cultural centre Walking around community
Sebastian	Male	Indigenous	<21	1	1 hours	Side of the road
Samantha	Female	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hours	Cultural centre
Tadeo	Male	Indigenous	>50	1	1 hours	Side of road
Tomas	Male	Indigenous	21-50	1	1 hours	Outside of his house
Lionel	Male	Indigenous	>50	1	3 hours	Inside his house

In addition to community members I also interviewed outside actors in the community, the details of which can be seen in the table below:

Table 8. Outside actors interview details

Name	Role in Community	Gender	Nationality	Age	No. of interviews	Duration of interviews	Location of interviews
Peter	Director of NGO	Male	British	40-55	4	4 hours	NGO Office
Pierre	Long term volunteer guide. Living in community. Close relationship with project organisers	Male	French	30-45	5	6 hours	Kichwa community. Inside volunteer house, side of the road, walking around the community
Roxanne	Visiting Health Worker. Repeated visitation over multiple years.	Female	American	25-35	1	1 hour	Kichwa community. In the street
Tom	Guide with volunteer group. Repeat visit over year to community	Male	American	25-35	2	2 hours	Kichwa community. Whilst watching volunteers work
Melony	Guide with volunteer group. First visit to community	Female	American	25-35	1	1 hour	Kichwa community. Whilst in volunteer house

3.4.4 Incorporating Volunteer Tourists into Research

I conducted semi-structured interviews with volunteers to examine their experiences within the community, the project, and their general opinion of volunteer tourism. It is well-documented that the vast majority of research has focused on the volunteer as a frame of analysis (Wearing and McGehee, 2013) and, as a result, I initially did not intend to focus on this area. However, I decided that the voices of the volunteer tourists is important to gain a more complete understanding of volunteer tourism within the study communities. This is because, in recognising that a particular space was created for the volunteer tourists, I believed it would be interesting to explore how the volunteer tourists interpreted the space they occupied within the communities. The profile of the volunteers in both communities at the time of the research project are summarised in Table 9 below:

Table 9. Summary of volunteer tourists in study communities

Kichwa community			Tsa'chila Community		
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
72 volunteers interviewed. Split into the following groups.	15	14	8	20	15
Synonyms	Mike, Chris, Mary, Michela, Haley, Taylor, Crisi, Pam	Bethan, Isobel, Robert, Steph, Tom, Tim, Holly, Sam, Lisa, Helen	Hannah, Lucy, Nicola, Sara, Bryan,	Clara, Claire, Rachel, Rebecca, Louise	Nicky, Sarah, Kati, John, Chris, Paul
Focus Group	1	2	3	4	5
Age Range	19-22	17-18	22-28	17-18	17-18
Sex	13 Female 2 Male	10 Female 4 Male	2 Male 6 Female	20 Female	12 Female 3 Male
Nationality	American	American	British	British	American
Occupation	University Students	High school students	Travelling	Private all-girls high school students	High school students
Duration in Community	1 month	3 weeks	2 weeks	1 weeks	2 weeks
Leader	University lecturer	Expedition guide	Expedition guide	School teacher	School teacher
Structure of placement	Lived together in volunteer house. Volunteering in morning, Spanish in afternoon. Engaged in nightly and discussion activities.	Lived in volunteer house. Volunteering, with occasional recreational trips. Engaged in nightly and discussion activities.	Lived together in volunteer house. Volunteering in morning, Spanish in afternoon.	Stayed in tents in cultural centre. Volunteered/cultural activities	Stayed in Cabañas in cultural centre. Volunteer/cultural activities

Table 9 illustrates how those participating in the projects were mostly female, contributing for a short duration, and were relatively young. This profile fits with a pattern well-established within the literature, for the duration (Callanan and Thomas, 2005), gender (Benson and Seibert, 2009) and age profile (Wearing, 2001) of the typical volunteer. I lived with the volunteer tourists staying in the same accommodation, the homes of indigenous members in the Kichwa community, and in the cultural centre of the Tsa'chila community. During this time, interviews and casual conversations were conducted with volunteers throughout the day and evening. I was older than the volunteer tourists, and was not part of their close group and, as such, was an 'outsider' within the group dynamic. However, all the volunteers were happy to engage in discussions and answer questions.

3.4.5 Focus Groups

In addition to semi-structured interviews, I conducted focus groups in both communities, with indigenous host members and volunteer tourists. The hallmark of

this approach is the use of group interaction to produce new information and insights (Morgan, 1997). Kitzinger (1995: 299) notes that it is a method which is:

> "Particularly useful for exploring people's knowledge and experiences and can be used to examine not only what people think but how they think and why they think that way".

Focus groups also provide an opportunity for participants to have a greater role in the research process than occurs through traditional interviews. However, I recognise that through facilitating these groups, unequal power exists between myself as the researcher and the indigenous members as the subjects of inquiry (Goss and Leinbach, 1996). Focus groups have been utilised in volunteer tourism studies on numerous occasions, with examples including McGehee and Santos's (2005) study related to volunteer tourism and its relationship to participation in social movements, and McIntosh and Zahra's (2009) research on volunteer tourist experiences in a Maori community in New Zealand. However, to date there is no evidence of focus groups being used to explore host community members' interpretation and understanding of volunteer tourism. I began the focus group with indigenous members by asking some open-ended questions, through my translator, such as, '*what do you think is the purpose of volunteer tourism?*' I then continued to ask questions based on my emergent findings. One example of such a question would be, '*do you think all community members benefit from volunteers being in the community?*' I found these focus groups difficult to manage, as I had to rely on my interpreter, which reduced the spontaneity through which I could instigate and facilitate the discussion. Moreover, in both the Kichwa and Tsa'chila communities, the discussion tended to be dominated by the participant with the most authority. In the Kichwa community, this was the community president, whilst in the Tsa'chila community it was the project leader. As a result, despite the best efforts of the translator and I, the focus groups became a series of monologues by individuals, rather than a synergistic process providing new insights into participant understandings of volunteer tourism. I recorded the events of a focus group in the Kichwa community in my field diary, an extract of which can be seen below:

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Reflexive Field Diary Extract: July 1st 2015

"Today I held the first focus group; it did not go well. I have struggled to get participants, so the community president organised for a group of 12 people to take part. The project leader said he was too busy to participate. There was a mixture of people, some speaking Spanish other Quechua, which resulted in immediate difficulties in communication. Furthermore, the conversation was dominated by the community president, with occasional contributions by members with a particular grievance they wanted to share. Others in attendance appeared disinterested; a group of older women did not contribute and appeared to be focused on knitting. Nearby, young children played football, accidently hitting one participant with the ball."

Figure 8. Reflexive field diary extract 2

This extract indicates the difficulty I experienced facilitating a focus group in this context. Scholars such as Kitzinger (1995) note the value of homogeneity within participants of a focus group, in order to avoid power relations, whilst Powell and Single stress (1996) that participants should be chosen in a way to avoid systematic biases. I was aware of best practice in facilitating a focus group; however, in the field I found this process difficult. In particular, community members often expressed disinterest in participating, or were unwilling to commit to a specific time. As a result, in the Kichwa community I relied on the community president to organise a time for the focus group and to invite participants, whilst in the Tsa'chila community, I relied on the leader of the volunteer project. This was necessary, as these actors had the local knowledge and contacts to encourage interest and ensure adequate participation. However, this resulted in focus groups with unequal power differentials, and participants with a clear agenda for attending. Therefore, in the Tsa'chila community, only members with a positive relation to the project were in attendance, whilst in the Kichwa community only those dissatisfied participated. These focus groups were clearly disappointing, and illustrated the difficulty in transferring theoretical best practice into the messy reality of fieldwork. My own positionality and the differential

in power and status was also visually evident within the focus group 6, as can be seen from Figure 9 below:

Figure 9. Picture unequal status during focus group. (Source: Author's photograph)

During this focus group, I requested that myself and interpreter sit on the floor with participants to create a more non-hierarchical discussion. However, despite my request the indigenous members insisted that we had a chair to sit on. This would appear to be indicative of the unequal power between myself as a researcher, from an international institution, and the indigenous participants. This unequal dynamic also reflects indigenous members' interactions with volunteer tourists, as discussed within Chapter Five of this thesis.

While the focus groups did not go as well as I had anticipated, they nevertheless provided valuable insight into the power dynamics and knowledge flows in the communities. Although all community members were welcome to attend the focus groups, in reality those who attended and contributed tended to be:

- Community members who had a particular interest in the project and/or who wanted to advance their own personal agenda.
- Community members who were related to or friends with, either the community President or project leader.
- Community members with the highest social status
- Community members with the confidence to express themselves in such an environment.

The focus groups therefore brought to the fore the heterogeneity of the indigenous communities, specifically the uneven power and unequal access to knowledge amongst community members. This provided an early insight into the importance of social networks and personal qualities to understanding community dynamics, which would become important themes in the analysis. The focus groups also provide an exemplar of the wider critiques of participatory development. They illustrate how participatory methods, even if well-intentioned, can result in domination by a community elite, to serve their interests, whilst further disenfranchising the most marginalised in society.

In response to the difficulty in creating a formal focus group in both communities, I spontaneously orchestrated a focus group in the Tsa'chila community with indigenous women who worked in the kitchen of the cultural centre. This resulted in some interesting discussions, with these participants freely discussing issues, from the rules governing their dress code in the cultural centre, to their interaction with volunteer tourists. Goss and Leinbach (1996: 119) comment that "men, and persons of higher social status, are more likely to dominate discussion, interrupt, and assume leadership and expert roles in mixed-gender discussions". The success of this focus group corroborates this observation, with the equal status of participants appearing to encourage an informal cooperative discussion to emerge.

Five focus groups were also conducted with volunteer tourists in both the Tsa'chila and Kichwa communities. They began with myself, as the facilitator, asking open-ended questions such as '*what is the purpose of volunteer tourism?*' These focus groups lasted around one hour, with the nature of the groups resulting in the volunteer tourists expressing their opinion and debating in an apparently unconstrained manner. The details of the focus groups conducted can be seen in table 10 below:

Table 10 Focus group summary

Volunteer tourist	Participants	Details	Duration
Focus Group 1	Volunteer tourists	American University Students	1 hour
Focus Group 2	Volunteer tourists	American high school students	1 hour
Focus Group 3	Volunteer tourists	British travelling	1 hour
Focus Group 4	Volunteer tourists	British Private all girls school	1 hour
Focus Group 5	Volunteer tourists	American high school	1 hour
Focus Group 6	Kichwa host community members	Mix of people coming and going. Dominated by selected individuals pursuing own agenda.	2 hours
Focus Group 7	Tsa'chila project members	Dominated by project leader with limited input from other members	2 hours 30 minutes
Focus Group 8	Tsa'chila women kitchen staff	Interactive discussion with the indigenous women who prepare and serve food for volunteers.	45 minutes

3.4.6 Recording Participants

I recorded each interview and focus group for transcription purposes, with consent sought before beginning the recording. Whilst gaining consent, I informed participants that they could terminate the interview or stop the recording at any time. No participant requested the termination of an interview or failed to give consent for the recording. Transcription from the recording occurred as soon as possible, with the translator transcribing the recording into English, whilst I transcribed those conducted in English. Gilbert (2008) recommends this approach, noting that it provides the opportunity for any unclear or unrecorded material to be replaced by memory if required. The recordings also proved useful for improving the way the interview functioned. For example, on listening to a recording, it was evident I often filled silences too eagerly, not always giving enough time for the participant to provide additional clarification. Following this realisation, I consciously attempted to allow for longer periods of silence, and the recording therefore proved valuable as a self-assessment tool. In addition, Bryman (2001) suggests that recording interviews

is valuable because it allows secondary analysis to occur, and for data to be re-used in the light of new theoretical ideas or analytic strategies. This proved accurate, as I found myself listening to interviews multiple times in light of new ideas, and to think back over the interview process. I also used the recordings of interviews as a verification tool, with a random selection of recordings and transcripts being provided to another translator, who checked their accuracy. I recognise that this process does not ensure an objective translation has occurred, but increases confidence in the methods employed.

The use of a recording device was not without issues, however. Firstly, I found that on completion of the interview I would turn the recording device off to save its battery. However, on leaving, the participant would frequently make a final interesting comment, resulting in myself having to quickly scramble to turn the recording device back on, inevitably losing some of the spontaneity of the interactions and the unfolding event. Secondly, in certain circumstances I did not have the recording device with me, such as in some evenings when going for a walk or when the device was charging. It was frequently on these occasions that an unexpected spontaneous conversation would occur that subsequently was not captured. In such eventualities, I would write from memory about the interaction in my field diary, to ensure it was captured in some form.

3.4.7 Participant Observation

A strong tradition within ethnographic research is the use of participant observation, which is an important method employed in this study. This method has been widely utilised within volunteer tourism studies, such as Crossley (2012), Simpson (2004), Barbieri *et al.*, (2012) and Palacious, (2010). The term participant observation is described by Dewalt and Dewalt (2011: 1) as:

> "A method in which an observer takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of the people being studied as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their culture."

I chose to employ participant observation as it "excels in the possibility of gaining an in-depth understanding of a situation in its natural or usual context" (Belsky, 2004: 277). It was an important tool to gain a deeper understanding of events than could be achieved solely through interviews. I shared accommodation and meals with the volunteers, whilst also engaging in their activities, when not conducting interviews. This provided an opportunity to observe and experience the volunteers' interactions with each other and the host members. Before commencing the empirical investigation a preliminary literature review helped identify three areas on which to focus my observation. These included:

1. The inter-cultural interaction between the volunteer tourists and community members.
2. The space in which the volunteer tourists lived and worked, and how this related to the wider community as a place of residence.
3. The performative role adopted by volunteer tourists and community members in the projects.

These provided the boundaries of the participant observation, thereby ensuring a focus whilst employing this research method.

By living in the community, I was provided with the opportunity to instigate conversations with host members over dinner and at other times during the day. My activities therefore abided by how Dewalt and Dewalt (2011: 261) describe participant observation as involving "hanging out and conversing while consciously observing and recording what was observed". I made no attempt to hide my role as a researcher in the community, with host members and volunteers being aware of my purpose. Sin (2009) comments on the tension that existed between her role as a researcher, and that as a volunteer. I did not find any tension in my role during the project, as the volunteers had a closely bonded group which I was clearly outside, being a researcher not a volunteer. In engaging in the life of the volunteer tourist, it provided me with a bodily experience in the study communities, thereby providing insight into the feelings and emotions of the volunteer tourist experience, and aligning with how Goffman (1989: 125) describes collecting data as:

"subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals" (Goffman, 1989: 125).

To ensure I captured the variety of emotions and thoughts I experienced in the study communities, I kept a field diary throughout.

3.4.8 Field Diary

The final data collection method utilised was the field diary, which was vital for recording my personal reflections, struggles, and emotional state during the field research. It was a constant companion throughout the field research, in which I recorded notes throughout the day, writing this up in detail during the evening or in quiet moments. In line with the methodological approach, the field diary does not represent an objective recording, but rather my own subjective account. The field diary is a widely adopted tool of ethnographers, although frequently used in a private capacity, without accompanying published research. However, this limits an important resource, as the field diary is vital for providing the context of empirical data, and for self-scrutiny and transparency (Punch, 2012). As a result, extracts from the field diary are included throughout the thesis to support and substantiate my argument, whilst helping to avoid the detached and distant writing or what Geertz (1988: 141) refers to as 'author-evacuated' texts. To provide clarity each extract throughout the thesis is titled indicating if it is being used as a means of reflexivity, to document my participant observations or as a means of analysis.

3.4.9 Reflection on Ethnographic Methods

Ethnographic methods have been subject to much conjecture within academic discourse, relating to the influence of the researcher on the information retrieved and conclusions drawn. In particular there have been strong feminist critiques of any claim to objectivity, and a shift towards what Emerson (2001) refers to as the 'reflexive turn'. It is thus increasingly recognised that all knowledge is situated, with the researcher involved in a form of co-production, gaining an understanding through a specific interactional episode rather than uncovering some objective truth (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Sandy and Dumay, 2011). As Denzin (1997: 220) notes, there are

no "stories out there waiting to be told and no certain truths waiting to be recorded; there are only stories yet to be constructed". I acknowledge that my position within the community was an important influence on the information retrieved. The interview participants had their own imaginaries of me that may have influenced their responses. For example, I highlight in Chapter Six how my status as a researcher resulted in some Kichwa participants feigning ignorance in relation to volunteer tourists being in the community, as a way of expressing their dissatisfaction with how the project was being operated. With the aim of reducing the distance between myself and indigenous host members, I wore casual clothes, tried to present a friendly and open persona, and tried to involve myself in the community as much as possible. I hoped this would help bridge some of the divide between myself and the subjects of the study. It would have been desirable to spend an extended period within the community, although, due to time constraints, I was limited to spending two months in each community. My identity within both communities appeared to be fluid, being called, on different occasions, an 'academic', 'volunteer', 'tourist', or simply being a 'foreigner'. Rather than hide this in any way, I openly highlight in Chapter Six how my positionality may have influenced the participants' responses at different moments.

In addition, my position in the community was influenced by my access being secured through the Quito-based NGO. As a consequence, whilst in the Kichwa community I stayed in accommodation provided by one of the project members, whilst in the Tsa'chila community I stayed in a specifically built cultural centre. The result was that I stayed with, and had the closest relationships with, the middle-class community members who participated within the volunteer project. By basing myself with these families, I may have increased the distance between myself and the more marginalised members of the community. During my time in both communities, I did consider the possibility of staying with some community members who were not part of the project. Ultimately, this was rejected for a number of reasons. Firstly, I had not indicated this on my risk assessment form, which I had submitted for institutional approval to the University of St Andrews. Secondly, we had previously visited homes of indigenous members not involved in the project, and on these instances my translator looked considerably ill at ease. It was apparent that the different level of hygiene and hospitality made her extremely uncomfortable. As a result, I felt that it

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was not appropriate to ask her to stay in alternative accommodation, which may make her less comfortable. Thirdly, my research had made me aware of the hostility and competition between families, therefore by choosing to leave one family and stay with another; I was concerned I could cause additional conflict. Finally my hosts had been extremely welcoming throughout my stay, and grateful that I was staying with them. I thus did not want to disappoint them by leaving. Throughout the thesis, I openly highlight how my positionality may have influenced the participants' responses.

The difficulty of conducting research as an outsider in a community, within a different cultural context, is well documented within the literature. The result has been a shift, at least in rhetoric, from top-down research such as Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), to bottom-up Participatory Action Research (PAR) or Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR). This shift can be seen as a response to damming critiques such as that by Goldstein (2000: 521) that:

> "There is exploitation inherent in any research relationship; serious power differentials separate the researcher from the researched."

Participatory research recognises that participants should have an active role in controlling and directing the research, therefore generating and analysing data themselves, rather than relying on an 'expert' perspective. The movement towards participation and empowerment of people within communities is therefore appealing. However, there are number of concerns, such as who speaks for the subject of study, at what stage are they brought into process, and which knowledge is valued (Wallerstein and Duran, 2006). Participatory methods are therefore no panacea for conducting research in different contexts. The nature of this doctoral research thesis, and its limited time frame, resulted in participatory methods not being used, and I therefore recognise that my positionality has an important influence on the thesis.

3.4.10 Positionality

It is important within a research project for the researcher to note their own history and pre-conceptions before going into the field (Stake, 1995). I am a middle-class

white male originating from the Global North, and educated up to post-graduate level. I have been involved in volunteer tourism as a volunteer at various times in different locations, from Indonesia to Australia. The experience of volunteering inspired this thesis, to explore and learn from its outcomes for host communities. Although recognising some limitations, I was somewhat naively optimistic about the nature of volunteer tourism. In particular, through past experience, online material, and published work, I assumed that host members would be positive towards volunteer tourism and consider it different to a traditional tourism enterprise. I now recognise that my initial perception and preparation was inadequate, however, and the open nature of the research project allowed the thesis to be adapted accordingly. Moreover, the considerable negative emotional response to volunteer tourism by certain host members was somewhat shocking, resulting in more of an emotional endeavour than I had expected. Rather than adopt the position of an outside expert aiming to instigate change, as far as possible I aimed for a neutral stance to listen to the perspectives of host members. This was a challenging position to maintain, however, with the topic under study resulting in emotional responses from participants. Punch (2012) argues that academic scholars tend to emphasise their positionality, but are less willing to divulge the emotions experienced during their fieldwork. This reflects concerns over unveiling one's vulnerability, fear of losing legitimacy, being discredited, or it becoming an activity of self-indulgence (Punch, 2012). I recognise these concerns; however, I view one's emotional state and hidden struggles as an important influence on retrieving and analysing empirical data. As Hubbard *et al.* (2001: 135) note:

> "Being emotional is a way of knowing about, and acting in, the social world and is just as significant for how we make sense of our respondents' experiences as our cognitive skills".

Therefore, I view my emotions during the fieldwork as an important source of empirical evidence gathered from my fieldwork. Subsequently, I have included extracts from my field diary to be as open and transparent as possible over the emotional dilemmas felt during the fieldwork. As example of an emotional dilemma felt in the Kichwa community can be seen in the diary extract below:

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Reflexive Field Diary Extract: July 4th 2015

"Samuel has accused me of stirring up trouble and causing division with the community. It is apparent that he is not happy that, during a focus group, residents had the opportunity to express their anger over how the project is organised. Furthermore, my presence seems to have been used by Tomas (community president) as providing cover to express to Samuel his belief that the project should change. Other community members have cried in front of me, been angry and despondent. It is difficult to listen to them without feeling their resentment and anger towards how the project is organised. I have tried however to maintain a neutral position and recognise that certain members may be using my presence for their own means."

Figure 10. Reflexive field diary extract 3

This reflexive field diary extract indicates how I found myself in the uncomfortable position in which certain community members used my presence to try to advance their own personal agenda. A further challenge I found during this study was the realisation that I was contributing to the existing system and the inequalities it perpetuates, as the following extract indicates:

Reflexive Field Diary Extract June 12th 2015

"Today it was the birthday of the eldest son in the family I am staying with. My host mother indicated that she could not afford a cake for him to celebrate. Feeling like I should, I paid for a big cake for the whole family. The host mother and father seemed very grateful for this, making a speech thanking me. I see why so many volunteers give gifts to the family they stay with, as this seems a much more personal way of saying 'thank you', than simply paying money. Throughout the celebrations, however, I could not help but think about the community members I had met that day, some of whom were extremely upset about their present situation, who did not have two houses, and how they would probably not have anyone buying them cake on their children's birthday. I am annoyed with myself that the money I have paid is going towards the richest members of the community, and now I have also bought a cake for them."

Figure 11. Reflexive field diary extract 4

I have included this extract because it indicates how I began to be influenced by the level of resentment within the community about how the project was organised. From my initial naive optimism, I became critical and questioning of volunteer tourism in the community, and my own role within this. The result of this was that, on my return, I became increasingly interested in the national political context in which volunteer tourism was operating within these communities. As a result, my theoretical position shifted as I began to seek out and engage with post-development thought, and, in particular, the indigenous concept of *Buen Vivir*. This has become an important frame of analysis post-trip, even though it was not explicitly pursued during fieldwork in the indigenous communities. The issues highlighted in my field diary indicate the importance of ethics in research, which I took seriously throughout this thesis.

3.4.11 Ethics

Ethical concerns are present in all research undertaken, and it is thus imperative that these are given due consideration at all stages of a research project (Orb *et al.*, 2001). In reflecting on ethical research Miles and Huberman (1994: 288) note:

> "We must consider the rightness or wrongness of our actions as qualitative researchers in relation to the people whose lives we are studying, to our colleagues, and to those who sponsor our work".

In line with the University of St Andrews procedures, before undertaking fieldwork I sought ethical permission from the university ethics committee. This involved completing a risk assessment, consent forms, and providing an overview of the study. The risk of participants incurring physical harm or psychological trauma as a result of this study was considered low, and ethical approval was granted on the 26th May 2015.

On arrival in both communities, I sought consent for the research project with the project leaders. In the aim of transparency, I explained the aims and objectives of the project, and the possible outcomes that would result from this. In the Kichwa community, the project leader unilaterally agreed to the research, whilst in the Tsa'chila community, a meeting was called to discuss the research and then consent was provided. For the volunteers, when they arrived in the community I identified myself as conducting research and explained the nature of the project. Before each interview took place, I would explain to the participant the nature of the research, making it clear that they could opt out of participating. The process outlined was important, as Skelton (2001) argues it is important to give participants genuine choice and sufficient information about the project, so that they can provide informed consent. It was also explained that any information they provided would be anonymised, with care taken to ensure they could not be identified. This was particularly important within the Kichwa community, where a number of community members expressed a desire to be involved in the research, but also expressed they did not wish to be identified. Verbal, rather than written, consent was obtained, as both the director and project leaders highlighted a reluctance for indigenous members

to sign forms, stemming from a history of being 'tricked' in financial transactions. I therefore made no attempt to hide my purpose for being in the community and the nature of the research project, so it is unlikely any participants considered my role as "a spy, an undercover agent, operating against the interests of the observed group" (Fine, 1993: 272). Throughout the research process, all information has been stored on a password-protected computer or an external hard drive secured safely in a locked cupboard. In presenting the findings, pseudonyms have been utilised to protect the identity of participants.

3.5   Data Analysis

Upon return from fieldwork my empirical data consisted of transcribed interviews, focus groups, and a field diary filled with my personal observations as well as some in situ reflexive analyses. The priority was then to bring meaning to this empirical data to address my research aim. This involved an iterative process of analysis, comprising three stages. The first stage, required immersing myself with the complete data set, through reading and re-reading all the empirical data gathered. Braun and Clarke (2006: 87) note that this approach is time-consuming, but is essential for identifying potential patterns, and forms the "bedrock for the rest of the analysis". Although familiar with the data set, after conducting the empirical research, I found this stage very useful for clarifying the nature and totality of the empirical data. This solidified two observations/reflections noted whilst in the field. First, how the volunteer tourism projects mapped onto an existing class structure in the indigenous communities, and the importance of social networks in understanding how each project operated. Second, prior reading of the volunteer tourism literature had led to an expectation that specific issues would be of importance to community members (e.g. length of time volunteers are in the community [Callanan and Thomas, 2005], the skills and experience of volunteers [Sin *et al*., 2015] and the quality of the work volunteers produce [Guttentag, 2009]). However, the empirical evidence indicated these issues were of little concern to indigenous host members. As, a result, they moved away from being an important area of interest, and were not subsequently a direct focus of the analysis. Recognising that my initial preparation and literature grounding did not provide a solid enough foundation for understanding the empirical evidence, I began to expand my knowledge through a critical reading of wider

development literature. Whilst in Ecuador, I had become aware of the concept of *Buen Vivir* and its use in political discourses. It was through further reading upon my return, however, that I came to view it as a potential manifestation of an alternative to Western development.

Stage Two of the analysis involved conducting a more thorough systematic analysis of the empirical data through coding. Coding provides a means of digesting, organising and analysing large amounts of empirical data. Saldana (2015: 8) describes it is as a method of:

> "…managing, filtering, highlighting, and focusing on the salient features of qualitative data for generating categories, themes, and concepts, grasping meaning, and/or building theory".

I numbered each line of the empirical data and assigned a word or phrase to areas of potential interest. These codes provided a method of "labelling a condensed meaning, which allows data to be thought about in new and different ways" (Graneheim and Lundman 2004: 107). I continually went through the transcripts and my field diary creating codes and sub-codes. For example, I coded references to 'personal change' by writing [PerC] next to relevant material, and subsequently produced a sub-code to identify the causes of this change, such as [TrNgo] for training by the NGO.

Winsome and Johnson (2000) have expressed concerns over the process of coding qualitative data. Firstly, coding reflects how the researcher filters the data based on their relationship to that data, rather than being an objective process in itself. Secondly, the researcher may become detached from the data, "resulting in loss of meaning and context and creating sterile and dehumanised data" (Winsome and Johnson 2000: 396). Aligning with a constructivist perspective, I recognise that the codes produced are based on one understanding of multitude interpretations of the empirical data. Following my fieldwork and immersion with the data, the codes produced reflected my situated knowledge of its contextual origins. To increase reliability, I used line-by-line coding, thereby ensuring that I stayed close to the data, rather than basing codes on assumptions and generalisations (Charmaz, 2014).

Moreover, I discussed my coding approach and its outcomes regularly with my supervisors at supervisory meetings. Finally, I ensured a consistent approach by re-coding the same transcript after a lapsed time-period (two weeks) and compared the results. These actions ensured that the analysis and conclusions drawn reflect a methodical and rigorous coding process. The initial round of coding resulted in the production of the following codes and sub-codes.

Code		Sub-code	
Personal change Project change	PerC ProC	Training by NGO	TrNgo
		Volunteer tourists Feedback	VolFbk
		Guide Intervention	GdIvn
		Peer learning	PFbck
		Experiential learning	ExLrn
Social networks	SocN	Personal relationship with facilitating NGO	PrlNgo
		Personal relationship with project manager/s	PrlPm
Personal/family circumstances	IndCir	Space of the home	SpaHom
		Location of home	LocHom
		Financial situation	FinSit
		Planning and investment to secure future rewards	ForPla
		Friendly/engaging	FreEng
Criticisms of projects	CriPro	Uneven distribution of economic benefits	UneEco
		Power not evenly distributed in organising projects	UnePow
		The individual priorities over community well-being	IndCom
Economic development	EcoDev	Increasing number of volunteer tourists	IncVol
		Receiving gifts from volunteer tourists	RecGif
Presenting culture positively	PrCuPv	Challenge negative stereotypes Share positive aspect of culture	ChlStr ShPsCul

Volunteer Tourists

Code		Sub-code	
Perceived identity in community	VlinO	Identify being a volunteer Identify being a tourist	IdVol idTou
Performance of a volunteer identity	VlSma	Othering community members Identifying/searching out signs of being a volunteer Distinguishing volunteer identity to tourist identity Self- monitoring actions	OthH IdsVl DiVi VolSem
Change from being a volunteer tourist	PerChg	Perception of position in world Change in life course	PerPoW ChgLc

During this process, I continued to reflect on *Buen Vivir* through critical reading and attending academic conferences. From my immersion in the host communities, however, I knew there was little evidence of *Buen Vivir* discourses and practices overtly influencing how the volunteer projects functioned. As a result, I decided to explore the discursive construction of *Buen Vivir* and tourism at the national level, thereby allowing empirical evidence from the local communities to be situated within the national context of tourism in Ecuador. As Crang and Cook, (2007: 10) note:

> "Local cultures cannot be ring-fenced from large-scale, political and economic processes because the global is not 'out there', intruding annoyingly on the study, but is always 'in here', only existing through variously connected localities."

As a result, this Third Stage of the empirical investigation took the form a critical genealogical approach, dissecting how tourism in Ecuador had developed over time. This involved conducting document analysis on a range of on-line material including Ecuadorian political documents, News Broadcasters, and travel publications. The principle source of information was the Ecuadorian Ministry of Tourism website, which contains promotional material, press releases, position papers, and speeches by Ecuadorian officials. In total 70 documents were accessed, in which I searched for

information relating to the Ecuadorian state's strategy for tourism development, paying particular attention to references to *Buen Vivir*. I focused mainly on the period, 2007 to the present day, which reflects Rafael Correa's election as President and the incorporation of *Buen Vivir* into Ecuadorian Constitution. However, I also included some material prior to this period if useful for the wider historical context. I made copies of the relevant pages and secured them safely on my computer, whilst also printing a hard copy for my records. This process lasted for two months, with all empirical evidence gathered by March 2017. A summary of the sources of information utilised in Chapter Four is summarised in Table 11 below:

Table 11. Sources from online search of documents relating to tourism development in Ecuador

Source	Type of document
2009-2013 National Plan	Government documents
2013-2017 Plan National Plan	
Ecuadorian Tourism Ministry Website	40 different notices, promotional material and press releases, speeches at award ceremony
USAID Strategic Tourism Market Plan For Ecuador 1986	Aid document
Travel Weekly online publication 2016	Popular media
New Left Review online publication 2012	
Ecologist online publication 2015	
Online Blog Ecuador Beach Front property 2015	
Reuters website	News Broadcasters
Telesur website	
CNN Travel	
Doctoral Thesis	Academic

To analyse these documents I again coded the data, with the information from these documents being read multiple times, each line numbered, and notes made next to areas of potential interest. This approach is supported by Blair (2015: 16) who notes that "content analysis is dependent on creating labels (codes) that can be applied to data in order to develop data into meaningful categories to be analysed and interpreted". Subsequently, I grouped information together in the form of codes and sub codes. The results of this process is displayed in codes and sub-codes below

Code		Sub-code	
Market mechanisms	MarMec	Branding	BraIng
		Promotion	ProOn
		Standard and Certification schemes	StaCer
		Improve business environment	BusEnv
Tourism as a means for development	TorDev	Focus on economic growth	EcoGro
		Contribution to GDP	ConGDP
		Contribution to employment	ConEmp
		Increase visitor numbers	VisNo
Evidence of the Ecuadorian State adopting *Buen Vivir*	PakBue	Small-scale	SmaSl
		Environmentally conscious	EncCon
		Socially equitable and responsible	SocRe

In light of the importance given to tourism by the Ecuadorian State, I had expected to find examples of practices being implemented to achieve *Buen Vivir*. However, although evidence of *Buen Vivir* being incorporated into State discourses was apparent, as the above coding indicates, the practices employed reflected those typical of a neo-liberal State. Through analysing the discourses and practices of the Ecuadorian state in relation to tourism and *Buen Vivir*, I began to notice links between the processes occurring at the national and community level. In particular, how the tourism industry functions in and reinforces the existing neo-liberal capitalist system, whilst limiting the space for alternative worldviews such as *Buen Vivir* to be fully realised. As a result, I returned to my interview/focus group/diary dataset and began re-coding the empirical evidence by merging, revising, and grouping codes into categories. The categories created reflect a "group of content that shares a commonality" (Graneheim and Lundman 2004: 107), interpreting the underlying meaning of these categories resulted in the emergence of themes. The codes, categories and themes underpinning the thesis can be seen in table 12 that merges the interview and document analyses:

Table 12. Codes, categories and themes underpinning the thesis

Code	Category	Theme
Personal change Project change	Desired outcome of volunteer tourism projects	Professionalisation of indigenous group members
Economic development		
Presenting culture positively		
Social networks	Social capital	The importance of different forms of capital to explain indigenous members involvement and perception of volunteer tourism
Personal/family circumstances	Human Capital Financial capital Built capital	
Criticisms of projects	Focus on living well rather than better Focus on community rather than individual	The mobilisation of *Buen Vivir* discourses to resist neo-liberal discourses and practices
Market mechanisms	Use of neo-liberal practices for tourism development	Practices of the neo-liberal developmental model packed within *Buen Vivir* discourses.
Tourism as a means for development		
Evidence of the Ecuadorian State adopting *Buen Vivir*	Use of *Buen Vivir* discourses by Ecuadorian State	
Perceived identity in community	Reflexive volunteer tourist	Neoliberal subjectivity of volunteer tourists
Performance of a volunteer identity	Self-management	
Change from being a volunteer tourist	Individual action	

I used the themes emerging from this process to answer the Research Questions, as Figure 12 illustrates below:

Theme	**Research Questions**

The mobilisation of *Buen Vivir* to resist neo-liberal discourses and practices.

RQ 1 How is *Buen Vivir* discursively constructed at the national level in Ecuador?

Professionalisation of indigenous group members.

RQ 2 How is an indigenous community in Ecuador constructed as a site for volunteer tourism?

The importance of different forms of capital to explain indigenous members' involvement and perception of volunteer tourism.

RQ 3 How do different indigenous members interpret volunteer tourism, and what factors shape this interpretation?

Neo-liberal subjectivity of volunteer tourists.

RQ 4 How do volunteer tourists interpret their experience in the indigenous communities?

Figure 12 Themes and their links to research questions

3.6   Conclusion

This chapter has outlined and justified the methodological approach underpinning this doctoral thesis. It has explained the reasoning behind the decisions I have made throughout this study; from the choice of Ecuador, the indigenous communities chosen, the collection of empirical evidence, to the analysis stage. The results from this analysis will be examined in empirical Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven. The chapter which follows explores the discursive position of *Buen Vivir* and tourism at the national level through an analysis of online documents.

4   The Construction of Tourism and *Buen Vivir* by the Ecuadorian State

"The last day of oppression, and the first day of the same".

Luis Macas, Indigenous activist (Webber, 2017)

4.1   Introduction

The election of Rafael Correa[5] as President of Ecuador, and his desire for *Buen Vivir* to provide the principles on which the Ecuadorian State would function, resulted in considerable optimism in Ecuador and beyond. This is because frameworks from the Global South provide an opportunity for alternative visions for a country to be imagined and realised. For example, in South Africa the knowledge system of Ubuntu has played an important role in conflict reconciliation in the post-apartheid State (Murithi, 2006). In Bhutan, replacing Gross National Product (GDP) with a happiness index, has created the space for social and economic policies to be assessed in relation to their contribution to the population's happiness, rather than on strictly economic indices (Bates, 2009). In a similar way, enshrining *Buen Vivir* into the Constitution of Ecuador generated the hope that it would provide the springboard for a radical alternative to the orthodox neo-liberal model of development in the country. However, the significance of *Buen Vivir* and its incorporation into the Ecuadorian Constitution has since been subject to much conjecture. For example, Thompson (2011) describes this as a transformational moment, interpreting *Buen Vivir* as the literal translation of the indigenous cosmovision *Sumak kawsay*, and the beginning of a new epoch for the country. Conversely, Acosta (2013) asserts that *Buen Vivir* represents nothing more than the institutionalisation of *Sumak kawsay*, and the appropriation and curtailment of this alternative knowledge system. Finally, Vanhulst and Beling (2014) argue that *Buen Vivir* represents the necessary transformation of

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[5] The empirical evidence of this chapter was gathered and analysed during the Presidency of Rafael Correa. He has since stepped aside, with Lenin Moreno elected President of Ecuador in April 2017. President Moreno is widely considered the continuity candidate, being ideologically aligned with Rafael Correa. He is a member of the Aliana Pais party, and was vice President of Ecuador between 2007 and 2013 (Gerlach, 2017).

Sumak Kawsay into contemporary discourse, being in a state of constant development, with endless possibilities and potential. This chapter will contribute to these debates on the meaning of *Buen Vivir* to Ecuador, by exploring its influence on the development of tourism within the country. Tourism is a particularly interesting avenue for exploration, as it is an activity closely intertwined with, and illustrative of, political developments in Ecuador.

The chapter begins by tracing the genealogy of *Buen Vivir* and tourism within Ecuador. This is followed by an analysis of the specific discourses and practices of the Ecuadorian state in relation to tourism and *Buen Vivir*. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion on what the development of tourism in Ecuador can tell us about the interpretation and implementation of *Buen Vivir* within the country.

In exploring developments relating to *Buen Vivir* and tourism within Ecuador, it is possible to identity a number of significant moments, which shall act as a focus throughout this analysis. These are indicated on the timeline below:
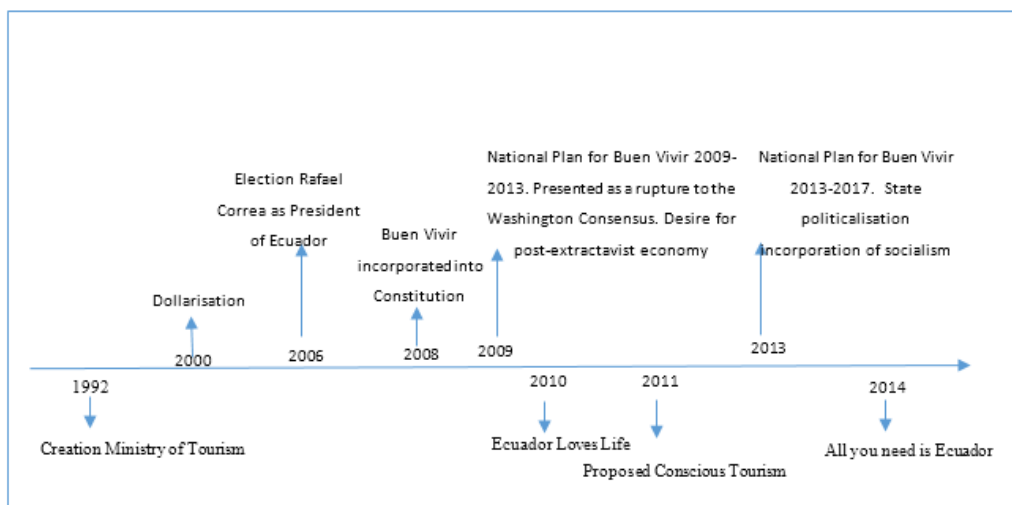
Figure 13. Timeline of key moments relating to Buen Vivir and tourism in Ecuador. (Source: Author's own compilation)

Figure 13 identifies the key political and tourism-related developments that have occurred in Ecuador, spanning the creation of the Ministry of Tourism in 1992 to the 'All you need is Ecuador' campaign in 2014. This temporal frame is chosen as it reflects the period from when the Ecuadorian state first took an active role in the tourism industry, up to more recent developments. The incorporation of *Buen Vivir*

into the Ecuadorian Constitution was followed by two National Plans, outlining how *Buen Vivir* would be realised in the country.

The significance of the National Plans is illustrated in the statement that they represent a "conceptual rupture with the so-called Washington Consensus and the most orthodox approaches to the concept of development" (National Plan 2009-2013). The National Plan explicitly rejects the Washington Consensus, and the neo-liberal dogma of the withdrawal of the state and unfettered markets. Instead, the Plan outlines a vision of Ecuador as a:

> "plurinational and intercultural state…with a post-petroleum economic model, based on local industrial production, environmental services and ecotourism (2009-2013: 7-9)…the promotion of natural tourism, particularly community tourism, is an alternative activity that enables making use of the natural landscape, generating educational and recreational opportunities, as well as the distribution and (re)distribution of work and wealth" (2009-2013: 67).

The National Plan identifies tourism as integral for the prosperity of Ecuador in a post-extractivist future. However, beyond utopian rhetoric it provides little detail on how tourism operating within the neo-liberal capitalist system will result in the operationalisation of *Buen Vivir*. This chapter teases out the tension between the principles of *Buen Vivir* and the state's use of neo-liberal practices and discourses in relation to tourism.

4.2   Analysis of National Plans

Analysis of the two National Plans reveals slight changes in emphasis, reflecting changing political priorities for the Ecuadorian state. Firstly, the notion of a 'plurinational and intercultural state' – a core feature of the 2009-2013 National Plan – is somewhat weakened within the 2013-2017 Plan, phrased as "[strengthening] national identity, diverse identities, pluri-nationality and interculturality". As a result, there is far greater emphasis on the notion of national identity within the 2013-2017 Plan. Radcliffe (2012) similarly concludes that the Ecuadorian state has shifted its political priorities away from pluri-nationalism, noting that this is the principle reason

for certain indigenous federations terminating their participation in the coalition government. Tourism is an important instrument utilised by the state to foster this national identity and to move away from pluri-nationalism, as explored throughout this chapter.

The Ecuadorian state's shifting political positioning of *Buen Vivir* is further evident in its depiction within both National Plans. The National Plan (2009-2013: 6) refers simply to *Buen Vivir,* attaching no overt political ideology to it, beyond recognising its indigenous roots in *Sumak Kawsay*. It describes *Buen Vivir* as relying on:

> "social equality and justice, and gives importance to dialogue with – and acknowledgement and value of – diverse peoples, cultures, forms of knowledge and ways of life".

There is a shift in emphasis within the later National Plan (2013- 2017: 22), which refers to the 'socialist *Buen Vivir*', stating that the "the political horizon of the Citizens' Revolution is the Socialism of Good Living". The 2013-2017 Plan, by incorporating the word 'socialist', indicates that the Ecuadorian State has started to prescribe the political and ideological form for the operationalisation of *Buen Vivir*. This centralised technocratic approach, outlined in the National Plan 2013-2017, has been open to strong critiques, especially those deriving from poststructuralist works, such as James Scott (1998) in *Seeing like a State*, Timothy Mitchell's (2002) *Rule of Experts*, or Escobar's (1995) *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World.* Through historical examples, these works document how elite visions of desirable change become the established orthodoxy, despite failing to address, or even identify, the underlying cause of concern. Ultimately, this failure reflects experts relying on technocratic expertise, rather than locally based *in situ* knowledges, tailored within, and for, specific locales. In line with such works, the discursive construction of *Buen Vivir* and tourism by the Ecuadorian State is unpacked throughout the remainder of this chapter.

4.3   The Ecuadorian State and Shifting Discourses of Tourism

In the midst of neo-liberal reforms and a financial crisis, in the 1990s Ecuador identified tourism as an important mechanism for economic development (Croes and Rivera, 2015). This follows a global trend of national governments identifying tourism as a priority to this end (Simpson, 2008; Zorn and Farthing, 2007). The appeal of tourism as a tool for economic development is clear, as it is considered to be imbued with the power of creating jobs and earning foreign exchange. In 1992, to help facilitate this, the neo-liberal government of President Sixto Duran Ballen created the Ministry of Information and Tourism. Its focus was on attracting foreign investors and improving tourism infrastructures, as a remedy for the country's economic ills. This was significant as, prior to this intervention, a report authored by USAID (1986: 1) refers to Ecuador as "perhaps the world's best kept secret as a tourist destination"[6]. The focus on developing the tourism industry was a successful strategy, playing a pivotal role in Ecuador's economic recovery during the 1990s (Croes and Rivera, 2015). Tourism was embraced once again with the election of Rafael Correa, who identified it as an important mechanism for moving the country towards *Buen Vivir*. Governmental discourses have subsequently shifted from focusing on tourism's economic benefits, to referring more holistically to its wider environmental and societal benefits. This point is illustrated in a response by Rafael Correa to a question about the future of tourism in which he stated:

> "There's no smoke, no pollution and not only does it create jobs but 67% of the people employed by the tourist sector are women. That's very important" (Weissmann, 2016).

Furthermore, at a campaign rally in Puerto Lopez, President Correa affirmed:

> "...tourism is the future of our economy. I am not speaking of large international hotels and agencies; I am speaking of tourism that benefits the local community; tourism that is community based" (Bauer 2008: 2).

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[6] http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnabg726.pdf

In this speech, President Correa is intertwining tourism with the discourses of *Buen Vivir*, through his focus on small-scale and environmentally conscious tourism development. This discursive positioning of locally based or alternative tourism as 'a good', against mass international tourism, has been questioned by scholars such Butcher (2005) and Butler (1999), who argue that such tourism may be equally destructive. Its appeal for President Correa in a travel publication and campaign rally, however, is evident, fitting squarely with his narrative of adopting policies that reject the principles of neo-liberalism and corporate exploitation. *Buen Vivir* and tourism are utilised together as a "kind of magic bullet" (Duffy, 2008: 330), holding the promise of achieving both development and wider societal goals.

4.3.1 Tourism Valued as a Tool for Economic Development

Although there has been a shift in the discourse surrounding tourism, the Ecuadorian government's interest continues to stem primarily from its potential to be a catalyst for economic growth. Evidence of this can be seen in how the Ministry of Tourism utilises economic indices to judge and describe its success; for example, by highlighting its achievement in increasing tourism numbers from 440,000 in 1995 to 1,557,000 in 2014 with forecasts that it will grow to 2.27 million by 2024[7]. Further, it calculates revenue to have increased from US\$850m in 2011 to US\$1.25bn in the first three quarters of 2013. Scrutiny of statements by Rafael Correa and his ministers further indicates that, despite referring to *Buen Vivir* and wider holistic goals, the unquestionable priority is to utilise tourism as a mechanism for economic growth. This is illustrated in President Correa's statement in the *Travel* weekly publication and his Minister for Tourism's speech at an awards ceremony, respectively:

> "Our goal is to have the tourism sector be the first, [and] the most important source of revenue for the country" (Weissmann, 2016).

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[7] https://www.thebusinessyear.com/ecuador-2015/something-for-all/review

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> "The Citizens' Revolution decided to prioritize the tourism sector. We see it as a key ingredient to transform the country's productive matrix. We understand its importance for our economy and our development". (Naranjo, 2014)[8]

The focus of the Ecuadorian state on tourism as a mechanism for economic development must be seen in the light of 'dollarisation', which has removed the ability of the Ecuadorian state to control its own currency. President Correa laments the effect of dollarisation, stating in an interview with the New Left Review in 2012 that "our economic destiny depends to a great extent on whether the monetary policy of the US coincides with our needs".

Ecuador does not, therefore, have the option of manipulating its currency, which Gagnon (2013) notes is a lever that can be utilised to boost growth, helping to improve the competitiveness of key industries within the global market. The country has therefore struggled to diversify its economy away from its reliance on extractive industries, and the volatility associated with this developmental model. Tourism is clearly appealing to the Ecuadorian state, as it is an industry for which political actors believe the country possesses a competitive advantage within the global market. For example the Ministry of Tourism emphasises that "Ecuador can truly claim to be the most compact 'mega-diverse' country in the world" [9], which is clearly aimed at reinforcing this position.

The use of tourism as a development strategy, however, has resulted in Ecuador being more susceptible to the global market, continuing a form of dependency on the global North. Evidence of this can be seen following the 2016 earthquake in Esmeraldas, with headlines in publications such as Rueters.com reporting: '*Ecuador appeals to tourists to return as earthquake hits economy*'[10]. In this story, for instance, the Minister of Urban Development and Housing, Maria Duarte, is quoted as stating:

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[8] https://www.turismo.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/%E2%80%9CTurning-Dreams-into-Reality-Achieving-Ecuador-Potencia-Tur%C3%ADstica%E2%80%9D.pdf

[9] http://www.hmi-online.com/contractors/business-management-and-development/ministry-of-tourism-of-ecuador/

[10] https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ecuador-quake-tourism/ecuador-appeals-to-tourists-to-return-as-earthquake-hits-economy-idUSKCN10H0O3?il=0

"We have several types of victims, not all are victims due to the destruction of their homes, there are people who remain without jobs and whose only form of sustenance was tourism, which momentarily is non-existent."

This statement indicates how a reliance on tourism ties citizens to the global market for their livelihood. The result is that any shocks to this tie transforms them into victims, not due to the actual natural disaster, but the loss of the tourism industry. Speaking at a special event to promote tourism in the Ecuadorian city of Guayaquil, President Correa is reported by the Latin America Television Network *Telesur* as going so far as to state that "the best way to honor our 670 people dead is by boosting tourism" (Telesur, 2016). This illustrates how the Ecuadorian state discursively positions tourism as integral to Ecuador's present and future prosperity. It subsequently takes an active role in ensuring that Ecuador is a competitive destination within the global tourism market.

4.4 State Utilisation of Neo-Liberal Practices

With the aim of increasing the economic value of tourism, neo-liberal practices are employed by the Ecuadorian state. For example, the state makes considerable effort to attract foreign and domestic investment by reassuring private enterprise about their ability to grow and be profitable. This can be seen within the Ministry of Tourism strategy *Invest Ecuador Tourism 2015*, in which it is stated that "one of the most important goals of the Ministry of Tourism is to improve the business climate in the tourism sector".

The Ecuadorian Minister of Tourism, Sandra Naranjo, points to the success of their existing strategy by noting how:

"Ecuador has climbed 15 positions for two consecutive years and is the country that rose the most in the Global Competitiveness Report 2013-14 prepared by the World Economic Forum, this is a substantial improvement in competitiveness" [11].

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[11] http://www.hmi-online.com/contractors/business-management-and-development/ministry-of-tourism-of-ecuador/

It is notable that the accompanying promotional video to *Invest Ecuador Tourism 2015* makes no mention of *Buen Vivir*, instead referring to the strong economy, stable government, clear rules, beneficial tax arrangements, infrastructure improvement and expansion of the middle classes. In a statement to *The Business Year* in 2015, the Tourism Minister appears to reconcile this pro-business approach with wider concerns, by stating:

> "Ecuador is adopting a progressive perspective on tourism and sustainability…by recognizing that sustainability and profitability are not mutually exclusive" [12].

This statement is indicative of those provided by the Ecuadorian state, which positions Ecuador as an attractive destination for international business and private enterprise. This demonstrates the use of the established neo-liberal practice of competing against other states for inward investment through establishing a pro-business environment (Harvey, 1995). To achieve this, potential investors are reassured that environmental and social concerns will not impede their search for profitability. The discourses of *Buen Vivir* have therefore been replaced in this instance by the language associated with 'weak sustainability' or 'green capitalism'. There is little evidence to support the Tourism Minister's claims of this strategy being 'progressive', with economic goals appearing to be given precedence over the more holistic goals of *Buen Vivir*. The result is the continuation of what Klooster (2010) terms the 'fantasy' that environmental and social justice can be achieved through a slight modification of existing practices. Reinforcing this conclusion, the Ministry of Tourism refers to its success on its website in terms of "over 15 international hotel brands now have properties in Ecuador, including Hilton, Marriott International, Starwood and Wyndham Hotels" (Press release, 2015)[13]. The Ministry of Tourism therefore assesses success in relation to attracting transnational corporations without considering the wider social or environmental costs of this investment.

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[12] https://www.thebusinessyear.com/ecuador-2015/all-you-need-is-ecuador/interview
[13] http://www.hmi-online.com/contractors/business-management-and-development/ministry-of-tourism-of-ecuador/

There is evidence to suggest that in providing a secure environment for international business, the Ecuadorian state has come into conflict with citizens who have alternative priorities. In such circumstances, the willingness of the state to defend the business environment through the use of force illustrates the prevalence of neo-liberal practices (Harvey, 2005). An illustration of the Ecuadorian state's priorities is provided by the *Ecologist* in June 2015, in an article entitled '*Galapagos rebellion against foreign investment in hotels, golf courses, luxury tourism*'[14]. It documents how riot police have been deployed to suppress protests against the relaxation of rules on foreign ownership on the Galapagos Islands. They cite examples such as a law specifying local ownership as 'essential' for tourism development being reduced to simply the 'preferred' option, a significant weakening of the state's intervention. The *Ecologist* also describes protests against luxury resorts that are deemed to be putting pressure on the local environment, whilst providing little benefit to the people on the islands. A local travel agent is quoted in the article as stating:

> "The government is desperate for money to replace lost oil revenue. They are fast tracking major offshore-owned projects that give back no benefit to the islands - except for cleaning jobs. Like the cruise-ships, they exemplify elite tourism - the antithesis of ecotourism, to which the government gives lip service."

The State's prioritisation of capitalist expansion and economic growth therefore results in it instigating policies and weakening legislation, to encourage inward investment above all other concerns. This approach is clearly the antithesis of practices associated within *Buen Vivir,* and contradicts President Correa's description of the future of tourism in Ecuador being small-scale and socially and environmentally responsible. The utilisation of the discourses of *Buen Vivir* must be viewed not as a guide to policy formulation, but rather as a deliberate strategy of the state to manage how tourism and Ecuador are perceived, or, in other words, its 'national brand'.

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[14] https://theecologist.org/2015/jun/25/galapagos-rebellion-against-foreign-investment-hotels-golf-courses-luxury-tourism

4.4.1 National Branding of Ecuador

The branding of nations has taken on a core importance within the neo-liberalism paradigm, both as a means for states to increase their appeal within the global market, and as a form of nation building in the face of globalisation (Varga, 2013). Branding is described by Hannam (2008: 4) as "perhaps the most powerful marketing weapon available to regional developers", providing an opportunity for nations to promote their distinctiveness, or unique selling point, in a world of competition and standardisation. Wilson (2011: 2) describes branding as being:

> "more than simply the recognition of a unique aspect of a nation's culture or society... nation branding in its contemporary context implies a concerted effort on the part of a government to effectively utilize and/or enhance a specific feature of the nation in order to improve its image abroad".

Such an approach has been embraced by Ecuador, which follows a broader trend within the Andean region. For example, in Peru, efforts have been made to rebrand the country by promoting its indigenous cuisine (Wilson, 2011) and developing the 'La Marca Peru' logo, inspired by Inca archaeological sites (Robertson *et al.*, 2016). Initiatives such as these, Silverman (2015) argues have created a strong, identifiable brand globally, whilst simultaneously generating a sense of national pride and unity amongst Peruvians. In Ecuador a similar strategy has been adopted, with considerable effort being made to create a desirable image. To achieve this the Ecuadorian state is taking on the role of an 'entrepreneurial subject' (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009) in an attempt to actively shape the perception that exists of the country. As Van Ham (2001) and Gertner *et al.*, (2007) note, image and reputation are essential parts of a state's strategic equity. A key focus of this rebranding is transforming Ecuador from a country that is associated with perpetual political turmoil[15], to one of peaceful coexistence. The Ecuadorian state embracing *Buen Vivir* and its discourses must be understood within this context.

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[15] Between 1992 and 2007 Ecuador had 10 heads of state, with three elected presidents forcibly removed from office due to public protests (Lopez, 2016).

The Ecuadorian Ministry of Tourism plays a central role in the re-branding of Ecuador, describing on its website, how it has adopted the latest marketing techniques. This has involved transforming its *modus operandi* from one that relied on scenic destination pictures to slogans that aim to capture the imagination of tourists. It has shifted its focus from object-orientated campaigns, to ones aiming to instigate existential feelings. The 2010 *Ecuador loves life* campaign is a clear example of this approach, discursively associating Ecuador with love and connectivity, stating on the Ministry's website that "In Ecuador love is in the air and all you need is in Ecuador". Its commitment to this campaign can be seen in the fact that the Ministry acquired the rights to the Beatles song *All You Need is Love,* and the song *Love is in the Air* written by Scottish songwriter John Paul Young, to reinforce the message. This fits with a global trend, in which brands are designed to be more than simple slogans and to embody values and feelings (Pike, 2009). In promoting the campaign *Ecuador love life*, updated logos were utilised, such as that below:

Figure 14. Ecuador love life logo

This logo has been widely distributed, and is "found on buses, the sides of government buildings, and on Ecuadorian product packaging"[16]. The logo represents a clear break with Ecuador's conservative past, employing concentric circles and multiple vibrant colours. Moreover it uses symbolism effectively, with the rainbow pattern being employed to resemble the *wiphala*, the international symbol of Andean indigenous solidarity, whilst the counter-clockwise rotation of the colours mimics the Kichwa construction of the future being situated at our backs (Lopez, 2016). The use of indigenous symbolism is one that the Ecuadorian state appears happy to embrace.

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[16] http://ecuadorbeachfrontproperty.com/ecuadorblog/?p=1009

Colloredo-Mansfield *et al.* (2012) note that at an indigenous transmission ceremony, when assuming the Presidency, Rafael Correa commissioned a 'multi-coloured dream shirt' consisting of indigenous symbols. The result, they argue, was that the media ignored the nature of the ceremony, and indigenous perspectives of the occasion, instead focusing on the shirt as an epitome of indigenous culture. The use of indigenous symbols within Ecuadorian branding is part of the state's strategy to represent indigenous identity. However, it does so in a way that confines it to the national identity, reducing the space for indigenous actors to challenge and drive for more transformational change. The use of tourism branding within Ecuador is therefore a deeply political act, rather than simply apolitical commercial decision. As Vich (2007: 2) notes:

> "tourism [is] a discursive machinery that produces representations of the nation that have important consequences on the ways in which history and cultural identity are conceptualised…. [and] we would be mistaken if we considered it as an innocent process".

The branding of Ecuador by the Ministry of Tourism has significance beyond the tourism industry. Incorporating indigenous symbols and discourses aims to create support for a multi-ethnic Ecuador, rather than one that is pluri-national, which has been a long-term goal of indigenous movements (Bressa Florentin, 2016). This is indicated in a speech given by Ecuador's Minister of Tourism, at the inaugural ceremony of the launch of the second stage of the *All you need is Ecuador* campaign in 2016, during which she states:

> "This campaign belongs to all Ecuadorians. Ecuador is a country that loves life, our country needs to be more united than ever to move forward. This campaign belongs to you, to all Ecuadorians and with it you have in your hands a powerful tool to help the entire world fall in love with Ecuador" [17].

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[17] http://www.turismo.gob.ec/the-second-stage-of-all-you-need-is-ecuador-invites-you-to-fall-in-love-with-the-four-worlds-of-ecuador/

Similarly, Vinicio Alvarado, Coordinating Minister of Production, Employment and Competitiveness, indicated:

> "I would invite citizens to build on a comprehensive national vision, a vision that should not be just a roadmap of the current government, but a policy of transcending the state. A policy in which all citizens share cohesive objectives and resources at the service of the people and all are involved in uniting us as a country" [18] (Ministry of Tourism, 2016)

The prominent role given to the Minister with a portfolio for 'Production, Employment and Competitiveness' illustrates the economic focus of tourism development in Ecuador. The focus on creating national unity is clearly evident within these statements, with Ministers emphasising a national vision that goes beyond the state, into the consciousness of every citizen. The use of branding in this way reflects the neo-liberal agenda of desiring a strong unified state and one national identity that can protect the interests of the market (Harvey, 2007). Furthermore, these statements illustrate how individual citizens are encouraged to ensure that Ecuador lives up to its branding. The Ecuadorian Minister proposes that responsibility for the prosperity of Ecuador rests with citizens "living the brand", thereby incentivising citizens to work on themselves to conform to this expectation. This also fits with the manner in which neo-liberalism fetishises less government whilst encouraging new forms of governmentality on the populace (Bevir 2016). Moreover, it is implied that tourism in Ecuador will bring benefits to all citizens equally without considering how certain citizens may benefit more than others, a theme explored further in Chapter Five. To signify the second stage of the love life brand the campaign was updated in 2016 to '*All you need is Ecuador*'.

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[18] http://www.turismo.gob.ec/the-second-stage-of-all-you-need-is-ecuador-invites-you-to-fall-in-love-with-the-four-worlds-of-ecuador/

Figure 15. 'All you need is Ecuador' logo

This campaign relies on promoting Ecuador's small size and diversity, illustrating the ease of travelling to the 'four worlds' of the Galapagos, Coast, Andes and Amazon. Vich (2006: 93) notes how tourism markets function within "a system which needs to produce difference in order to establish itself with its consumers" (Carnaffan, 2010: 209). This campaign, and the use of indigenous symbology in the love life logo, aims to achieve this by commercialising Ecuador's ecological and ethnic diversity, in order to create an appealing image and to better compete in the global tourism industry. The Ecuadorian state has made considerable investments to promote this new brand of Ecuador, engaging all available means for its promotion.

4.4.2 Promotion

The importance placed on tourism by the Ecuadorian state has resulted in President Correa himself participating in the television programme *The Royal Tour*, aired in April 2016. The premier was shown in New York City, before being rolled out globally via television and online media. By locating the premiere of a documentary promoting Ecuador in New York, an insight is given into how tourism fits into the existing core and periphery of an unequal global system. Moreover, it illustrates that the Ecuadorian State, despite promising a radically alternative political programme, promotes its tourism industry utilising existing levers of the global economic system. *The Royal Tour* focuses on portraying Ecuador as a country that embodies notions of harmony and co-existence between its environment and populace. The video has many similarities with that produced in Peru, starring the President Alejandro Toledo, which Vichs (2007) deconstructs in the paper *Magical, Mystical: 'The Royal Tour' of Alejandro Toledo*. Vichs makes a compelling argument that the documentary is

illustrative of how the global tourism industry functions as a neo-colonial mechanism, with countries of the Global South having to respond to the dictates of the global market. The result is historical depth and context being substituted with exoticism, culminating in the creation of an appealing image for the western tourist to consume. The critique provided by Vichs is equally valid for the Ecuadorian production, with President Correa taking on the role of the salesperson for the country, emphasising a unique culture and environment that will appeal to the Northern consumer. The similarity of the two programmes is illustrative of the homogenising processes involved in marketing countries in the Global South to satisfy western imaginaries of these destinations. Moreover Vichs (2007: 7) expresses concern that "the state, the market and private enterprise find themselves fused together not only because they share the same discourse but because they function as a single entity".

The Ecuadorian state similarly functions as a business in this respect, utilising its apparatus to promote a desirable image of Ecuador to a global audience. An example of this can be seen from how Ecuadorian embassies aim to portray the country as being at the forefront of environmental and social consciousness. The Ecuadorian embassy in Canada for example describes Ecuador as:

> "…a real sustainable paradise. Its commitment on protecting natural, cultural, and human megadiversity is the main goal of this country, which leads sustainable tourism in Latin America" (Ecuador Embassy, Canada).

The state's apparatus is mobilised to convey the new brand of Ecuador to the rest of the world, utilising the discourses of *Buen Vivir*. The Ministry of Tourism has estimated that over 460 million people worldwide have viewed the *All you need is Ecuador* campaign. It highlights the innovative techniques it has adopted to achieve this. This includes using a promotional video during the Super Bowl in the United States at a reported cost of US$3.8 million, with Ecuador being the first country to showcase itself in this manner at the event (CNN Travel[19]). The marketing of the new post-neoliberal Ecuador at the Super Bowl, an event described by TIME's TV critic James Poniewozik (2000) as "the unofficial high holiday of capitalism" (Kedmey,

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[19] https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/ecuador-super-bowl/index.html

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2015), is illustrative of the Ecuadorian state's ambivalent relationship with *Buen Vivir*. In promoting Ecuador in 2011, the publication *Campaign* reports how the Ecuadorian government has appointed MPG International Media Contacts, replacing the local agency Uma for its Ministry of Tourism advertising. The company announced this partnership, on signing the £10 million contract, by stating:

> "We are delighted to be working with the Ministry of Tourism Ecuador to help spread the word about the amazing travel opportunities within their country"[20].

This indicates how the Ecuadorian state prioritises competition within the global tourism market, drawing from technocratic knowledge in the Global North over that from the Global South. This then ties Ecuador further into the unequal global system, relying on expertise from the core countries, whilst aiming to satisfy the desires of consumers in the Global North. Further evidence of this approach is evident in the Ecuadorian state's adoption of international standards and certifications originating from the Global North, a topic to which I will now turn.

4.4.3 Standards and Certification

The Ecuadorian state has clearly embraced market mechanisms in relation to the development of its tourism industry. This is evidenced in the partnership between the Ministry of Tourism and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council in 2015, which resulted in Ecuador agreeing to work towards complying with their universal standards for sustainability in travel and tourism. Furthermore, at the commencement of the second stage of the *All you need is Ecuador* campaign in 2016, Günter Koschwitz, a managing director of TourCert, a German non-profit association was an invited speaker. He stated:

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[20] https://www.portada-online.com/2011/04/26/mpg-international-media-contacts-wins-16-million-ecuador-tourism-account-2/

"We have been impressed with Ecuador and its great tourism potential as well as a tourism policy which is clearly committed to quality and sustainability. We see Ecuador as a pioneer destination in quality certification and social responsibility in South America" [21] (Ministry of Tourism, 2016).

The eagerness of Ecuador to develop its tourism industry has resulted in it embracing international organisations and certification schemes to lend greater credibility to its tourism industry on the global market. The adoption of such certification schemes has become synonymous with neo-liberalism, being a response to the governance gap which results from lighter state regulation of private enterprises. This has led Burrell and Moodie (2012: 213) to refer to them as "tools of the times", as they proliferated in the 1990s with the global diffusion of the neo-liberal doctrine. The adoption of such a scheme by the Ecuadorian state, despite its supposed radical political platform, indicates its willingness to embrace neo-liberal practices to foster its tourism industry. Furthermore, the Ministry of Tourism widely advertises, via its website and press releases, the international awards Ecuador and Ecuadorian private enterprises have received. Examples of such awards include: the World's Best Green Destination 2014; Quito as South America's Leading Destination WTA 2014; Finch Bay Eco Hotel as the World's Best Green Hotel; Cuenca as Best Adventure Destination 2014; and Tren Crucero as South America's Leading Luxury Train 2014. The prominence of these awards, and the prestige which the Ministry of Tourism conveys in relation to them, fits with the notion of 'national neo-liberalism', in which countries compete in creating an environment valued by international organisations. Illustrative of this, the Ministry of Tourism cites how the World Travel Awards are considered the 'Oscars of Tourism'[22], thereby implying how the reward signifies Ecuador outcompeting other destinations.

4.5   Analysis of the Framing of Tourism within Ecuador

The Ecuadorian state's priority is economic growth, with tourism interpreted through this prism. This reflects the political model adopted by Ecuador, which has not challenged the position of elites in society (Torre, 2013; Friant and Langmore, 2014) or the underlying causes of poverty and inequality (Radcliffe, 2012). No attempt has

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[21] http://www.turismo.gob.ec/the-second-stage-of-all-you-need-is-ecuador-invites-you-to-fall-in-love-with-the-four-worlds-of-ecuador/
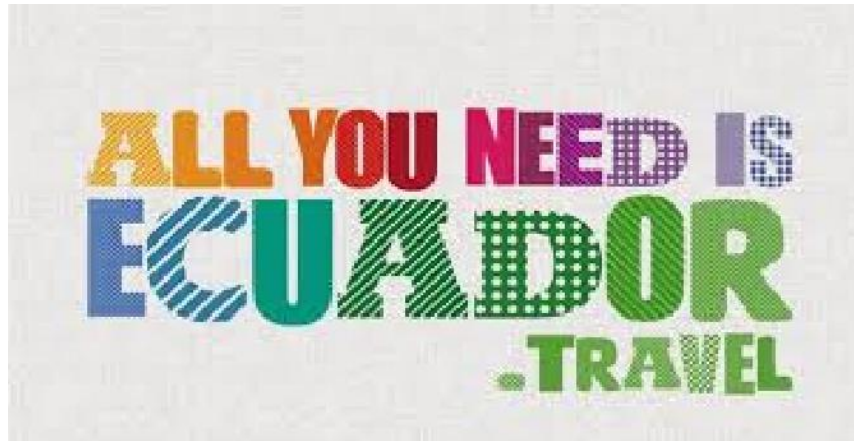
[22] http://eeuu.embajada.gob.ec/ecuador-wins-14-world-travel-awards-considered-the-oscars-of-tourism/

been made to directly control the economy, or transform deeply embedded structures within the country. Instead, there is a reliance on growth, coupled with increased taxation, to achieve its political objectives. President Correa's belief in growth as a means for achieving social justice has led Burbach *et al*., (2013: 112) to note that he has positioned himself as "a manager of state run capitalism". Indeed, President Correa himself stated soon after taking office that 21st century socialism "differs totally from the idea of state control over the means of production and traditional socialism" (Becker, 2013: 116).

The capitalist system, and its search for continuous growth, therefore continue unabated in Ecuador. Radcliffe (2012: 247) draws a similar conclusion, noting in her analysis of political developments in Ecuador that "modernity and progress continue to have the same values as they did under (neoliberal) developmentalism". It is possible to discern how the model adopted by the Ecuadorian State conflicts with two purported principles of *Buen Vivir*. Firstly, the notion of linear growth contrasts with cyclical notions of time within *Buen Vivir*, which rejects the entire notion of the need for constant improvement (Cobey *et al.*, 2016). Secondly, prioritising growth over all other concerns conflicts with a more holistic notion within *Buen Vivir* relating to harmonious existence (Acosta, 2013). The model adopted by the Ecuadorian state is one that has moved away from its indigenous roots, to one based on its own interpretation, or even appropriation, of *Buen Vivir* (Friant and Langmore, 2014). This interpretation appears to be based on the assumption that it is possible to determine via technocratic expert knowledge how to achieve *Buen Vivir* in practice. The result provides little space for citizens themselves to determine the necessity of growth or, if desired, the nature and form it should take; nor, ultimately, does it allow citizens to deliberate regarding how *Buen Vivir* should be realised. President Correa, an economist with a doctorate from the University of Illinois, has subsequently termed those who object to the state's interpretation of *Buen Vivir* as the "infantile left" (Correa, 2012[23]) or "backward and uncivilised" (Sieder and Vivero, 2017: 13), thereby disparaging alternative understandings of *Buen Vivir* as inferior. This resonates with how post-colonial scholars, such as Said (1978) and Escobar (1995), describe knowledge from the Global South as being dismissed in favour of scientific

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[23] https://newleftreview.org/II/77/rafael-correa-ecuador-s-path

modern western knowledge. Moreover, Escobar (1995: 222) states that "one must resist the desire to formulate alternatives [to development] at an abstract, macro level; one must also resist the idea that the articulation of alternatives will take place in intellectual and academic circles". This warning seems particularly pertinent to how *Buen Vivir* has been operationalised in Ecuador. Ultimately, the Ecuadorian State has been responsive to civil society groups that support their model, but have used the state apparatus (often violently) when their views are in conflict.

The Ecuadorian state's aim of achieving *Buen Vivir* through economic growth and adopting neo-liberal practices, although paradoxical, is indicative of the perverse nature of neo-liberalism. Bondi (2005: 499) notes, for example:

> "A key symptom and condition of the rise of neoliberalism has been its capacity to co-exist with apparently contradictory political ideas".

The utilisation of neo-liberal practices to achieve the holistic radical alternative of *Buen Vivir* is clearly oxymoronic. For example, the use of neo-liberal practices such as certifications and awards is based on 'universal' standards that come from institutions originating within the Global North, which may not fit easily with the notions based within the Global South. Concerns such as these have led Neilson and Pritchard (2011) to interpret such certification schemes as a neo-colonial mechanism. The incompatibility of achieving the holistic notion of *Buen Vivir*, with its focus on socially responsible relations rather than market-based interactions (Fakier and Ehmke, 2014), would lend weight to this assertion. For example, the Ministry of Tourism highlights the success of the tourism industry through the awards it has received, such as Quito being awarded 'best green destination' and 'best travel destination'. These awards, however, are based on narrow parameters, determined by international organisations, which provide little insight into deeper processes that have occurred, and are occurring, within the city. This is illustrated by Swanson (2007), who argues that through strong regulations with well-resourced enforcement, authorities in Quito have targeted marginalised citizens such as beggars, in the aim of presenting an image of a clean, safe city. People of indigenous origin have been particularly affected, deemed out of place in modern cities, and instead belonging in rural areas. The focus on international standards and awards, although appealing for

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the Ecuadorian State in terms of international prestige and being an attractive marketing ploy, is therefore of little value for understanding the more holistic notion of *Buen Vivir*. Moreover, they may serve to dilute critiques of government policy, by framing the debate within certain narrow parameters and removing the space for more radical non-market-based initiatives, which may be more appropriate for achieving *Buen Vivir*.

Although it has adopted certain neo-liberal practices, the Ecuadorian state has clearly embraced discourses associated with *Buen Vivir*. In doing so, the Ministry of Tourism has not only presented this via a new slogan and logo, but has developed a whole new discourse surrounding tourism in Ecuador. This comes in the striking form of the development of 'conscious tourism' by the Tourism Minister Freddie Ehlers in 2011. This displays elements of co-responsibility, as it involves obligations for the tourists, as well as for the hosts, indicating a radical alternative to traditional touristic practices, in which the hosts are the producers and tourists the consumers of the experience. The Ministry of Tourism describes conscious tourism as:

> "Asking every visitor to experience the country in keeping with its nature and its people, underscoring the positive aspects of the relationship between host and tourist, while improving the lives of Ecuadorians through tourism experiences with their own cultural and natural heritage" [24].

With these words, the Tourism Minister indicates the importance of conscious tourism, as it originates from the Global South, as opposed to 'sustainable' or 'ethical' tourism, which emerged from the Global North. It is positioned as counter-hegemonic, challenging western dominated notions of tourism and what it is to be a tourist. Emphasising this latter aspect, the Tourism Minister describes conscious tourism as providing a holistic vision of nature and the cosmos, including "the personal experience of friendship, respect, and the love that leads to inner growth". Beyond this rhetoric, however, there is no explanation of how this interpretation of tourism can be reconciled with the Ecuadorian state's position of ever-increasing tourist numbers, and a focus on enhancing its contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It does, though, fit with practices associated with the late stage of capitalism,

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[24] http://www.travelweekly.co.uk/articles/38786/ecuador-to-limit-number-of-visitors-to-galapagos-islands

where it is not the product that is sold, but a psychological state associated with its consumption (Arvidsson, 2005). As Pike (2009: 624) notes:

> "branding practices have extended and deepened in seeking to construct meanings…that are appealing to sophisticated, aesthetically aware and reflexive consumers, especially from affluent and elite groups".

Conscious tourism is therefore an attempt by the Ecuadorian state to create a new discourse around tourism in Ecuador, one that appeals to the modern-day tourist. Specifically, it targets middle class consumers who, through their choice of holiday destination, aim to distinguish themselves from segments of society who do not demonstrate such "good taste" (Bourdieu, 1984: 190). In sum, the Ecuadorian state's promotion of conscious tourism indicates the utilisation of modern capitalistic marketing practices, rather than a new direction for the development of tourism in the country.

4.6 The Ecuadorian State's implementation of *Buen Vivir*

The incorporation of *Buen Vivir*, with its origins in an indigenous knowledge system, into the Ecuadorian Constitution is clearly a significant moment in the history of the country. This chapter has illustrated that alternative tourism's promise of economic development, with limited environmental and social degradation, has resulted in the Ecuadorian state identifying it as an important a means of achieving *Buen Vivir*. However, in turning to the global tourism industry and its apparatus to satisfy the country's desires for greater economic prosperity, rather than move towards *Buen Vivr*, the country is further entrenched in the neo-liberal capitalist system. This indicates the difficulty in operationalising a knowledge system from the Global South within an interconnected, uneven and unequal globalised system. Although the globalised economy clearly constrains the Ecuadorian state's ability to navigate the country to an alternative future, disappointing outcomes to date must also be seen as reflecting the means by which *Buen Vivir* was implemented in the country. As outlined in Chapter One, Rafael Correa's Allianza party adopted *Buen Vivir* from the indigenous Pachacutik party. In so doing, it embraced its appealing framework of rejecting the Washington Consensus, however, it failed to follow through with radical practices required to achieve *Buen Vivir*. For example, Rafael Correa adopted a centralised prescriptive means of achieving *Buen Vivir*, which limited the ability of

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local people to determine how *Buen Vivir* should be realised in their locality based on their socio-cultural settings (Villalba, 2013; Merino, 2016; Morley, 2017). Moreover, in not challenging the position of Ecuadorian elite, deep routed causes of poverty and inequality such as unequal land distribution are ignored, in favour of redistributive policies reliant on economic growth (Ponce and Vos, 2014; Radcliffe,2012). To achieve this economic growth, as this chapter has examined through tourism, the Ecuadorian state relies on neoliberal practices to create a business friendly environment overriding environmental or societal concerns. The influence of this interpretation of *Buen Vivir* at the state level, and the constraints of the global economic system on alternative knowledge systems, are further explored at the community level in Chapter Five and Six of this thesis.

4.7   Conclusion

This chapter has traced the genealogy of *Buen Vivir* and tourism within Ecuador, and how they have become intertwined within state discourses. It deduced that the ambivalent position of the state in relation to *Buen Vivir* is a reflection of how tourism and development are operationalised in Ecuador. The result is that principles of *Buen Vivir,* such as "harmony, reciprocity, equality and cyclonic notions of time" (Thompson, 2011: 3), are not applied or even considered in the way that the state aims to develop tourism in the country. Instead, *Buen Vivir* has been incorporated into the neo-liberal practices resulting in a continuing focus on economic growth, in what Escobar (1995, 2009) terms neo-developmentalism. The appeal of the discourses of *Buen Vivir* to the Ecuadorian state is apparent for a number of reasons. Firstly, it has allowed the re-branding of the country to both domestic and international audiences, creating an appealing image essential for competing for investment within the neo-liberal system. Secondly, by using the discourses of *Buen Vivir,* the state has appropriated the counter-hegemonic language of resistance to neo-liberal practices, thus reducing the potency of critiques, particularly those stemming from indigenous actors. Tourism has been a vital component in the development and promotion of *Buen Vivir* within Ecuador, with the state discursively positioning these concepts in an apparently symbiotic relationship, with tourism holding the promise of prosperity without environmental and social externalities. *Buen Vivir* provides an appealing existential image for tourists, beyond the physical objective properties of

Ecuador. However beyond this rhetoric, both are confined within strict neo-liberal parameters, restricting the space for any alternative conceptualisations or transformational possibilities to emerge. The initial promise of *Buen Vivir,* and the progressive position of tourism within this, therefore remains unfulfilled, with the Ecuadorian state being unable or unwilling to disavow neo-liberal practices and the fetish of continuous economic growth.

In unpacking the discourses and practices relating to tourism in Ecuador, this chapter has focused upon the nation state as the site of interest. Beyond such top-down economic and policy prescriptions, however, there is a body of geographical literature that argues that neo-liberalism should be understood within local contexts and everyday lived experiences (Peck and Tickell, 1994; Didier *et al.*, 2013). In line with this body of work, the subsequent two chapters critically analyse how volunteer tourism operates at the community level within Ecuador. Volunteer tourism is a particularly suitable realm of focus for this exploration, given its association with small-scale community development (Wearing, 2001), thus fitting neatly with Ecuadorian state discourse surrounding tourism and *Buen Vivir*. The nexus of volunteer tourism, *Buen Vivir,* and neo-liberalism is therefore explored, analysed, and unpacked at the community level.

5 The Spectacle of Volunteer Tourism in Ecuadorian Indigenous Communities

"I don't want the public to see the real world they live in… I want them to feel they are in another world" (Walt Disney, 1981)[25]

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the processes that occur when a community becomes a site for volunteer tourism and, in particular, how host members adopt certain knowledges and practices that are deemed necessary by all stakeholders for succeeding within the global tourist industry. This results, the chapter argues, in the professionalisation of indigenous community members, who become self-regulating subjects, consequently helping the diffusion of neo-liberal practices and discourses. In self-regulating their actions, indigenous members conform to certain geographical imaginaries of indigenous people, whilst countering negative imaginaries traditionally propagated within Ecuadorian society. The result is a process of 'Disneyification': the creation of a 'volunteer space' that is sanitized and devoid of context and complexity (Bryman, 1999). This space takes the form of a hyper-reality or simulacra (Baudrillard, 1986), in that it represents a notion of indigeneity that has never existed outside of Western visitors imaginaries. Exploring this, the chapter makes use of a number of seminal texts used in tourism studies, including Goffman's (1956) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Lif*e, which facilitates an understanding of how performative roles can be undertaken to portray desired meaning. Furthermore, Urry's (1990) *The Tourist Gaze* is used to explore the power of the volunteers' gaze in actively shaping the environment that they encounter.

The chapter first presents the 'volunteer space', arguing that it is co-produced by key stakeholders through a series of processes and negotiations. This space is then unpacked by analysing its construction in terms of the performative role of indigenous members and the sculpting of the physical environment. The chapter

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[25] (King, 1981: 121)

concludes with a discussion of the implications of these processes for how indigenous communities in Ecuador are presented and represented within volunteer tourism.

5.2   The Host Community as a Space of Volunteer Tourism

Scholarly work on volunteer tourism has tended to view the host community simply as a place of visitation. Illustrative of this is Keese's (2011) paper *The Geography of Volunteer Tourism: Place Matters* in which he argues that volunteer tourism is geographically clustered in certain destinations. This work falls in line with a broad literature that proposes that volunteers are attracted to particular destinations based on particular criteria. These criteria include safety (Soderman and Snead, 2008) interesting fauna and flora (Coghlan, 2009), a perceived need (Mostafanezhad, 2014), and an ability to provide intimate encounters (Conran, 2011). This account of appealing places for the volunteer tourist is clearly well-documented within scholarly work, although it is somewhat unproblematised, implying that these places are passively waiting to be 'discovered' and then continually visited by volunteer tourists. However, my fieldwork, based in two communities hosting volunteer tourism, indicated that this was not the situation on the ground. Rather, community members actively engaged with and responded to market forces as soon as it was decided that they would like to receive volunteer tourists. The following statement by Ricardo in the Tsa'chila community illustrates this point well:

> "We have all worked so hard to receive volunteers and develop the project into what it is today. I know other projects like this have failed, we clearly do not want that to happen here...It is important that we provide volunteers with a good experience, as if we do they might come back, or tell other people; in that way, the project will grow and be more successful."

Ricardo indicated that host members actively work to develop the project in a manner which attracts volunteers, viewing the volunteers as consumers whose desires they subsequently aim to satisfy. Furthermore, Veronica in the Kichwa community notes that personal rewards are available when satisfying volunteers' expectations. Commenting on receiving personal gifts from volunteers, she notes:

"Yes…it makes me feel really good [smiles broadly]. Makes me feel like they really appreciated staying in my house. I have clothes and toys for the children, things for the kitchen. The one that means the most though is a French couple who gave me money towards a pig house, so now I have piglets to sell."

In both communities, the indigenous members are therefore incentivised to cater for volunteer expectations, both to ensure the reputation of the volunteer project, and the potential individual rewards in doing so. Consequently, receiving volunteer tourists has transformed the community from being a place of residence, to being a commercial volunteer space, fitting with a neo-liberal logic, or propensity, for assigning value to that which previously had none (Guthman, 2007). The result is that this volunteer space is now viewed by indigenous members as a product, to be refined and sold to volunteers as part of the tourist industry. To understand volunteer tourism in these two communities, it is therefore necessary to unpack further this volunteer space and the processes surrounding its construction.

5.2.1 Unpacking the Volunteer Tourism Space

In dissecting the volunteer space, it shall be proposed here that this is co-produced by key stakeholders including the relevant NGO, guides, volunteers, and indigenous members. This space does not follow any grand plan; rather, it is the outcome of a series of processes and negotiations, reflecting the interests and priorities of these stakeholders. These interests and priorities are not always in unison, however, and there is evidence of ongoing tension in how this volunteer space is created and presented. As this chapter will illustrate, this space is therefore not static, but in a constant 'state of construction': being refined and sculptured, influenced by both geographical imaginaries and market forces.

The volunteer space and the factors shaping it are summarised in Figure 16 below. It should be noted that the figure, and the subsequent analysis, give the impression that social performance and the physical environment are separate entities within the volunteer space. However, the splitting of the human and physical environment is merely a device for ease of communication, and it is not intended to imply that, as it is recognised that such a duality adopts a Western-centric view of the human and

environment being separate, a perspective commonly rejected within indigenous knowledge systems (Acosta, 2010). Figure 16 aims to indicate how the 'volunteer space' is shaped by several influences, which combine to form a hyperreality to satisfy the volunteer gaze.
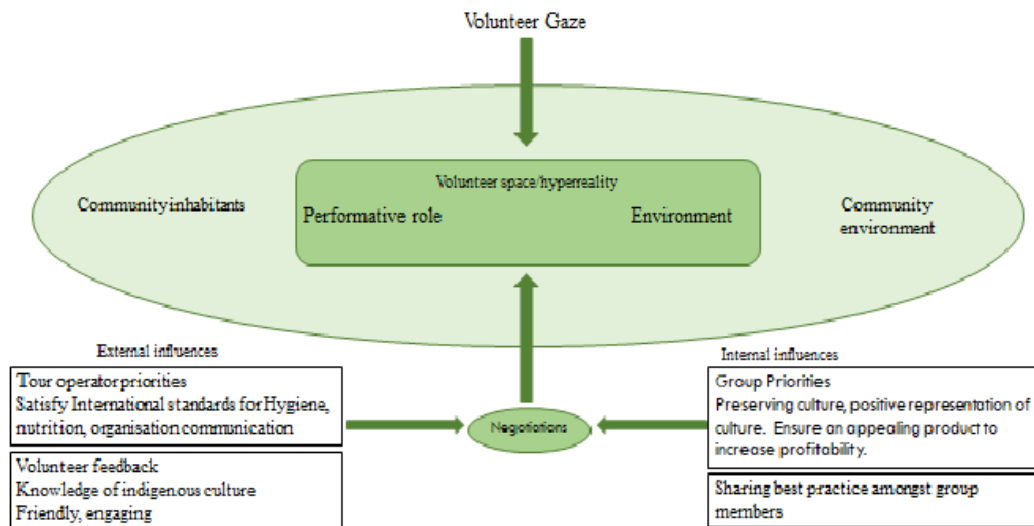
Figure 16. Diagram illustrating the construction of a 'volunteer space'. (Source: Author's own compilation)

Figure 16 illustrates how the upward accountability of the tourism industry, results in external pressures to satisfy Western standards relating to comfort, health and safety, nutrition and hygiene. In addition, market forces ensure that host members are accountable to the volunteer tourists, in terms of providing them with an enjoyable and interesting set of experiences. As a consequence, they are influenced by volunteer feedback, which reflects volunteers' expectations and imaginaries of volunteer tourism and an indigenous community. Additionally, the indigenous members have their own capitalistic intentions in creating a desirable product, and a wish to present their culture in a positive manner on the global market. Therefore, in addition to guidance from the NGO and volunteer guides, indigenous members develop the project themselves through experiential and peer learning. Figure 16 illustrates these priorities and processes are negotiated to construct a social reality and physical environment; combining inside the community to create a volunteer space or hyperreality, to satisfy the volunteer gaze. The remainder of this chapter analyses in more detail the construction of this volunteer space.

5.1 Direction and Performance

The relationship between volunteers and host community members is one that has been of considerable interest to scholars of volunteer tourism. This has frequently been examined from the volunteer perspective, including volunteer desires to go beyond the relationship associated with traditional mass tourism (Wearing, 2001). Host community members are therefore of central importance to the volunteer tourism 'product'. The empirical evidence I collected suggests that, as a result, indigenous members adopt, and are directed to perform, a particular role when volunteers are in their community. In analysing the performative role, useful insight can be gained from Goffman's (1959: 8) thesis relating to the performance of self, in which he discusses how an individual "presents himself and his activity to others [and] the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him".

It should be acknowledged that Goffman's thesis has been critiqued for inadequately exploring the role of structural power on the interactions between subjects (Giddens, 2013). In addition for being based within modernism, and the notion that there are clear codes of conduct for individuals to follow (Branaman, 2010). It has, however, been widely used in tourism studies, notably underpinning seminal texts relating to authenticity, such as works by Boorstin (1961) and MacCannell (1973). In line with this tourism literature, Goffman's work will here be used to unpack how indigenous members present themselves to volunteer tourists, and how this is directed to convey particular meanings. This will be explored in terms of community members aiming to perform the role of 'a good host', while demonstrating a romanticised notion of indigeneity.

5.2.2 Being a Good Host

Emerging from discussions with indigenous group members was the acceptance that they needed to satisfy particular notions of hospitality while the volunteers were in the community. Achieving this is clearly a result of them, as both a group and as individuals, responding to, and negotiating, the direction given to them by the NGO, guides, and volunteers. In relation to the NGO, direction for their performance was given prior to volunteers arriving in the community. As the director of the NGO explains:

"We've always provided help for any community that we are working with to receive volunteers. There is a certain necessity for that from our side. As we work with school groups and organisations that are very demanding about what people can do, how they are looked after, and what type of supervision they have. If they are off working with some lady in a field, and she comes out with a machete and something happens, then suddenly we are liable."

The NGO director indicates in the above extract how, due to the upward accountability, he aims to direct indigenous community members to meet certain requirements of the volunteer tourism industry. The NGO does not view itself as imposing arbitrary conditions, but rather enacting necessary guidelines for the operation of a successful volunteer project within the global tourism industry. Therefore the desire of volunteers for adventure (Sin, 2009) coupled with safety (Soderman and Snead, 2008) results in the NGO ensuring that certain global international standards are abided by in the project. To achieve this, the NGO relies on expert knowledge imparted via technocratic forms of delivery such as training workshops, to meet 'universal standards' originating from the Global North. This prioritising of knowledge from the Global North therefore delegitimises or ignores locally based knowledge and understandings of how one should live in the world. The directors' intervention in the communities functions as a typical development practice, which Kothari (2005: 443) describes as a "technical process of intervention that maintains the legitimacy and authority of Western modernity and the dominance of the neoliberal agenda".

Moreover, the similar training being provided to both communities indicates the homogenising nature of capacity building instigated by the NGO, which leaves little space for any alternative conceptualisations of how volunteers should be hosted. In addition to meeting the requirements of the volunteer tourism industry, the director also implies an ulterior motive, stating:

> "It's a great opportunity for us to teach them about nutrition, hygiene, and how to act with foreign people. Because these people are going to come and stay and this is what they are going to expect…With the Tsa'chila, at the beginning they were terrified they could not even come out of their kitchen… It helps us to help them change a bit of their culture, in terms of just doing things a little bit better…Basically, to be normal."

This extract indicates that the NGO interprets volunteer tourism as an opportunity to encourage indigenous members to change or 'modernise' their practices. Such a stance fits with Escobar's (2011) observation of development practitioners being preoccupied with addressing perceived deficiencies within communities of the Global South. The director's statement that they help those indigenous communities which receive volunteer tourists "to be normal", although well-meaning, reflects embedded notions within modernisation theory, particularly of a desire "to make them more like us" (Corbridge, 2007: 179).

In addition to training, indigenous members have developed their performative role as good hosts, particularly in response to the continuous monitoring and auditing by the NGO and guides. The result is that the indigenous communities are subjected to what Baillie-Smith and Laurie (2011: 550) term the "pervasive audit culture associated with neoliberal approaches". Examples of this include NGO staff making regular visits to both communities to discuss the projects, offering advice on how it could be developed further. The NGO also collates feedback from volunteers at the end of their visit, to identify any areas that their experience could be enhanced. The volunteer guides also monitor indigenous members' performance, and encourage them to act in specific ways. As one French guide in the Kichwa community explained:

> "When we are eating I always say to the indigenous hosts, "come here and join us". It is difficult to get them to join, but sometimes they do. I think they don't have the confidence, and also meals here are not so much of a social occasion as in France. I think it's good though, if they can discuss with the volunteers their work and share stories whilst eating."

The guide therefore indicates how he aims to direct indigenous members to tell stories about their lives and the community during meal times, with the aim of signalling to volunteers that they are receiving an intimate experience. It has been well documented that volunteers desire such an interaction (Conran, 2011), and how such experiences are a major motivation for participation in volunteer tourism (Lo and Lee, 2011). This desire is a central argument of MacCannells' (1973: 592) classic thesis, in which he argues that tourists are dissatisfied with a mere performance and strive for truth and intimacy by "being at one with their hosts". Recognition of volunteer tourism's positioning as providing such an encounter, therefore results in the guide directing indigenous members to perform, ultimately selling this intimacy as part of the volunteer tourism experience.

The guides' direction to indigenous members is not limited to their contact with volunteers, but also incorporates wider sustainability goals, as Tom an American guide in the Kichwa community alludes:

> "I always try to stress to them the importance of buying locally. I'm sure otherwise they would just go to one of the big stores you see in town…I don't want them to do that, when they could buy a few things from different people locally. This is better for the environment, as it is more likely to be natural than something imported from, well, who knows where? Also it helps the local economy, and in that way we can really help to make sure the benefits of us being here are spread more widely around the community."

In such contexts the guides ensure that volunteer tourists' generally high concern for sustainability (Gray and Campbell, 2007) is being met, by directing and monitoring the project leaders' procurement decisions. The role of guides therefore goes beyond simply translating host members' actions, to actively crafting and directing them, ensuring that they operate in a manner appealing to volunteers. The direction provided by the NGO and guides can be interpreted as aiming to transform indigenous members into subjects suitable for working within the tourism industry. Bondi (2005: 501) notes that the purpose of professionalisation is encouraging members to adopt "modes of action that express autonomous, decision-making agency, at the same time as submitting to disciplinary mechanisms". The indigenous

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members clearly adopted certain strategies, practices, and behaviours that are expected from professional employees of the tourist industry.

5.2.3 Self-monitoring

Indigenous community members also reflected on their interactions with volunteers, resulting in a refinement of their performance in order to improve the experience provided. This level of reflection is especially evident in conversations about personal changes made since being part of the project. For example, in the Kichwa community, Veronica stated:

> "I had to learn to be much more talkative around foreign people. I understand that they want to learn about the community and our lives. So it's important for me to be able to talk to them about this. Also it is important to be organised, as they like to know what tasks they will complete, what time is breakfast and dinner, and things like that."

Diego the project leader in the Tsa'chila community similarly comments on how the group members have changed since receiving volunteers:

> "We have learnt a lot since receiving volunteers such as being punctual and organised. It was difficult but little by little we have learnt. Now when we receive volunteers we ask them what they like and what they dislike to make a list to buy all the food for them. We understand that some volunteers are vegetarians or don't like certain food".

The indigenous members therefore, through experiential learning, improve their performance or develop their product for the global market. In achieving this, the hosts display characteristics and adopt strategies that one would traditionally associate with professional tourism employees. For example, Hochchild (1983) proposed in *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* that employees in service roles are expected to manage their emotions, so that they express and evoke feelings within both themselves and others. To achieve this, Hochchild (1983) deduced that those employed in service roles employ 'surface' and 'deep' acting techniques to mask their true feelings. Surface acting involves presenting oneself in such a way that desired emotions are simulated whilst any

negative emotions are suppressed. There was evidence of this being adopted by certain indigenous members, as illustrated by Carolina's statement in the Kichwa community:

> "If I am angry or upset with my husband, I would never show this to volunteers. I would go outside, or wait until the volunteers have left, before discussing it with him. It's important to show that that we are good people, and don't display problems in front of the volunteers. I think this also sets a good example to my children as well, how to behave in front of guests."

Carolina, in this instance, employs surface acting to hide her true emotions when in the presence of volunteers, fitting with how Goffman (1959) notes that subjects will conceal certain emotions to protect the ideal standards or desired image they want to present. This type of action is not confined to the home, but also occurs in all interactions with volunteers more broadly. As Roberto in the Tsa'chila community states:

> "We can't say to the volunteers "there is no-one to welcome you", or "we are busy or tired, come back later". No, we have to be there, be welcoming, do our job, and act professional. That is what I always do, and that's what others have to do if we want this project to become more successful."

Indigenous members therefore adopt surface acting techniques to convey positive emotions to the volunteers, regardless of how they are feeling at the time. The aim of this is to emphasise their professionalism and to promote a desirable image of themselves to the volunteer. In addition to such surface performances there was also evidence of what Hochchild (1983) terms 'deep acting'. Deep acting is the process whereby those in a service role change their internal feelings to produce more natural and genuine emotional displays to meet organisational expectations (Hochchild, 1983). This can be seen when members of both communities employ a technique of viewing volunteers like members of their family:

"No matter how long volunteers are here, I try to think of them as part of the family" [Mariela Tsa'chila community].

"When volunteers stay with me, I think about them like they are one of the family, like they are my children. I try to make sure they are safe and happy. Some of them even refer to me as their mother, which makes me feel so warm and happy" [Carolina Kichwa Community].

The technique of deep acting therefore ensures that the host members are able to provide the close, intimate interaction that volunteers desire during their time within the community. Although volunteer tourism is not a homogenous product as discussed in Chapter Two, the performance of a particular role by host community members tends not to be considered within the volunteer tourism literature. Barbieri *et al.* (2012: 513), for example, in a study of volunteer tourism in Rwanda, note the "remarkable" efforts of local builders to teach traditional construction techniques to volunteers. They speculate that this reflects the reciprocity embedded within volunteer tourism, which distinguishes this activity from traditional tourism. However, they do not consider the possibility that the builders were performing their role as welcoming hosts for volunteer tourists. This chapter has therefore worked to illustrate how the welcoming indigenous host that the volunteer tourist encounters is a performance that has been developed over time, formed through the use of strategic techniques, and allowing the indigenous host to hide any non-desirable emotions.

5.2.4 Overt Signs of Indigeneity

In addition to performing a role as a hospitable host, indigenous members also display overt signs of indigeneity to conform to Western imaginaries of indigenous people. An example of this is the Tsa'chila group magnifying and emphasising their 'otherness' to the volunteers, by agreeing that all members in the presence of volunteers should conform to a specific homogeneous visual Tsa'chila appearance. As Rafael explains:

"It is important because we like to show to volunteers our traditional clothes, as this is important to show our identity to them. They want to see and

experience things that are different to their home countries. Also, this helps us to preserve our customs." (Focus group 7)

The process of creating a particular visual image of difference in the minds of the volunteers illustrates the power of the tourist gaze, encouraging hosts to conform to particular signs of indigeneity. The result is limited space for indigenous people to illustrate the complexity and hybridity of their lives to the volunteers. The adoption of this practice whilst in the presence of volunteers, is thus indicative of how host members perceive volunteers as tourists, despite any discursive creation otherwise by the volunteer tourism industry. The use of indigenous dress to conform to a particular notion of indigeneity is not uncommon in the tourism industry. For example, Crain (1996) traces how the Quimsenas in the Andes dress to produce an authentic look of 'Indian-ness', inspired by colonial imagery and approved by the elite, to gain a competitive advantage for employment in the service industry. They therefore employ 'strategic essentialism' in utilising the preoccupation of global elites with their authenticity to their own advantage, therefore turning the gaze back on the coloniser. The simulated otherness employed within the Tsa'chila group can be seen as a further use of this technique, in this case creating an appealing image for volunteer tourists' to consume.

Figure 17. Tsa'chila displaying overt sign of indigeneity. (Source: Author's photograph)

Figure 18. Tsa'chila displaying overt sign of indigeneity (Source: Author's photograph)

Figures 17 and 18 illustrate how indigenous members conform visually, in the presence of volunteer tourists, to western imaginaries of indigenous people in order to satisfy the volunteer gaze. In addition to the visual signs of indigeneity, host members are also expected to possess a detailed knowledge of their cultural practices and locality, in accordance with the colonial fantasy of indigenous people being the gatekeepers to ancient cultural and environmental knowledge. Failure to perform such a role can result in negative feedback, as Ricardo in the Tsa'chila community recalls:

> "An American woman chose me to be the guide of her group and asked some things that I didn't know, about my province and Tsa'chila culture. She said to me: "You are very bad as a guide". I felt so bad in this moment, I wanted to drop out of the group. But I stayed and learnt a lot more, and now can talk a lot about my culture and the place."

Similarly, within the Kichwa community it was noted how volunteers had a specific notion of indigeneity that they were interested in learning about, and which was subsequently catered for. As Alexis in the Kichwa community notes:

> "The volunteers want to learn about our relationship with the land and community, and so I always take volunteers on a guided walk where I emphasise this to them. For example, I talk about Mingas and how we work together in the community, also about the plants and their medical properties.

They just go to the pharmacy, so they find it interesting learning about what we can get from nature"

The importance of a sense of community (Conran, 2011) and having a close relationship with the land (Vrasti, 2013) is frequently identified as an appealing aspect of volunteer tourism. Butcher and Smith (2015) note that this reflects the feeling of remoteness and impersonality in Western society, or Gesellschaft. Similarly, MacCannell (1973), in his thesis, argues how tourists search for authenticity in others times and places, as opposed to the inauthenticity of Western modes of life. Alexis therefore appears to respond strategically to this desire by emphasising the importance of community and land to indigenous people, whilst not divulging information which would contradict this perception. The indigenous members in both communities therefore responded to volunteers' romanticised notions of indigeneity, performing and emphasising aspects of their culture, an act which reinforces rather than challenges this imaginary. It became evident during the research process that the Tsa'chila were keen to learn the expectations that volunteers have of them, as can be seen from the following extract from my field diary:

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Analysis Field Diary Extract: 15th August 2015

"Throughout my time in the community, the Tsa'chila group leader has asked my opinions on a number of issues: from whether they should use soap in the river, to which of their cultural practices they should emphasise to volunteers. It is apparent he believes the group need to project a particular image to the volunteers, if they are going to make the project more successful."

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Figure 19. Analysis field diary extract 5

The indigenous hosts therefore appear eager to gain extra knowledge to be able to conform to the image that Western volunteers associate with indigenous people, be it environmentally conscious or mystical cultural practices. Goffman (1959: 52) notes how:

"in those interactions where the individual presents a product to others, he will tend to show them only the end product, and they will be led into judging him on the basis of something that has been finished, polished, and packaged."

The self-presentation of indigenous hosts appears to the volunteers as natural, rather than one that has been refined and developed over time through training and previous interactions.

Indigenous hosts adopt a performative role as a response to market forces, but also in a desire to present their community and culture positively to a global audience. Consequently, the volunteer project is interpreted as a means to counteract negative stereotypes propagated within Ecuadorian society, such as an association of indigenous people with being "dirty, unclean or backward" (Swanson, 2007: 709). Typical statements, illustrative of this, included:

"I hope volunteers have a good time and see that we are good people. I think it's good they can see that the negative things people say about us is not true." [Sarah, Kichwa community]

"I think its good that volunteers come here. They don't come because they want to laugh at us, but because they want to learn about our culture. Some people in the community don't seem to realise this. I believe we show people that they should be proud of being Tsa'chila." [Lionel, Tsa'chila community]

These statements by indigenous project members in both communities, emphasise the importance of their culture being respected and presented in a positive light to volunteers. The transformation of the culture and community into a product to be sold within the global capitalist system is therefore undertaken on condition that negative stereotypes are not propagated and reinforced. This has important implications for how the project is organised, as it is ensures that efforts are made to create a positive image of the communities within the minds of volunteers. In their analysis of volunteer tourism in an indigenous Maori community in New Zealand, McIntosh and Zahra (2007: 553) note how volunteers learnt about gang culture and illegal narcotics. The result is that it allowed them to gain an understanding of the community that was

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"authentic, genuine, [and] reflexive" in comparison to that gained by mere tourists. Conversely, within the Tsa'chila and Kichwa communities, volunteers are shielded from the less reputable members of the community in the name of protecting the communities' image. As a consequence the volunteers only interact with the community's elite, limiting their potential for a more rounded or in-depth understanding of community life.

5.2 Disneyfication of Indigenous Members

The processes and negotiations moulding the performance of indigenous members in the volunteer space results in the Disneyfication of the communities. Bryman (1999: 26) defines Disneyfication as "the process by which the principles of the Disney theme parks are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world". An important aspect of this is encouraging a particular behaviour by employees, as "the style and quality of the employees' service are critical in the consumer's perception" (Matusitz and Palermo, 2014: 99). As a consequence, Bryman (1999) refers to how Disney staff are trained to present a certain demeanour and use a particular language, conveying the impression that they are not just working, but having fun too. Parallels can be drawn with the performance of indigenous members in both communities, who control their emotions to portray a welcoming, happy demeanour and mask any capitalistic intentions. This is highlighted in an extract from my field diary:

Participation Observation Field Diary Extract: 1st September 2015

"It is notable that indigenous members who are involved in the project always refer to participants as volunteers, never as tourists. Furthermore, they will always thank volunteers for their work and refer to this as important for the community; any monetary reward from their visit is never mentioned."

Figure 20. Participant observation field diary extract 6

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As a result, like a theme park where the guests pay once to create the illusion of everything being free inside, the 'volunteer space' is presented as devoid of capitalistic motivations. This performance may be justified, as Gray and Campbell (2007) noted in their study of a turtle conservation project in Costa Rica, when discussing the disappointment volunteer tourists expressed when they believed local people were primarily motivated by the monetary benefit of their presence, rather than the work they undertook. Additionally, the utilisation of signs of indigeneity, such as environmental consciousness and a detailed knowledge of historical and cultural practices, allow a 'theme' or brand to be sold to volunteers.

The performance of indigenous community members is one that the principles of *Buen Vivir* have been internalised and practiced. The indigenous members present relationships within the community, and with the natural environment, as reciprocal and complementary, rather than exhibiting capitalistic notions of monetary exchange and a search for economic growth. The complexity of achieving *Buen Vivir* in a society composed of indigenous subjects with fluid and hybrid identities remains unaddressed, replaced with static and timeless subjects living in harmony within their community. The transformation of *Buen Vivir* into a product to be sold within the global volunteer tourism market therefore risks it potentially becoming an empty signifier of an ancient imagined past, rather than a concept under construction, offering an alternative to the neo-liberal capitalist system. The overall performance of indigeneity, therefore, is one that is pleasant and easily understood by the volunteers, as it fits within, rather than challenges, their existing imaginaries of indigenous people. Although in the Kichwa community project, members did not have to conform to visual notions of indigeneity as in the Tsa'chila community, it is notable that a similar performative role occurs within both communities, as the field diary extract below indicates:

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Participant Observation Field Diary Extract: 5th
September 2015

"Today another group of volunteers left the Tsa'chila
community. To mark the occasion there was a series of
indigenous dances, which the volunteers were encouraged to
participate in. This was followed by the volunteers being
presented with a small gift, a bracelet, whilst the leader gave
a speech thanking them for their visit and their hard work.
This has occurred when each group leaves the community.
Interestingly, I noted the same events within the Kichwa
project when volunteers left, with a dance, gift, and speech all
occurring".

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Figure 21. Participant observation field diary extract 6

This extract illustrates how the processes and negotiations indicated within Figure 16 result in a homogenised performance being provided that volunteers consume. Furthermore, this provides an indication of how "capitalist markets simplify and standardise social practices in order to extract a profit" (Scott, 1998: 8). Therefore, like a Disney theme park, a world is created for the consumer that is sanitised, clean, civilised, and devoid of context, complexity and contradiction. The following section explores this further, arguing that the physical space volunteers encounter is also moulded for their consumption.

5.3 The Moulding of the Volunteer Space

Volunteer tourism is discursively positioned as providing the opportunity for volunteers to travel beyond traditional tourist settings (Wearing, 2001) into what MacCannell (1974) terms the 'backstage' of communities. In both communities, however, a volunteer space had been created and sculpted for volunteers. This space has similarities with Wilson and Richards' (2011) description of backpacker spaces being suspended, providing both the exotic and familiar, or the here and there. In the Tsa'chila community this took the form of a cultural centre, separate from the community, and at a distance requiring motorised transport. In the Kichwa community, two volunteer houses have been constructed for volunteers, located

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centrally within the town. Although different, the locations of these volunteer spaces shared a commonality, in that they acted as barrier separating the volunteers from the rest of the community. The result is the creation of a volunteer enclave, providing Western comforts such as showers, bedding, and dietary requirements, whilst limiting contact with members not part of the project. Both indigenous groups explained that they felt it was necessary to create such a space so that volunteers could be catered for, to the standards they require. This can be seen from how Diego, a member of the Tsa'chila group, described why they built the cultural centre:

> "We built this cultural centre as we wanted to provide somewhere for the volunteers to stay and where we could demonstrate our cultural practices. Unfortunately, we built it without thinking through how to make the design appealing to volunteers. We would like to hire an engineer to design the cabins so that they are of a traditional Tsa'chila design, and fit in with the natural environment. My grandmother told me that Tsa'chila used to sleep on the floor, but we will have beds for volunteers."

The indigenous hosts' conceptions of foreign people requiring comfort, coupled with a desire to project a positive image of the community, therefore resulted in the creation of these volunteer enclaves. In the Tsa'chila group there was, however, disappointment with the cultural centre, in that they now recognise the value of portraying signs of indigeneity which were not incorporated into its construction. The Tsa'chila group recognise the need to display signs of indigeneity to appeal to Western romantic imageries, whilst satisfying similarly Western notions of comfort. Carnaffan (2010) noted, in a study of homestay tourism in Peru, how, in response for tourists demands for difference and markers of authenticity, the leader of the community tourism association strategically responded by building houses using traditional materials. The desire to present the cultural centre in a strategic manner is therefore a response to how "the tourist gaze is structured by culturally specific notions of what is extraordinary and therefore worth viewing" (Urry and Larsen, 2011: 75). Through experience with volunteer tourists, the Tsa'chila are adapting to the 'volunteer gaze' and their desire for exoticism and difference, thereby creating the allure of an indigenous setting.

5.3.1 Space of the Home

In both study sites, volunteers have the opportunity to stay in the homes of indigenous community members. While the possibility of staying in the homes of hosts during a volunteer tourism project has been noted in the literature (Chen and Chen, 2011; Callanan and Thomas, 2005), there has been little analysis of the home as a particular subject of interest within volunteer tourism research (Agyeiwaah *et al.*, 2014). Studies, such as Callanan and Thomas (2005), have situated volunteers staying in the homes of host members as providing the possibility of deeper immersion and interaction. Similarly, Sin (2009: 497) noted the motivation of volunteers to "go beyond superficial tour packages where you don't see how people really live". The home of host community members appears to be interpreted in the schema of a place proposed by Saunders (1989: 181), in which people "relax, [can] be themselves and establish their own rules of conduct", which volunteers can then visit. There is clearly a need to problematise the construction of the home within volunteer tourism research because, as Blunt (2005) notes, a home is more than a place; it is symbolically and materially important as a political space, in terms of both its internal intimacies and how it interfaces with the outside world. For example, Johnston and Valentine (1995), in a study spanning New Zealand and the UK, observed how lesbians living in their parental home felt pressured to restrict performing their sexual identity, as they were cautious of the family gaze. Further, Brickell (2013) noted how homes of missionaries in Albania were political spaces, with their location, size, and interior trappings all being deemed symbolic of their relationship with the local people and the evangelical mission. Similarly, in both indigenous communities under study here, the homes hosting volunteers were spaces to convey a message; namely, that indigenous people were able to provide a safe, clean home for volunteers, and thereby countering negative stereotypes propagated within Ecuadorian Society, that indigenous people are "dirty, lazy, irrational and backward" (Colloredo-Mansfeld, 1998: 186). To achieve this there were strict parameters which had to be met before an indigenous member could receive volunteers, as Diego, the project leader in the Tsa'chila community, describes:

> "To receive volunteers, families must provide them with a room to themselves, or one that they will only share with another volunteer, mosquito nets, clean water, good bedding, whilst not being too noisy and not too far away from the cultural centre."

These parameters were also set within the Kichwa community as Samuel the project leader reflects:

> "Other families want to receive volunteers in their houses but the problem is the families don't have a place to receive volunteers: the house is small, there aren't rooms or they dont have time to attend them... I think this isn't good for the image of the community. I plan their activities and look after them so they can enjoy this new experience in the community".

To ensure volunteer tourists were catered for the Kichwa group went further than improving their homes, to building specific houses for receiving volunteers. A French guide, commenting on this, stated:

> "I told them they did not need to build new houses for volunteers, as they could stay in their houses, but they did not agree. They did not think volunteers would want to live like them, so they built new houses to receive them."

The French guide appeared to encourage the indigenous members to present their ordinary life, rather than overly catering for volunteers. For example, later in the interview he continued:

> "I tell them that they do not have to give meat to volunteers every day. I say "you do not eat meat every day, so don't feel like you have to change so much for the volunteers". Still, though, as I'm sure you have found, they provide meat each day."

In encouraging the host community members to provide a rudimentary home and service to volunteers, the guide aims to create a space that reflects Western narratives of 'primitive' indigenous people. Scholars such as Mostafanezhad (2013) note how volunteer tourists frequently link the authenticity of their trip with the experience of

the poverty, which may support the action of this guide. This, however, was rejected by the indigenous members who believed volunteers expected a particular standard of comfort which they wanted to provide. For example, in the Tsa'chila community, Matias recalled how he changed his house for the volunteers:

> "No, we did not change anything, just painted some of the walls… [later in conversation] We did build another room for the volunteers. As when volunteers stayed here, my family would all stay in one room, and the volunteers would have one room to themselves. We didn't mind this, as its normal here in Ecuador for families to stay together, but the volunteers felt bad. I think they felt sorry for us staying in one room. I didn't want them to feel bad, so I built another room which they can stay in".

The act of painting walls, by Matias, to improve his home to receive volunteers, was typical, with each host describing how they had cleaned or improved some aspect of their home prior to the volunteer tourists' arrival. Matias went even further, however, as he built an additional room to his home, to ensure the volunteer tourists did not experience any feelings of ill ease. These findings indicate how, rather than explain to volunteers the Tsa'chila traditional living arrangements, and how they were happy to stay in one room, he chose to alter his home. As a result, an opportunity for cultural exchange and reflection on the part of volunteers, in relation to their assumptions regarding family and comfort, was missed in the name of hospitality. This indicates that a particular indigenous mode of life is presented to volunteers, one that satisfies volunteers' romanticised visions of living with local indigenous families, but does little to challenge their own position and perspective. The desire of participants to provide a good home for volunteer tourists challenges assertions by Barbieri *et al*. (2012: 514), who, in proposing volunteer tourists stay in homestays, state this "should not be an arduous task, especially since this type of tourist tends to require lesser amenities than mainstream tourists". Evidence from both host communities, however, indicates that despite its discursive positioning, considerable work is undertaken to host volunteer tourists.

To ensure that particular levels of comfort and cleanliness are maintained, indigenous hosts are subject to constant monitoring and surveillance by the NGO, volunteers,

and other indigenous group members. Failing to meet the required standards results in members being expelled from the group, as Veronica explains:

> "We received many complaints from volunteers who stayed in that family's house. They said they found fleas in their beds, and the sheets and blankets were dirty. Volunteers were getting sick, and one day one had to be taken to hospital. These types of problems were very bad for the image of the community."

The expulsion of group members for failing to meet the required standards of care illustrates how seriously the group take the presentation of home to volunteers. Brickell (2013), in her study in Albania, observed how missionaries would judge other missionaries by their home, subsequently making assumptions about their relation to the community and the evangelical mission. In a similar way, indigenous members would judge other members on the upkeep of their home, with only those deemed of a high enough standard being able to host or to continue to host volunteers. The home in both communities has therefore taken on the form of both a commercial and political space: commercial, in that it represents an important facet of the product that has to be maintained and developed to sell to volunteers; political, as the home is utilised to demonstrate that they are modern, good people, capable of providing hospitality to Western volunteers.

5.4 Volunteer Space within the Community

The guides within the community also aim to influence how the hosts construct their environment, so that they can satisfy their volunteers' desires. This can be seen from the statement below, by a French guide within the Kichwa community:

> "At one time they got some bikes and horses for volunteers, and there was also an idea of having a zip-line across the lake for volunteers to use. I said I would not be able to bring my volunteers to the community anymore, as my volunteers get angry with me, they say they want to go to a place with local people, live in a local community, not to be in some professional tourist place. I have already had people complain because it is not like living with real native people. It's up to them which direction they want to go….You do not see bikes here any more, compared to two years ago, so that's good."

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The unequal power dynamic is evident in this statement as, although the French guide stresses it is for the group to decide how the project should operate, by stating he would no longer be able to bring volunteers to the community, he coerces the host members to abide by his recommendations. The French guide's concern would appear to reflect the classic paradox of utilising tourism as a development tool. This is succinctly summarised by Boissevain (1992: 9), who notes:

> "Tourists are attracted to rural, unspoilt, primitive, tranquil environments, which the host populous embrace as an opportunity to modernise, encouraged by disparaging representations of their backward nature. The ultimate result being the destruction of the very features, which attracts tourists and the need for a new 'unspoilt' destination to be uncovered".

The scenario outlined above is the basis of Butler's (1980) life cycle model, which charts the rise and fall of tourist destinations in six stages, from the discovery stage to eventual decline or rejuvenation. The negative reaction of volunteer tourists to development within destination areas is identified by Gray and Campbell (2007: 476), whose study noted the desire of volunteers for maintaining the current level of development, with one respondent stating "I wouldn't like to see it more civilized". This perspective falls in line with Butcher's (2005) critique of what he termed the 'New Moral Tourists', who elevate nature over development, regardless of the desires of the local populace. The guides' intervention, in this instance, therefore actively works to constrain tourism development, to protect what MacCannell (1976: 160) would describe as "the primitive, the natural, that which is untouched by modernity", or what Urry and Larsen (2011) would refer to as the 'romantic gaze' of the undisturbed, that tourists appreciate and search out. MacCannell's (1976) observation that indigenous people can become 'hostages to authenticity' is equally as valid for volunteer tourism as it is for mainstream tourism enterprises.

The desire of volunteers for signs of indigeneity also encouraged certain indigenous practices to re-emerge, as identified by the French guide:

"I knew an old man who made typical sandals from a local plant. He gave up this job, but then I started to bring volunteers to see him. He would show them how he made the sandals, and he was very happy. His grandson then became interested in this and asked if he could teach him, and he now gives demonstrations sometimes. So this is a good aspect of volunteer tourism as it revitalises the native culture."

Furthermore, Nicolas, a member of the Kichwa community who was not actually part of the project, had just opened a restaurant to cater for the increasing numbers of foreign visitors. In describing the restaurant, he stated:

"I have lived in Europe and have now returned to the community as my wife is here. I have built this using local material and natural products. I understand that foreign people want places to be traditional and sustainable, that's why I think my restaurant will be a success."

The colonial fantasies about indigenous people therefore encourages, via market forces, the emergence of activities that abide by Western imaginaries of indigenous activities. In discussions with the Kichwa group leader, Samuel, he suggested a future in which other group members would provide demonstrations for volunteers, incorporating different indigenous activities. In addition to displaying signs of indigeneity, the volunteer space provides an environment in which the untrained Western volunteers can make a difference. Evidence of this can be seen when Diego, the leader in the Tsa'chila group, reflected his disappointment when one group of volunteers departed the community:

"It is clear that they were not happy with the tasks we gave them. The thing is, the last group did more work than we were expecting. We also heard they had been travelling around a lot, and so might be tired. We thought they may not want to work too hard, so we did not have many tasks planned for them to do. It is disappointing, but we need to be given more information by the NGO, of the volunteer requirements."

In this instance the group leader recognised that they were unsuccessful in fulfilling the expectations of the volunteers, that they did not create an environment in which

the volunteers felt that they were needed, or could 'make a difference', a feeling that volunteer tourism is based upon (Wearing, 2001). Coghlan (2007) notes disappointment will result when volunteers' expectations are not matched by the experience they receive. Therefore, the group interpret their role as that of creating an environment in which volunteers can play out a desired role of 'helping', and in which they are the grateful recipients. This fits with assertions that communities in the Global South are seen as the "imagined global playground" (Baillie-Smith and Laurie, 2011: 555) for Western citizenship to be exercised, but also suggests that hosts are not passive, but actively developing themselves to facilitate this experience. This is clearly something that is learned over time, as the NGO director recalls from when he first started sending volunteers to the Tsa'chila community:

> "I sent a group of volunteers and they called after a few days, and said how they had done nothing in three days, as there was no work to do. When I asked the group about it they said it was a bit cold outside, so they thought the volunteers would not want to work. It's very hard for them to understand that volunteers are there to work, there to get wet, get calluses on their hands. They would treat them with kid gloves."

The desire of volunteers to work therefore also challenges the perception of the indigenous group in terms of what people wish to do on their vacation, and their notion of what being a good host to volunteers requires.

5.5 Volunteer Space as a Hyper-reality

The processes occurring by hosting volunteer tourists have transformed the indigenous communities into a 'volunteer space' designed to instil an emotional reaction within the volunteers, the result of which is that a hyperreal environment is presented for volunteers to consume. The concept of hyperreality was developed by Baudrillard (1994), who theorised that the world is constructed through simulations of reality. Similarly, Eco (1986) in his thesis on hyperreality, argues imitations do not only reproduce reality, but also try to improve it. The processes occurring in the communities can therefore be seen as refining and reworking the indigenous people and space, in order to fit volunteers' desired imaginaries of an indigenous community. As Brockington *et al.* (2008: 193) note, "When reality differs from the model, it is reality not the model that is expected to change". As a result, the volunteer space can

be viewed as a simulacra, representing an indigenous community that has never existed beyond that of the Western imagination. Allowing the volunteers to play out colonial fantasies of encountering welcoming and primitive indigenous people, who are grateful for their help, whilst all the time being catered for according to Western notions of hospitality. The 'volunteer space' therefore presents an imagined reality, in which the indigenous community is composed of harmonious coexistence between the environment and populace, ignoring important issues such as land reform or the disparity in wealth and opportunity between different community members.

5.6 Conclusion

The findings of this chapter add new insights into understandings of volunteer tourism. This is because to date, scholarly work has tended to portray host community members as passive recipients of volunteer tourists and volunteer organisations (Palacious, 2010; Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004; Conran, 2011). Epitomising such research, Palacious (2010: 25) notes the "mutual learning" or "emotional friendships and solidarities" between volunteers and hosts, whilst not considering the voices of any local community members. The tendency to frame the experience through the lens of the predominantly Northern volunteer or scholar, therefore not only silences host members but also results in them being 'spoken for'. This therefore obfuscates the locally embedded desires and priorities of host members, which may influence how the practice of volunteer tourism unfolds. Taking this position forward, critiques such as Crossley (2012), that volunteers interpret "hosts as poor but happy" (frequently explained by a lack of critical assessment on the behalf of the volunteer [Simpson, 2004]), could also be seen as reflecting the fact that hosts perform a role to instigate particular feelings within the volunteer. Whilst this chapter recognises that there may be different processes at work in different forms of volunteer tourism, it nevertheless illustrates the importance of including the voices of community members in the research process. There has been speculation that the volunteer space may be vulnerable to subterfuge, for example, Sin (2010: 990) postulated that:

> "If communities become more experienced in hosting volunteer tourism, would they then learn to perform such dependencies and desperations so as to fulfill what volunteer tourists have come to expect?"

Similarly, Conran (2011) argues that volunteer projects are often not located in places with particular needs, but in communities that are willing to satisfy their desire for close intimate relations. This chapter would lend weight to these assertions, arguing that host members are active agents in shaping the volunteer experience, through providing a particular space and performance for the activity to be operationalised.

Chapter Two highlighted how there has been a shift from mass tourism products that involve experiencing an environment, to alternative tourism, which aims to provide an experience based on immersion and interaction. Alternative tourism is associated with going beyond a controlled, structured environment that the tourist passively gazes at, to one in which there is unpredictability, reciprocity and, ultimately, deeper meaning (Wearing, 2001). It is within this alternative framework that volunteer tourism is frequently situated, and has led to it being one of the fastest growing forms of tourism (Callanan and Thomas, 2005). The discursive positioning of volunteer tourism is summarised by Brown (2005: 488), who states volunteer tourism "enable[s] tourists to enter physical and conceptual spaces that largely exist independent of the dictates, demands, and tastes of the typical tourism platform". This chapter has highlighted that in the two indigenous communities studied, through a series of processes and negotiations, a particular 'volunteer space' is created that takes on many of the forms of a traditional tourism destination.

Indigenous hosts adopt professional knowledges and specific practices to enable them to function within the global tourism industry. These, however, are often hidden from the volunteer. This allows the volunteer to play out certain colonial fantasies, such as encountering 'primitive' indigenous people that they can interact with, and develop, by 'helping'. The change associated with volunteer tourism therefore has little relation to the nature of the volunteer, but rather involves processes that hosts undergo to create a successful volunteer project. As a consequence, the approach that has dominated existing research, such as identifying factors such as the length of time volunteers are in the community (Callanan and Thomas, 2005), if they speak the local language (Raymond, 2008), or their level of skills and experience (Palacious, 2010), has less relevance than how the hosts adapt themselves to receive volunteers.

This chapter therefore adds new insight to the existing literature, by exploring the power of the 'volunteer gaze' and host members' responses to this within two

indigenous communities. Indeed, the power of the volunteer 'gaze' and host members' response to it is currently absent from the volunteer tourism literature. This should perhaps not be considered surprising, as it is well documented that too little consideration has been given to the community hosting volunteer tourists (Lo and Lee, 2010; Butler and Smith, 2010; Lyons *et al.*, 2012). Focus has been given instead to how volunteers perform during their experience, whether acting as experts (Guttentag, 2009), competing to make a difference (Palacious, 2010), or presenting themselves as carers, in line with international celebrities (Mostafanezhad, 2014). This chapter, however, brings to the fore the unequal power dynamic often hidden within the discourses of volunteer tourism, reflecting volunteers as the consumers of an experience and hosts as the producers. In so doing, it adds insight into how volunteer tourism functions at the local level in two indigenous communities. Chapter Six continues builds on this position, further unpacking how the processes outlined encourage the diffusion of neo-liberal discourses and practices within the indigenous communities.

6   The Mobilisation of Neo-Liberal and *Buen Vivir* Discourses within Ecuadorian Indigenous Communities

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"If tourism triumphs, we all triumph. Tourism is like the rain:

when it comes, it wets everyone"

[Ecuadorian Tourism Minister, Sandra Naranjo, 2014]

6.1   Introduction

The hosting of volunteer tourists and the creation of a volunteer space demonstrates how indigenous members are active agents in shaping the volunteer experience. This, therefore, challenges any discursive positioning of volunteer tourism as being a distinct alternative to more mainstream tourism activities. This chapter unpacks this further, by exploring the processes and outcomes for indigenous members of living within a site for volunteer tourism and thus being incorporated into the global tourism industry. It argues that the creation and maintenance of the volunteer tourist space encourages the uptake and diffusion of neo-liberal discourses and practices within indigenous communities. The result is that divisions within the community are exacerbated, between those more adapted or adaptable to the global capitalist system and those who are marginalised. The discourses of *Buen Vivir* are certainly in evidence, although these are mostly utilised as a language of resistance by those excluded and marginalised by the volunteer projects. Indeed, it shall be shown that, by being an instrument of the neo-liberal capitalist system, volunteer tourism provides little space for *Buen Vivir* to be realised, and thus represents a microcosm of similar processes occurring at the national level.

The chapter begins by examining the political positioning of volunteer tourism within the Kichwa and Tsa'chila communities in Ecuador. The importance of different forms of capital to the indigenous members is then unpacked, and neo-liberal discourses and practices identified. The chapter concludes, however, by providing evidence of *Buen Vivir* in the language of resistance to neo-liberal practices, and by exploring the framework this provides for an alternative conceptualisation of volunteer tourism, in both communities.

Chapter One positioned Ecuador as a country that has undergone a process of neo-liberalisation, continuing to this day, in spite of the uptake of a more progressive political discourse. The practices of the Ecuadorian state have clearly influenced how volunteer tourism has been interpreted by indigenous community members. Evidence of this can be seen from Samuel, the project leader in the Kichwa community, who states:

> "Volunteers have helped us on the water project, fixing the church roof, teaching in the schools. All these things help the community. Tourism will help us in the future as we can develop other types of activities to get income for families, in handcrafts or their own animals and product businesses. This is the only way to improve the lives of people here, as nobody helps us."

This statement challenges assertions by McGehee and Andereck (2008) that hosting volunteer tourists reduces the dignity of host community members, instead indicating that the host community interpret volunteer tourism as taking control over their own development, in response to the inaction of the Ecuadorian state. In this way, volunteer tourism is indicative of how neo-liberalism results in private enterprises and citizens having to manage and contain the social costs of the hollowing out of the State (Harvey, 2005). In conjunction with an NGO, indigenous community members therefore have to take responsibility for their own well-being. However, this results in a very specific form of development aligned with the neo-liberal agenda, focusing on the individual and their ability to function within the market, whilst aiming for poverty reduction, rather than addressing or challenging the deeper structural causes of inequality and marginalisation.

The influence of the Ecuadorian state's discourses and practices were also in evidence in the Tsa'chila community, as can be seen by Sebastian saying:

> "I think the cultural centre is important, as we never practiced tourism here before. The government has made a real effort to make tourism important in Ecuador, and motivate people to come here. I think that has made people want to become more involved in tourism."

> Similarly Diego also in the Tsa'chila community stated:

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"I tried to explain to people about the environment, conservation, and the loss of Tsa'chila culture, but the assembly authorities didn't want to know. Now the President of Ecuador talks about similar issues; we can take advantage of this, to continue working to try and make changes. This is where the project is important."

National discourses, related to *Buen Vivir* and tourism, therefore provided encouragement for people to involve themselves in tourism, whilst also providing space for alternative views that previously struggled for recognition. The successful hosting of volunteers has resulted in Mathew, one local politician, taking greater notice of the project, he stated in an interview that:

"There are areas, such as a water project, where I think we could work closely together. This is something I hope to take forward in the future".

Mathew points to the possibility of collaboration, whereby the volunteer project and his political objectives could be aligned. In this way, the development of the project reflects the outcomes of processes occurring on multiple scales, from the local and national, to the transnational in the case of volunteers. In turn, this can also feed back into political arena, resulting in a loop that creates new possibilities and opportunities for development. Overtly politicising volunteer tourism is not without risks, however, as Alejandro, who left the Tsa'chila group as a result of such an alignment, indicates:

"I do not think the group should get involved in politics. Diego made efforts to work with some authorities I do not agree with. I had great resentment about this, and so I left the group."

This excerpt indicates how, by becoming overtly political, volunteer projects may become burdened with political associations. The appeal of volunteer tourism to local political leaders has also been identified by Zahra and McGehee (2013) in their study in the Philippines. They noted how a local mayor became interested in the volunteer tourists, subsequently inviting them to a political event, while the volunteers instead expressed a preference for spending their time with ordinary local people. Volunteer tourism's positioning as an apolitical act, based on a discourse of solidarity in the minds of volunteers (Tomazos, and Butler, 2009), may explain concern about its

politicisation. Subsequent sections, however, will argue that its implementation is a deeply political act, going beyond a response to the hollowing out of the state and creating a new space for the diffusion of neo-liberal and modernisation-based discourses and practices.

6.1.1 The Importance of Different Roles of Capital

By exploring volunteer projects in the indigenous communities, it is evident that different forms of capital have an important role in their development. Various forms of capital – including social, financial, cultural, and human – influence community members' involvement in, and perception of, volunteer tourism. To some extent it could be argued that referring to notions such as social relations or human behaviour as capital is problematic in that it appears to 'monetise' aspects of life that were previously considered outside the remit of the market. Nevertheless, these concepts are useful for explaining the processes identified in the studied communities. Figure 22, below, adapts Krippendorf's (1987) spectrum of tourist-host encounters, to summarise the influence of different forms of capital on indigenous members' involvement in, and perception of, volunteer tourism.

Project leader	Host families	Work in project	Community residents:
Control: Full	Control: Limited	Control: None	Control: None
Contact: Constant	Contact: Close	Contact: Cursory	Contact: None/sporadic
Types of capital:	Types of capital: Bonding;	Types of capital:	Types of capital: None
Social [linking; bonding];	Cultural; Human; Financial;	social [Bonding];	utilised
Cultural; Human. Financial;	Benefit: Considerable	Human; Cultural	Benefit: None
Benefit: Considerable	Perception: Strongly	Benefit: Limited	Perception: Ambivalent/
Perception: Strongly support	Support	Perception: Support	antagonistic

Figure 22. Influence of different forms of capital on indigenous member's involvement in volunteer tourism. (Source: Author's adaptation of Krippendorf (1987) spectrum of tourist-host encounter)

Figure 22 illustrates how community members in possession of forms of capital, desirable in the neo-liberal capitalist system, have most control over the volunteer tourism projects. The result of this state of affairs is the possibility of further enhancing these forms of capital through their engagement with the project. Conversely, those members not in possession of desirable forms of capital, have the least involvement in the projects, and ability to enhance their capital position. Further explanation and discussion of Figure 22 is provided throughout the subsequent sections.

6.1.1 Social Capital

Chapter Two identified the emergence of social capital as an important concept in the lexicon of development practitioners. However, to date there has been little use of the concept within the volunteer tourism literature, particularly in relation to indigenous communities. The exception to this, are limited studies that have utilised the concept of social capital, such as in Clifton and Benson's (2006) study of volunteer tourism on an Indonesian island. This study although recognising the appropriation of financial benefits by local elites, credits the high degree of social capital with local residents focusing on communal rather than individual benefits. Similarly, Zahra and McGehee's (2013) study on social capital in a community in the Philippines associated volunteer tourism with the creation of bonding and bridging social capital, which had positive outcomes for all those involved. However, although recognising a community as heterogeneous and stratified Zahra and McGehee (2013) do not consider this within their analysis, instead the community is presented as a homogenous entity.

Two types of social capital, 'linking' social capital and 'bonding' social capital, receive the most interest within the development literature. Linking social capital refers to relationships or networks with those external to the community, whilst bonding social capital pertains to horizontal relationships within a community (Pretty, 2003). There was evidence of both of these types of social capital being significant within the indigenous communities in this study. In terms of linking social capital, the relationship between project members and the facilitating NGO, is vital for understanding how the projects have developed. However, this has received little sustained analysis within the academic literature on volunteer tourism. Instead,

scholarly work has focused on the relationship between the NGO and the volunteer tourist. This results in studies focusing on issues such as; the extent NGOs encourage critical preparation and reflection in volunteers (Raymond and Hall, 2008), if the NGO requires the volunteer to possess relevant skills or experience (Simpson, 2004), and if the NGO has instigated mechanisms to ensure that volunteer tasks benefit the community (Zavitz and Butz, 2011). Such a framing reflects the hegemonic discourse of volunteer tourists being the instigators of development, the hosts being passive recipients, and the NGO being the facilitator of this encounter. The relationship between the NGO and host community is an important link, however, as this partnership sets the parameters by which the projects operate. This can be seen from how the NGO director established a relationship with one community member in each community, which facilitated the receiving of volunteer tourists. As the NGO director explains:

> "The main requirement is the need for one reliable person who is very capable and organised, who has a clear vision of what they want for the community. This is because the foundation has very limited resources and so it is easier if we have one person who knows what they are doing. We have worked with the Tsa'chila in a large part because of Diego. He is a great guy, very dedicated and organised. Samuel, in Chilcapamba, for the same reason; he is intelligent, dedicated, and has spoken at the UN, so is streaks ahead of a regular farmer in the field."

The relationship between the NGO and the community is therefore based on the linking social capital of one indigenous member. Embedded within the relationship, however, is the ability of this indigenous member to demonstrate qualities associated with the NGOs perception of good business practice. This approach supports Townsend *et al's*. (2002: 835) observation that NGOs frequently search for the "easiest route to service delivery", as a result communities that do not possess such an individual are excluded from receiving volunteer tourists. The characteristics the NGO searches for, in the individuals they work with, are those that are expected of a neo-liberal subject. As Sugarman (2015: 104) notes, since the neo-liberal turn individuals are expected to possess "personal attributes aligned with enterprise culture, such as initiative, self-reliance, self-mastery, and risk taking". As a

consequence, before even receiving volunteers, the potential to do so rests on one member demonstrating his or her ability to satisfy the requirements of operating within the neo-liberal global capitalist system. The result is that it excludes community members who may have alternative understandings of volunteer tourism, or skills and knowledge that are not appreciated within said system. A lack of linking capital, and the manner by which it excludes certain members, can be inferred by the following reflections of two indigenous members:

> "One family had the opportunity to meet someone who brings volunteers to the community, and so they work with them. We don't have the right connections, so we can't work in tourism like them. We would like the same opportunity." [Leonardo, Kichwa member]

Similarly a Tsa'chila community member states:

> "I would like to receive volunteers; I have plenty of space and it would be nice for the children to meet foreign people. But I don't know how I would go about it. If someone contacted me, and helped me receive volunteers, I would be very happy to do that." [Juliana, Tsa'chila community]

Linking social capital, although essential for the formation of the volunteer project in the communities, excludes those who do not have access to such external relationships. The result is a clear divide within both communities between those members who have contact with outside agencies, and those who rely on being connected to someone with this linking social capital. The importance of this relationship was inferred by Scheyvens (2002: 58) when he observed that "elites within communities often become wealthier than others simply because they have the power and confidence to deal with outsiders". The NGO therefore implicitly influences the nature of the volunteer project, through the criteria it sets before working with a particular indigenous community. During discussions with the Director of the NGO, he was explicit in explaining how they aim to influence community:

"It's a good idea for community members to make decisions, but they don't have the preparation to understand what the options are, and what is most relevant to them in terms of development. It needs dialogue between us and them to move forward. It can take years to educate them. We will speak to group or representative and say the same points over and over again."

The notion that indigenous members have to be educated to perceive the world in the same way as the NGO demonstrates the clear paternalistic relationship and the top-down structure of the volunteer projects in the communities studied. The result is that the volunteer space is one that is framed by the knowledge and practices of the Global North, leaving little space for alternative conceptualisations. The NGO, having the power to send volunteers to the host community, therefore creates an unequal power dynamic between the two parties. The NGO Director rationalises this by stating:

"If they were organised, if they knew how to do things, they would not need our help. These are the problems that they have to overcome, the skills that they have to learn to be able to take advantage of what they have got there".

There is support for this assertion within the tourism literature, as Fuller *et al.* (2005) note how, without training, indigenous people often lack the skills and experience to effectively manage a tourism enterprise. The language utilised by the NGO director, however, shares close similarities with the notion of trusteeship during the colonial era, in which:

"development was a process that had to be managed by experts…to civilize others, to strengthen the weak, to give experience to the child-like colonial peoples who required supervision" (Mercer *et al*., 2003: 423).

The critique of the neo-colonial nature of volunteer tourism is typically against the actions of volunteers as the instigators of development (Palacious, 2010); it does, however, appear that it is the NGO that aims to specify the nature of the development framing the actions of indigenous members. The unequal 'partnership' between the NGO and host communities is one that development theorists have long identified and critiqued (Noxolo, 2006). It therefore indicates how similar neo-liberal processes are at work, even if it is packaged within the relatively recent phenomenon of volunteer tourism. The NGO director, in justifying their approach, appears to view

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himself and the indigenous members as being powerless within the global system, noting:

> "Indigenous communities in Ecuador have tended to be exploited by people with more resources, intelligence or connections…We are just helping them get a foot on the economic ladder, but it's going to be on the bottom. So they will be screwed anyway. But at the same time, that's the way the world is. We can try and help them get a bit of control over their environment."

The inevitability of the global system and its exploitative nature or, in the terms of Thatcherism, 'there being no alternative', was a theme throughout the NGO director's responses, although he appeared to do little to reflect on how his foundation contributes to, and expands, this system within indigenous communities. It would, however, be too simplistic to consider the indigenous members as having no agency within this relationship. Chapter Five indicated that indigenous members would only adopt policies that represented their culture in a positive manner; furthermore, they would also only accept guidance if it was presented to them in a manner that they deemed acceptable. This can be seen in how Daniel, a Tsa'chila community member, described why they refused to work with one representative of the NGO:

> "There was one representative of the NGO [who has now left], that we refused to work with, as she would always criticise us and look down at us because she considered us poor. She would say we had poor nutrition and only eat empanadas. We would be happy to learn more about nutrition, but in a good way, not with her just saying what we eat is really bad without giving us any advice."

The refusal to work with this representative may reflect the importance of food in the Andean region. For example, Weismantel (1989) notes how culinary distinction is embedded within notions of personal and group identity, and therefore the overt criticism of culinary practices can be interpreted as a criticism of indigenous identity itself. The relationship between the NGO and project members was one of negotiation, and fraught with historical mistrust on the part of indigenous community members of outside agencies. The NGO director implied this during a discussion, in which he stated:

> "Tsa'chila say we steal all the money and you need us more than we need you. It's not true, we are very open and transparent as an organisation. But I just say it's up to you if you want to work with us or not."

The unequal status of the partnership is evident within this statement, as the NGO has the flexibility to work with a variety of communities in Ecuador. This is because the NGO possess the knowledge and expertise tailored to the global tourist market, which it can bring to any interested community. As Keese (2011: 260) notes, "unlike governmental programmes, NGOs can pick and choose more easily where they work". Conversely, the indigenous members, after committing time and money to the project, are reliant on the expertise of external agencies to ensure a supply of volunteer tourists.

6.2.1.1   Bonding Social Capital

A key element of social capital is that it represents trust and shared norms within a community, which Putnam (1995) argues is the vital ingredient for economic development. There is evidence to support this in both communities, with the projects relying on relationships of trust between group members. For example, in both projects members described working closely together, sharing knowledge and relying on an understanding that they would share future rewards. The following statements begin to demonstrate this:

> "We worked very hard at the beginning and did not receive anything for this, as no volunteers were coming. Diego used to tell us that volunteers are going to come soon. I started to not believe, as some projects have failed before. Some families left, but we kept on working hard, and now the volunteers come." [Samantha, Tsa'chila group member]

> "At the beginning my husband designed and built the houses and nobody paid him for this. I lend Samuel things when he needs them and, for example, helped him the other day when volunteers turned up unannounced. We always help Samuel when he needs it." [Veronica, Kichwa group member]

The trusting relationship and shared norms within the group are therefore integral for the development of projects, and their continued success, and supporting arguments about the value placed on indigenous social capital as "the start-up capital for

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sustainable social and economic development" (Deruyttere, 1997: 10). It is evident, however, that this trusting relationship only existed amongst members of the group, with the wider community having little involvement with the volunteer project. The bonding and close relationship between project members results in what Portes and Landolt, (1996) term the 'dark side of social capital', which results in it being acquired by a small group at the expense of the wider community (Vermaak, 2009). Similarly, Eccleston and Field (2003) note that a lack of information and skills exchange can occur, whereby extremes of socio-economic equality result in social capital being utilised to gain status and power, rather than encourage cooperation. Figure 22 highlighted how those involved in the projects had forms of capital, which are desired by the global tourism industry (e.g. financial, social and human); by being involved in the group, these are enhanced, exacerbating the divide between themselves and wider community residents.

6.1.2 Financial Capital

In both communities, having financial savings or ability to access a bank loan, was an important determinant of an indigenous member's position within the project. This is because in order to host volunteers in their house, members would frequently build a new house – as in the Kichwa community – or make modifications to it – as in the Tsa'chila community. Both projects provided no financial reward whilst being established, but did require considerable time in terms of training and preparing for the volunteers arrival. The result of this was that members involved were comfortable in their financial situation or able to access credit to invest in the project and wait for the future rewards. Conversely, indigenous members with limited finances needed to prioritise satisfying their immediate concerns:

> "We had to work so hard at the beginning to build the cultural centre for the volunteers. We were here almost every day doing something. It was a lot of work." [Ricardo, Tsa'chila group member]

> "When we started the project we had to work a lot to build the cultural centre, to what you see today. At that time, we didn't receive any volunteers, so received no benefits for this. Some people left the group, as they needed a job to maintain their family" [Jesus, Tsa'chila group member]

> "We had to get financial credit to build this house for the volunteers. Yes, we get money when volunteers stay here, but part of the money goes to pay the loan. We have had to work a lot and it was very difficult to pay back. Many people criticise us, because they didn't want to invest, but now they are not happy when we make money." [Veronica, Kichwa group member]

The importance placed on finance indicates that members viewed the project as an investment that they hoped would result in financial reward. In both communities, however, there were concerns about these rewards. In the Tsa'chila community, its remote location resulted in the project receiving low numbers of volunteers and subsequently very little financial return. The result of this was that fourteen families ceased their participation in the project, predominantly because of the financial costs of involvement. As Lucas explains:

> "I do not understand the value in the project. I know if I work in my field I can make money and support my family but, in the project, we did not receive many volunteers, so I don't understand the value in it."

The limited financial return is clearly a concern for those still involved in the group, as they recognise that financial security is essential for the project's future viability. This is recognised by Diego in the Tsa'chila community:

> "We need to understand better how we can make money from the project. Next year, I would like us to advertise on television and radio. Also I think we need more training, as we have learnt a lot but still need to learn more about working in tourism. I know some people left the group because we don't make much money. But we need to be patient; some people expect instant reward, they need to look more long-term."

The focus on marketing and training indicates how the project leader identifies a need to embrace mechanisms of the global capitalist system, to ensure the project's continuation. The difficulties faced by the project are not uncommon; for example, Dixey (2008) notes that despite community tourism being in vogue, many projects struggle for viability, due to their lack of market orientation.

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In the Kichwa community, the project has been more successful in attracting volunteers, reflecting its accessibility in relatively close proximity to Quito, and a clearly defined project for the volunteers to participate in. There is clear tension, however, within the community, in relation to how the financial benefits of volunteer tourism is distributed. In particular, many members of the community feel only the project leader and his immediate family benefit from volunteer tourism. This reflects volunteers only staying in accommodation provided by the project leader or, if he can not accommodate them, in accommodation provided by one of his relatives. The project leader and his family therefore receive financial benefits both from direct payment for hosting volunteers and indirectly through receiving gifts from volunteers. Reflecting on the financial rewards, Mary, in the Kichwa community, stated the following about the project leader:

> "He has two houses, he has just bought a new car, and his children in the best schools. He has everything. I have nothing. It's not fair that he keeps everything for himself. I'm so upset just thinking about it. But there is nothing I can do"

Financial concerns also framed the opinions of community members who were no longer involved, but had invested time and finance into the project:

> "You see this house, we built this for the volunteers. I had such high hopes but now we don't receive any volunteers, we have lost so much. I am so angry, but what can I do." [Leonardo Kichwa community member]

Whilst Stephanie, a Kichwa project member who only receives volunteers sporadically, stated:

> "By the time I bought bedding and things to make them comfortable, I actually lost money by hosting the volunteers. I hoped I would receive more, but no, I don't know when I will receive volunteers in my house again."

The disappointment of these members is particularly acute because they have adopted practices expected of a neo-liberal subject, taking a risk, and investing time and money into the project in the belief that this would lead to future financial rewards.

However, they have not received the expected financial rewards for their actions, due to their lack of social capital. The financial expense and reward from volunteer tourism are integral to understanding host indigenous members' perception of tourism. This is rarely identified in the volunteer tourism literature, a notable exception is Zahra and McGehee's (2013) study of volunteer tourism in four host communities in the Philippines. This study notes the expenses incurred by hosts who buy volunteers drinks and give gifts that they would normally sell. It is evident, however, that the investment required in both indigenous communities was not a nominal amount, but a significant one, which subsequently framed how this activity was perceived.

6.1.3 Cultural and Human Capital

Cultural and human capital is also important for indigenous community members to be involved in volunteer tourism. In both communities, those engaged with the project had to meet certain requirements, such as being able to speak Spanish, being able-bodied, willing and able to learn how to cater to volunteers, confident in conversing with volunteers, and thus being deemed a 'good person' able to represent the community to the desired standard. These requirements for involvement in the project further fit into a general post-industrial stage of capitalism, which requires 'soft' people-orientated skills. The tourism industry, in particular, requires employees to be adept at person-to-person interaction and displaying emotional competency (Duncan *et al.*, 2013), as Fáilte Ireland (2005: 8) note, "successful tourism enterprise is largely about people". The desire for a successful project therefore results in group members possessing, and being able to demonstrate, the forms of human and cultural capital expected within the global tourism industry. The NGO, as outlined in Chapter Five, also helped this process through training and guidance, which is imbued with the ideology of modernisation, as can be seen by the NGO director stating:

> "Initially we just encourage host families to change but, bit by bit, this begins to rub off on others within the community."

The focus on developing project members, with the expectation that this will diffuse to the wider community, distinguishes project members from residents who are not involved in the project. The result is that project members view themselves as possessing a certain prestige, as they can communicate with international volunteer

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tourists and operate in the global tourism industry. Some project members identify how, because of their engagement in the project, their human capital has changed. As Valeria a Tsa'chila project member states:

> "I used to be scared to talk to foreign people, I don't know kind of embarrassed. But now I will talk and express my opinion. You see some of the other Tsa'chila; they would run away and hide and are scared of the volunteers [begins to laugh]."

Valeria now views herself as being able to communicate with Western volunteers on a more equal footing, whilst laughing at those members who have not developed the same social skills. The language used by this member signals a similar phenomenon to that identified by Colloredo-Mansfield (1998) in a study in Ecuador, in which it was noted how indigenous members who had prospered and gained social mobility utilised racist language against more marginalised members of the indigenous community. This, in turn, increased the social distance between themselves and the less prosperous. In both study communities, indigenous members appear proud of how they have developed themselves to function within the project. Therefore, no evidence was found to support McGehee and Andereck (2008), who argue that receiving volunteers negatively affected the dignity of local residents. The development of human capital has been recognised in the volunteer tourism literature, although this has tended to focus on the influence of training by volunteers (Zahra and McGehee, 2013), rather than the preparation project members undertake to cater for volunteer requirements.

In addition, Roberto states how the Tsa'chila members have learnt and developed themselves as a group:

> "We have learned so much since the project started. At the beginning it was difficult to be organised and we wasted a lot of time. Now we are much more organised and are starting to work much better together"

Roberto implies that the volunteer project results in a network forming, providing the foundation for further opportunities and thereby developing further bonding social capital between group members. Illustrating this, initial discussions have taken place

to develop an organic cacao project, which may provide an alternative income stream in the future. Therefore, the group has created additional bonding social capital amongst themselves, based upon the increased trust that is necessary for the development of the project. In his critique of development policy, Ferguson (1994) argues for the value of understanding the indirect consequences of development initiatives. Providing a platform for other projects to build around, and from, the volunteer project in the Tsa'chila community is such an example of an indirect consequence. Volunteer tourism provides the opportunity, for members in possession of human social capital, to not only develop this further, but to convert it into financial capital.

The emergent professional nature of the indigenous group is a disappointment to some long-term guides and agency staff:

> "I remember when we came with the first group of people. When they left, everyone was crying, even Samuel, as they were so happy. It was seen as so important, them coming here. Now it's just like work for him. One group is leaving, another is coming. I have seen the difference with him. Now, it is a job, it is a business." [French Guide]

Similarly, Roxanne a visiting American health worker stated:

> "Before, they used to take time to explain things, where they came from, and care more. Now it is just 'Here is your dinner. Do you like it or we will make something else for you?'"

The disappointment of these practitioners appears to reflect their existing views of indigenous people being challenged by their professionalisation. In this way, parallels can be drawn with what Rosaldo (1989) termed imperialist nostalgia, which describes the nostalgia that makes racial domination appear innocent, with people mourning the outcomes they have caused. The interview extracts support this, with these agency staff lamenting the loss of caring or emotional displays of affection, language embedded with essentialist colonial undertones of the capitalist modern European and 'backward' emotional indigenous people.

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6.2   Indigenous Project Members as Neo-liberal Subjects

The discussion so far, along with Figure 22, has illustrated that the position of indigenous members within the volunteer tourism project reflects their possession of particular forms of capital. The requirement for financial and human capital to participate fully in the project, and the opportunity to enhance these further, illustrate how volunteer tourism is most beneficial to the elite in the community. As a result, these community members were highly supportive of volunteer tourism, a trend well documented within the general tourism literature (Prentice, 1993) and also previously identified in a quantitative analysis of residents' perceptions of volunteer tourism (McGehee and Andereck, 2009). This perception is not uncommon in the wider development field, as Hales (2004) notes the long-established history of elites being accused of patronage and using development projects for their own and their family's gain. Conversely those members who felt they were not adequately compensated were ambivalent, or at worse antagonistic, towards volunteer tourism in the community.

In defending the structure of the project, the NGO director justifies any inequalities in outcomes as resulting from certain members displaying more initiative or 'modern' ideas. As he notes:

> "Some people are inspired and want to get ahead, while others do not want to do anything. The reason people don't want to be involved is that they accept life as it is, don't want to get involved in something they don't understand, or that it all seems alien to them. These people, however, very often become very resentful when other people start to take off and say 'what about us?'…We want other people to get their finger out, and get stuck in."

> [later in interview] "I don't know, there is still this kind of underground egalitarian ethic where everything should be shared. They don't realise that, that's not how the world works anymore".

The director's explanation of the existing system has similarities with the approach Goldman (2001) identified within the World Bank, in which he deduced how institutional practices only accepted certain types of knowledge as valid, while dismissing others as illegitimate or irrational. In the same way, the director positions

the projects within the neo-liberal capitalist understandings of development, referring to any alternative conceptualisation of society as being outdated. The result is that the director adopts an approach that Hales (2004: 19) identifies as distinguishing between the 'permitted Indian' and 'unruly Indian'. The permitted Indian being one who embraces "modernity and is fully conversant with the dominant milieu", whilst the unruly Indian is "vindictive and conflict prone". It is apparent that those indigenous members who have profited from the project view themselves as forward-looking and modern, and utilise neo-liberal discourse of individual responsibility for development to justify the project and any rewards they receive. This is seen from the following responses:

> "It took a long time to make this cultural centre, we worked really hard. We made a lot of mistakes, but we kept going, and you see what we have accomplished." [Roberto, Tsa'chila group member]

> "I have seen this problem in the community that people do not think long term, or think about the future, they want to make money quickly. I think about the future and they think I am crazy". [Diego, Tsa'chila project leader]

> "I think the big problem within the community is people's attitude. Maybe it is the ignorance of the people. I had to learn a lot to host volunteers. I have undertaken training courses and learned a lot when I worked as a cleaner in a hotel in Quito. They can do it, but they have to study a lot to get it. For example, they can study to become a tourist guide or interpreter. I think children and young people understand better how our real life is. Old people can't understand it." [Veronica, Kichwa group member]

Stressing their individual commitment to the project through work and training indicates a belief that they are 'enterprising individuals' who have earned any individual rewards that are forthcoming. Such responses reflect a neoliberal subjectivity, emphasising the importance of individual responsibility and self-management through risk taking, acquiring new skills and working hard (Brown, 2015). The result is the view that marginalised indigenous members are at fault for failing to develop themselves enough to work in the project. As Veronica implies, anyone can be involved if they study and work harder, without considering the

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structural constraints impeding certain community members from undergoing training or investing in the project. Notably, she believes that the younger generations are more open to this, which may indicate the normalisation of neo-liberal practices within the community. Embedded within such discourses is what Larner (2000: 246) describes as 'neo-liberal strategies of rule…[which] encourage people to see themselves as individualized and active subjects responsible for enhancing their own well-being''. The projects therefore encourage the internalisation of neo-liberal discourses and creation of neo-liberal subjectivities. This argument corresponds with what Harvey (2005) notes is the seductive appeal of neo-liberalism, in that the elite justify any increase in inequality as being a result of a failure of the marginalised to develop themselves in order to take advantage of available opportunities. The result is that project members dismiss any concerns of community members as reflecting their selfish desires or ignorance, as these extracts indicate:

> "Volunteers bring benefit to the whole community... Some people here are ignorant, and they just don't understand and appreciate what the project is about…They are jealous of our success." [Carolina, Kichwa project member]

Similarly, Diego the project leader in the Tsa'chila community states:

> "Many people don't realise or understand that the project brings many benefits to the community in an indirect way. They just don't see it, they think the only benefit is the money we receive. We need better communication, I accept that, but also people need to be willing to listen."

The language used by these project members has parallels with how Western development agendas often dismiss critiques of the subaltern as being based on inaccurate or non-scientific knowledge (Escobar, 2011). Therefore, rather than reflect on the nature of the project, these members simply state that residents need to be better educated to understand how the project operates for the benefit of the whole community. There is evidence of certain residents internalising neo-liberal discourses, explaining their lack of involvement as reflecting their own limitations:

> "I would like to be involved in the project, but I would not know how to look after them, and my house is not very big." [Marlene, Kichwa community]

"I have problems with my feet, I can't stand up for a long time. So, I could no longer work in the project. I think it's a good project and I enjoyed working there when I could." [Lucas, Tsa'chila former project member]

In line with understandings of neo-liberal subjectivity, these community members view themselves as being an "enterprising individual" and therefore deem their lack of involvement as a form of failure, for which they bear sole responsibility (Sugarman, 2015: 114). As a result, they do not consider the factors shaping their lack of involvement such as its organisation by the community's elite.

In both projects, members stress the wider economic benefit to the community of visits by volunteers. This interpretation fits with neo-liberal discourses that stress the benefits of economic growth to the wider society. Diego, the project leader in the Tsa'chila community, for example, states:

"The volunteers pay for trees to plant which are for the whole community and they also work in the local school. Also, they take a taxi to get here, and often go to the town to use the internet or to buy souvenirs. This all means that there is a wider economic benefit, so the whole community benefits."

Similarly, in the Kichwa community, Carolina states:

"We hire people to help in the kitchen, buy extra food from farms, all of this helps the community."

The underlying ideology shaping members reflections on the project emerges further when they discuss how they would like to see it develop into the future. For example, Veronica, in the Kichwa project, states:

"I think it is possible to make a big greenhouse to cultivate tomatoes, and people can work there, or each family could have field to sell vegetables, fruits, animals, milk and eggs for families who receive tourists in their houses. Other people can work washing sheets and blankets. We can call other people to clean the house when we will receive volunteers. We can organise a tour with families who make crafts, to show and buy them. It is not necessary that the tourists buy them, because they earn money for the tour. We can find many

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types of job for the community. I think this is what we need to do in the future."

It is notable that within this statement there is no desire to change the underlying structure of the project, which results solely in an elite within the community hosting volunteer tourists. Instead, she focuses on the possibility of distributing some of the benefits of the volunteer tourists' presence in the community more widely, whilst maintaining the beneficial position of hosting them in her house. As a result, a more equitable sharing of benefits for the whole community is not considered a possibility. Underpinning this position is a priority to protect the position of an elite within the community, which she does by arguing that residents can benefit from the existing system with only slight alterations. This approach is reminiscent of how Harvey (2005) describes practices of neo-liberalism as being a class-based project for maintaining the ruling class's position in society. The perspective expressed by this project member fits with the neo-liberal paradigm, whereby a set of beliefs have been normalised to such an extent that changes can only be made within strict parameters, restraining the possibility of any radical change occurring (Peck, 2001).

The structure of the projects caused a clear divide in both the Kichwa and Tsa'chila community, between those members in possession of forms of capital desired by the capitalist system, and those who felt marginalised, excluded and unable to improve their situation. However, the community residents are not passive, and do express their agency and dissatisfaction with the existing system in a variety of ways. In understanding how this is manifested, insight can be gained from Scott's (1985) book *Weapons of the Weak*: *everyday forms of resistance*, in which Scott argues that a method of resistance is in the use of veiled discourse to resist the abuse of power. Evidence of this can be found in the Kichwa community, where certain community members would utilise language indicative of their displeasure at how the volunteer project is organised. Examples include the multiple times I noted community members referring to: 'Samuel tourism' as opposed to 'community tourism', and 'Samuel's hotels' rather than his houses. I was also included within this, with my host family referring to me as being 'like a miracle' for staying with them, instead of in one of Samuel's houses. Furthermore, it became apparent that certain community members would feign ignorance about volunteers' presence in the community, as a

demonstration of their lack of involvement, which only became clear after I built up trust with participants. These methods abide by what Scott (1985) terms disguised resistance, in not requiring direct confrontation with the elite in the community, but nonetheless comprising an effective tool for the oppressed.

There is also evidence of more overt signs of resistance, as Pedro, one Kichwa member, recalls:

> "About six months ago, after church, a group of people went to the communal house, and demanded that the volunteers leave, as they do not agree that volunteers only visit one family. I have worked with Samuel in the past, and he has been a friend to me, so I defended him and calmed them down. But people are really angry about how things are…I, personally, would not like to see more volunteers come to the community, if it stays like this, with only him and his family benefitting."

This account indicates the level of anger and dissatisfaction manifesting in the community, resulting in a spontaneous form of direct action. There is further evidence of this with Marlene, a Kichwa community member, describing how in an apparent act of solidarity with her neighbour, who is no longer involved in the project, volunteer tourists were no longer welcome in that particular part of the community.

In addition to these forms of protest, those members who have the necessary forms of capital but are no longer involved in the project, expressed a desire to start up rival projects to compete for volunteers. To date, these families had made little progress, as they lacked the 'linking' social capital essential for gaining access to volunteers. As Veronica indicates in the following statement:

> "I would like to be able to set up my own project so that volunteers come here. This is my only chance of receiving volunteers in the future, as I know soon I will not receive any. Then I won't be able to pay for my children's education. But I don't have the connections or know how to advertise [starts to cry]."

This situation is not confined to the Kichwa community, as a similar process is beginning to occur in the Tsa'chila community. Here, the lack of volunteers at the

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beginning of the project, and subsequent lack of financial remuneration, resulted in
certain families leaving the project. It appears, however, that on subsequently viewing
the volunteer project as successful, these members are planning to start a new project,
which will put them in competition with the existing project. As David, a Tsa'chila
community member, states:

> "I left before many volunteers started to arrive, as it took a lot of time that I
> could have spent working in my fields to support my family. But I think by
> being part of the project and its organisation I learnt a lot. And with this
> knowledge I am now able to organise this new cultural group…I see
> volunteers are coming now, and gives me hope that volunteers will want to
> come to this project."

The notion of different families competing for volunteers is the rational conclusion
of abiding by free market neo-liberal principles. This appears to be of little concern
for Roberto, a member of the Tsa'chila project, who recognises that rival projects
may emerge, stating:

> "I think some people are jealous of us now that the project is becoming more
> successful. I am not worried though, and if they want to start a new project
> because of this, then they can do it."

The ambivalence of this member to rival groups may be explained by his knowledge
that the project has developed to such an extent that a rival group would struggle to
compete. It also reinforces the discourse that any members can reap the rewards of
receiving volunteers, if they work hard enough to develop a project. The allure of
individual wealth and the uptake of free market principles therefore did appear to
challenge the notion of community solidarity. The relationship between indigenous
people and the market is one that has been subject to much conjecture amongst
scholars. For example, Weismantel and Eisenman (1998) argue how the penetration
of the market into rural areas resulted in the weakening of dense social networks and
the ideology of reciprocity. Moreover, Taussig (2010) notes the vast array of folklore
in Latin America that associates the capitalist with making a deal with the devil.
Conversely, Larson *et al.* (1995) contend that indigenous people have been subject to
market forces since European conquest, and have resisted and participated depending

on a multitude of factors, from the specific place to political conditions. Ferraro (2004) similarly rejects a market-community dichotomy in her study of debt in Pesillo, Northern Ecuador, concluding that reciprocal exchanges occur which are embedded in monetary, cultural, and spiritual meaning. In both communities, it can be deduced that volunteer tourism is operating as a capitalist enterprise, with the indigenous community, as a place, being little more than a desirable image to attract volunteers. The relationship between the project and the community, however, is clearly more nuanced. It is evident that members support the notion of community and reciprocity, but diverge on how this should be enacted. The subsequent section explores the discourse of *Buen Vivir,* as an alternative interpretation of their understanding of the role of volunteer tourism in their communities.

6.3 Mobilisation of *Buen Vivir*

The volunteer tourism projects have clearly caused discord amongst indigenous members, as they bring to the fore questions relating to 'community' and what it means to be indigenous in today's world. Through analysing the empirical evidence, it is possible to tease out evidence of an alternative vision of an indigenous community, which resists the neo-liberal agenda. This emerges in how marginalised community members mobilise the discourses of *Buen Vivir,* as a critique of the neo-liberal practices employed in the volunteer projects. In the Kichwa community, it was apparent that residents did not view the volunteer project as an appropriate form of development for their community. As Pedro states:

"We are indigenous and so it's not right that one family keeps everything for themselves, it's not good for the community; there is much resentment and anger about it."

Pedro reconfirms the indigenous identity of the community whilst critiquing how the project is organised. Embedded within this assertion is the notion that this model of society is not one that abides by indigenous knowledge and practices. He links the project leaders' focus on personal economic prosperity with causing resentment and anger, thereby damaging the community. This was a common critique in the Kichwa community, with Marlene stating:

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"They have bought cars, have big houses, with their children in good schools, and bought all these things only with money they receive from volunteers. Now they don't work like us. That family wants everything and for the rest of us to have nothing. I cannot afford for my children to have a good education; their children laugh and make fun because we are poor [starts to cry]. It's not fair".

Similarly, Carmen commenting that

"Certain families benefit through providing accommodation, services and taking the volunteers on tours of the community. Also the volunteers have donated clothes, but we never receive anything. I don't think its right that they keep everything for themselves and my family receives nothing".

In the Tsa'chila community, Adrian notes a similar trend:

"I don't think the project is for the community. I think it's just for those involved. I know they say it's community tourism. But, sorry, I don't think we benefit. In my honest opinion I think they benefit financially from tourists being here."

The focus of the projects on growth and capital accumulation are clearly questioned by the wider community residents, who view this as causing disharmony within their communities. This critique of the projects can be seen to utilise the discourses of *Buen Vivir*, which proposes 'living well' rather than 'living better', with the good life achieved by being part of a community rather than searching for individual reward and prosperity. Similarly, Leonardo in the Kichwa community questions who benefits from volunteer tourism:

"I think it is bad, as they come and help people who do not need it. There is one old woman whose sons have left the community, and so she works in her field by herself. No one comes and helps her, it's not fair".

This critique of the project questions the neo-liberal practices whereby the individual benefiting is he or she who strives the hardest to develop themselves. Instead, Leonardo argues that the project should focus on benefitting the most marginalised

and deprived members of the community. Likewise, Tadeo a member of a Tsa'chila community, questions the inclusivity of the project:

> "If this project is for the community, they have to communicate and invest in our resources. They should be finding out more about what other community members could bring to be involved in tourism. For example, I work with natural medicine and I would like to be able to teach or show this to tourists, but I have never had the opportunity to work in the cultural centre."

The focus of the projects on ensuring that members possess forms of capital valued within the capitalist system therefore results in residents with alternative types of knowledge, such as natural medicine, being marginalised. Ruttenberg (2013: 76) notes that *Buen Vivir* shares some commonality with the fundamental socialist principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs". The critiques of these members relating to the inclusiveness and diversity of those who benefit from the project clearly fit well with the discourses of *Buen Vivir*. This is taken further when, Gabriela, in the Kichwa community, describes how she would like to see the future of the project:

> "I think all families should have equal opportunity to work with, and benefit from volunteers being in the community. Of course some families will need more training than others., as it is difficult with the language, and working with people from a different culture. But I think it's possible, and we should strive so there is an equal distribution of money and benefits throughout the community. It should be a priority to help the families who need the most help. You have seen in the community that there are some old people, or some people who are very poor, and they receive no help from volunteers. This is what I think volunteer tourism should be like, and if the project does not change, myself and my brothers hope to develop such a project."

This vision challenges the existing system that the volunteer project operates within, and calls for a radical alternative. Gabriela recognises that different members have different forms of capital, but proposes that this can be addressed through additional training and guidance, allowing the collective capital of the community to be built, rather than that of individuals. It is also proposed that the most marginalised members

should be the primary focus of the project, rather than the elite in the community. This interpretation of volunteer tourism aligns with the principles of *Buen Vivir,* with a focus on the community rather than the individual. Moreover, the very power of *Buen Vivir* is that it challenges the basic assumptions which have dominated development discourse (Acosta, 2012), therefore providing a powerful critique of certain volunteer tourism practices in the indigenous communities.

6.4   Volunteer Tourism as a Form of Alternative Development

The laissez faire approach to volunteer tourism adopted in both communities is not conducive to achieving *Buen Vivir*. It also runs contrary to established best practice within tourism studies, which call for local involvement through participatory methods (Salazar, 2012; Mitchell and Reid, 2001; Campbell, 1999) and the equitable sharing of benefits (Li, 2006). As Blackstock (2005) cautions, local control does not automatically lead to participatory decision making, or the best interests of the whole community being prioritised. This is illustrated in both indigenous communities, with unequal access to forms of capital resulting in certain members aiming to consolidate their position in society, whilst those without valued capital become further marginalised. The nature of volunteer tourism helps the project members maintain the existing system as, when challenged, members in both communities would highlight the work volunteers do for the whole community:

> "The volunteers help in the school, playing with the children, and also have painted the walls of the school. They have done a lot of work on the water project, digging ditches to bring water to people's houses. Other times they work in the fields with families, helping with different tasks. The whole community benefits from volunteers being here." [Samuel, Kichwa project leader]

Samuel's response indicates how the discursive positioning of volunteer tourism helps to disarm critiques of the project by community members. This is because project members highlight the work volunteer tourists undertake for the whole community, emphasising the project is not focused on the pursuit of monetary return, whilst simultaneously securing financial rewards for themselves. Similarly, Everett (1997) recounts how the local elite in Bogota, favouring development initiatives that

maintained their interests, would present projects using discourses such as 'environmental sustainability' and 'participatory planning'. However, she notes that local residents rarely accepted this positioning, and would resist and challenge these developments. The community members in this study are similarly not fooled by the elite's presentation of volunteer tourism, mobilising the discourses of *Buen Vivir* as a means of resistance. Li (2006) provides evidence of best practice in community tourism through a study examining an unregulated ecotourism project in Jiuzhaigou, China, in which each family would compete and fight for tourists to stay in their own family hotel. To address this, an administrative system was designed so that each family had equal access to tourists, with the income being shared equally, leaving the local people ultimately satisfied. This illustrates how, despite the protestations of the NGO and the elite, the neo-liberal free market principles through which the volunteer tourism project operates are not inevitable, but reflect political decisions at the state and community level.

An equitable sharing of the benefits of volunteer tourism in the communities studied, although clearly desirable, are difficult to implement in practice. As the NGO director indicates when he states:

> "We have had various groups or students coming to our projects and making different recommendations on how decisions should be made based on different theoretical approaches to development. We have been drawn into the notion that development should be very bottom up, to help those at the bottom get a leg up. The trouble with this however is that the community dynamics are very complex… in general what we have seen is that there are people who get involved and people who don't want to get involved. Then when they see people getting advantages or perceived advantages all this resentment comes out".

The NGO director eludes to how the idealism of 'bottom up' participatory led development, struggles with delivery when faced with a heterogeneous and hierarchical community of the Global South. This is because community members may be reluctant to participate before understanding the benefits, whilst also not having the necessary forms of capital to fully engage with the projects, as illustrated above. However, once the projects have developed and are successful, those host

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members involved are reluctant to incorporate new members who may 'freeride' on their initial investment. There has been limited recognition of this reality in the volunteer tourism literature, with scholarly work instead focusing on what above I term 'the spectacle' of volunteer tourists' work. In moving beyond the spectacle, this chapter illustrates that volunteer tourism projects operate in a similar manner to alternative development initiatives. As a result, to increase the potential of more equitable outcomes from volunteer tourism, greater consideration needs to be given to how best practice operates in these models. For example, in relation to community resource management Dyer *et al*., (2014) describe that it is essential that "local knowledge is incorporated in the project process", and that to achieve this there must be early and on-going engagement and communication with all community members. Indeed, it is widely acknowledged that for bottom up development initiatives to avoid elite capture, there needs to be democratic leadership selection (Fritzen, 2007), transparency (Dongier *et al*., 2003), accountability (Brent, 2012) and a focus on empowerment and building the capacities of the most marginalised community members (Nikkhah and Redzuan, 2010).

This chapter has illustrated how the limited resources of the NGO, and the desire to get the projects up and running, has resulted in there being a focus on individual community members rather than the wider community. There is some benefit of this approach to the wider community, such as volunteer tourists providing materials for development initiatives, spending money on goods in the local area, or increasing employment opportunities in service level jobs. However, these benefits are limited when spread amongst the wider community, especially when community members compare these to the considerable benefit received by those individuals more directly involved in the projects. The fact that community members have to rely on income or knowledge to 'trickle down', and do not have the opportunity to actively alter their present situation becomes a cause of resentment. The extent that it is possible for a volunteer tourism project to become established, whilst also increasing the development capacities of the wider community, is an important question if this form of tourism is to be considered a viable development strategy. To begin to answer this, further research is required on volunteer projects in different contexts, in particular how different NGO engage with the communities that they operate. This may then

allow the identification of 'best practice' in different cultural and contextual settings, and provide interesting insights into the potential of volunteer tourism to achieve positive outcomes in the Global South. This study has begun this process by providing valuable insights into the challenges that volunteer tourism project face when touching down in the Global South, and it is only through acknowledging these challenges that new possibilities can begin to be imagined.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the volunteer tourism projects studied are embedded within discourses and practices of neo-liberalism and modernisation. These are presented by the NGO and project members as rational and necessary for a successful project in the global tourism industry. However, the result is that they remove the space for alternative conceptualisations of how volunteer tourism could function within the communities. The volunteer projects therefore map onto, and exacerbate, existing inequalities within each setting. This chapter has illustrated how in expressing dissatisfaction with the existing system, community members use language that is embedded within a discourse of *Buen Vivir*, with the latter remaining a discourse of resistance, rather than one that is shaping the realities of Ecuadorian society. This analysis of the processes occurring at the community level mirrors that which Chapter Four identified at the state level. Indeed, the Ecuadorian state has made no progress in challenging the paradigm of economic growth, the positions of elites, or the structural causes of poverty and inequality. As a result, at the community level, it is not surprising that indigenous members strive for individual rewards to pay for better education, medical bills, consumer goods, or any products available at a price in a capitalistic society. Moreover, the structure of the projects results in the spread of neo-liberal discourses and practices within the indigenous communities. As Hale (2004: 17) notes:

> "The core of neoliberalism's cultural project is not radical individualism, but the creation of subjects who govern themselves in accordance with the logic of globalised capitalism".

Therefore, although volunteer tourism is constructed with notions of 'reciprocity' and 'caring', it can be an instrument for the further diffusion of the neo-liberal agenda.

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The chapter which follows explores how the volunteer tourists themselves interpret the 'volunteer space' they encounter during their time in the indigenous communities. It focuses on how the volunteer tourists demonstrate their own neo-liberal subjectivity, strategically managing their experiences in the indigenous communities, in order to maximise the return on the investment they made to participate in volunteer tourism.

7   The Volunteer Tourist as a Neo-Liberal Subject

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*"Ecuador is asking543 every visitor to experience the country in
keeping with its nature and its people, underscoring the positive
aspects of the relationship between host and tourist."*

Ecuador Tourism Ministry, 2011

7.1   Introduction

There has been a proliferation of published works on volunteer tourism since Wearing
(2001) first coined a definition of this tourism practice. Chapter Two identified how
these studies have overwhelmingly focused on the volunteer tourist, relating to their
motivations and own interpretation of this activity (Wearing and McGehee, 2013;
McGehee and Santos, 2005; Brown and Lehto, 2005). This chapter contributes to this
understanding, by examining the 'volunteer tourist identity' and how this is managed
during a volunteer tourism project. This contribution is important because scholarly
work, although identifying multiple motivations of volunteer tourists (Lo and Lee,
2011), tends to present the volunteer identity as one that is fixed when in a host
community. Work by Callanan and Thomas (2005) is illustrative of this,
distinguishing between 'shallow', 'intermediate', and 'deep' volunteer tourists, as is
Brown and Lehto's (2005) distinction between 'volunteer minded' and 'vacation
minded' volunteer tourists. This chapter argues for a more nuanced position; that is,
that the volunteer tourist identity is fluid, while many who undertake this activity are
ambivalent in their role of volunteer and tourist. It puts forward the argument that
volunteer tourists demonstrate a level of reflexivity that challenges overly simplistic
interpretations of them as na*ï*vely optimistic or somewhat passive participants of a
volunteer tourism project. This understanding of the volunteer tourist allows certain
moments to be identified in which this ambivalence is removed and particular
identities felt and acknowledged. Developing this position further, it shall be argued
that volunteer tourists adopt certain strategies to manage and navigate their

ambivalent position within the host community. As such, the chapter therefore adopts a conception of identity in alignment with Elsrud (2001: 599) who states:

> "identity is not given or static, but rather experienced as a dynamic and time dependent outcome of an ongoing creative process. It is a process of reflexive communication among the subject, the world, and people around him or her."

This chapter proposes that, by positioning the volunteer tourist identity as a managed construct within a contradictory space, it is possible to gain new insights into this performative tourism practice. The chapter focuses on two important aspects of volunteer tourism: firstly, the volunteers' work and, secondly, the relationship between volunteers and hosts. It begins by justifying its interpretation of an ambivalent volunteer tourist, followed by an exploration of the strategic techniques adopted by volunteer tourists to manage their experiences whilst in the communities. The chapter then focuses on the volunteer tourists' awareness of *Buen Vivir*, and their understanding of its potential to offer an alternative to development models originating from the Global North. Finally, the chapter draws conclusions with regard to our understanding of volunteer tourism's ability to instigate greater cultural understanding and global citizenship within the volunteer tourist.

7.2 Volunteer Tourist's Ambivalence Towards Volunteer Work

The work that volunteer tourists engage in during their time in a host community has been of considerable interest within scholarly discourse (Lorimer, 2010; Barbieri *et al.*, 2012). This reflects how the notion of 'making a difference' through direct action is an important pillar of this activity, providing a means of distinction from other alternative tourism practices. When interpreting volunteer work, scholars have tended to present the volunteer tourist as either adopting the role of an expert, and propagating colonial discourses of the needy 'Global South' in which Western volunteers 'know best' (Ingram, 2011; Palacious, 2010; Simpson, 2004), or conversely adopting a learning role, fetishising a romanticised understanding of poverty and 'simplistic' ways of life (Vrasti, 2013). Evidence from the two volunteer tourism projects' studied suggests that this characterisation is overly simplistic, with the volunteer tourists recognising the complexity of the issues surrounding completing work in the Global South. However, they demonstrate a degree of

ambivalence, acknowledging that they have a desire to make a difference in the community, but also the desire to receive an enjoyable experience. Extracts from a debate between two volunteers, which occurred during focus group 1 in the Kichwa community, illustrate this point:

> Mike: "I do think the work we have done has been important; who can say bringing water to people is not? But at the same time, I think we could have made more of a difference by sending the money we spent here for them to do the work. Just in practical terms, it's quite obvious that they can do this work a lot more efficiently than us. I suppose that is the selfish part, in that we wanted to come here"

> Chris: "Yes, I'm sure people who will get water will appreciate it. But also there will always be people who think getting help makes them less in someway. I don't agree that we are being selfish. Yes, we are getting something out of it, but I'm sure we would not give so much money if we weren't. We have an interesting experience and they get extra hands to help, I don't see how that is a bad thing."

Similarly, in the Tsa'chila community during focus group 5 the following responses occurred:

> Nicky: "We are here and want to work, but at the same time we are not really doing anything that they cannot do themselves."

> Sarah: "Yes, I agree, and we are only here for six days. So, they might think you are here to help, but you are not willing to give up much time."

The statements by these volunteers indicate their reflexivity when they discuss the tasks they have been involved in during their time in the community. Simpson (2004: 685) expresses concern that volunteer tourism constructs a discourse in which development is a simple activity that "non-skilled but enthusiastic volunteer tourists" can achieve in host communities. Similarly, Sin (2010) notes how volunteer tourism tends to encourage a discourse in which citizens of the Global North are responsible for the wellbeing of the poor and marginalised citizens of the Global South. I found

little evidence of volunteers internalising such a discourse; instead, the volunteers questioned their ability to contribute to the community, whilst recognising the ability of host members to work to a higher standard than they were capable. During focus group 3, contradictory views relating to volunteer tourism emerged between two volunteers:

> Hannah: "Rather than just visit a place, we come here and want to help people. That is why I think, although volunteer tourism may not be perfect, it is a better way to travel."

> Lucy: "I know tourists get a bad rep. But why? They are just people visiting another place. I do not think there is anything inherently bad about being a tourist, or us doing some things that can be considered touristy."

The statements by these two volunteers interestingly mirror debates that dominate the volunteer tourism literature, indicating how the volunteers are reflective in relation to their role and reason for being in the community. The first volunteer's opinion coincides with a growing body of literature, such as Mostafanezhad (2013), that links volunteer tourism with the current neo-liberal citizen, who works outside the state, believing in ethical consumerism as way of making a difference in the world. The second follows Butcher's (2005) critique of what he terms the 'new moral tourist', in which he argues that rather than be consumed by 'fraught reflexivity' on the correct way to travel, tourists should simply accept a holiday for what it is, a form of relaxation. It is through discussions like these, often initiated by the volunteers, the volunteer space takes on a deeper meaning than simply being a place of visitation. This is because this 'volunteer space' provides an opportunity for volunteers to question and reflect on the nature of volunteer tourism, their role within this, and that of the community members. For example, an important critique of volunteer tourism is its reliance on marketing strategies, which re-package colonial discourses of the 'needy South' (Simpson, 2004). A number of volunteers in both communities commented on how they felt misled by how the project was organised, as Sarah a volunteer in the Tsa'chila community stated:

"It's advertised as being in the wilderness, really remote, living and working with indigenous people. But then we get here and it is really built up, and it is like a tourist point. It makes you think if there is anywhere really like that left."

This volunteer recognises how the marketing of the project played up certain imaginaries to encourage participation, which resulted in her questioning how places are constructed within the global political and economic system. Similarly, the extracts of conversations within this chapter indicate how volunteers reflected on issues such as whether they had 'selfish desires', the nature of development, and what it means to be a volunteer and tourist. The volunteer space, in providing a forum and trigger for these debates and personal reflections, can be considered valuable for the development of the volunteer. However, these discussions would take place in an unstructured manner, with no critical pedagogy to encourage the volunteers to reflect on the causes of poverty and inequality, and an uneven and unequal global economic system. Moreover, these discussions would take place with very little input from host community members. It was notable that, during discussions, volunteers would frequently state "I think" or "I'm not sure" when referring to host opinions. As a result, there was little evidence of the unconstrained encounter between volunteer and host through which this tourism practice tends to be framed and marketed.

Figure 23, below, is indicative of the 'volunteer space' that is created for and by the volunteers. A group of volunteers were given the opportunity to paint the school walls in any way they liked, choosing to paint international flags with 'hello' in different languages.

Figure 23. Representative picture of volunteer space. (Source: Author's photograph)

Although volunteers stayed in particular indigenous communities, Figure 23 is symbolic of a space being created that is interpreted as an 'international space', for the development of the volunteer. The indigenous community takes on the form of an undifferentiated construct through which the volunteer tourist can perform their volunteer identity, with little consideration of the complex local structures or relations in which they operate.

7.2.1 Moments of Clarity in Volunteer Tourists' Work

In narrating their experience in the community, volunteer tourists emphasised particular moments in which any ambivalence about their role dissolved, and they felt that they occupied a particular identity. This is seen in how the following volunteers describe the most enjoyable aspect of their work:

> "One of the best days was when as we all worked together securing pipes for the water project. Two old indigenous women joined us, and we were all in a line passing buckets full of cement. There was something so magnificent about the energy of everyone working together like that. It was such an emotional experience, with all of us working together with our hands, everyone tired, dirty, but carrying on. It was amazing. It really felt like, yes, this is what being a volunteer is all about." [Bethan, volunteer in Kichwa community]

Similarly, in the Tsa'chila community, Clara recalled:

"When we were planting trees. We would be working really hard, far from the cultural centre, which we had to travel in the back of a truck to get to. Then at the end of the day you see all the trees, and we are like 'yes, we did that'. It felt good".

The instances recalled by the volunteers are moments in which their ambivalent feelings were removed and they were confident in their identity as volunteers. Embedded in these volunteer recollections are moments when they had to overcome some challenge, when they felt like they made a difference and worked as part of a group. These reflect well-documented findings in the volunteer tourism literature, with regard to a diverse range of projects around the globe (Cousins *et al.,* 2009, Mathews, 2008, Lyons and Wearing, 2008). These situations appear to resonate with triggers for instigating particular existential feelings or 'sense of being' within oneself, representing what Giddens (1991: 143) refers to as "fateful moments". Such feelings are often associated with challenges, as "everyday familiarity collapsing as one can no longer dwell in tranquillised familiarity" (Heidegger, 1962: 233 cited in Brown, 2013: 182). The notion of making a difference also corresponds to Golomb's (1995: 140) claim that "only by action, by changing the world can the self be created" (cited in McDonald and Wilson, 2013: 114). Furthermore, 'being part of a group' reflects Wang's (1999: 364) observation regarding how, during a trip, "inauthentic social hierarchy and status distinctions can disappear". Volunteers therefore felt confident in their volunteer identity, performing a role which triggered experiential feelings within themselves. Therefore, it is the feelings instigated through engaging in work, rather than the objective difference the work made to the host communities, which was important for the volunteer tourists.

The reflections of the volunteers also indicate moments in which they felt their work was simply a tourist activity, diminishing their desired volunteer identity. This can be seen from a discussion in focus group 5 conducted with volunteers in the Tsa'chila community:

Kati: "They have this whole cultural centre, which I assume they made for us. Makes me think how hard they must have worked to make this. We have only been here for one week, so I don't think that the work we have done is equal to all this."

John: Yes, I agree, and some of the tasks, I just felt like they were giving us something to do. Yesterday we just swept the leaves from the cultural centre, and it seems so pointless, as they will just blow back. It seemed that they didn't need us to do anything, but they know we want to work, so they gave us things to do."

Similarly, volunteers in the Kichwa community, at certain points, questioned the value of their work. This can be seen from the statement by Isobel:

"I thought it would be really hard work, really difficult you know, as it's not supposed to be relaxing. But we are always taking breaks and having days off. It does seem like we are more on holiday than really working hard. If I'm being honest it's not as good as I was expecting."

Similarly, Crisi commented:

"I don't feel like they really need our help. By the time we have all got ready and they have told us what to do it is almost time to have a break. They also don't mind us going into town using the internet and just working when we want to really"

These statements indicate how, at various points, there were signs of them being catered for as tourists, resulting in disappointment. It can be surmised that this disappointment reflects the tasks not provoking feelings that they expected from becoming a volunteer. Similar findings were observed by Palacious (2010), who noted volunteers' disappointment when they could not fulfil their desired volunteer identities. Throughout the time in the communities, volunteers' interpretations of their work are thus fluid, between feeling like a volunteer and a tourist, whilst also possessing a degree of reflexivity about the value of their contribution.

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7.3 Volunteer Tourists' Ambivalence in Relation to their Embeddedness in the Community

Chapter Two highlighted that concern over the neo-colonial narrative embedded in the notion of 'making a difference' has led to a shift in emphasis within the literature, towards the value of cultural exchange between volunteer and host (Everingham, 2015; Sin, 2010; Palacious, 2010). Its discursive positioning is one which provides a mode of interaction that goes beyond the limited host-guest relationship associated with traditional tourism activities (Conran, 2011). It is able to "dissolve barriers" between volunteer and host (McDonald and Wilson, 2013: 111), resulting in more meaningful type of interaction and instigating feelings of global citizenship (Wearing, 2001; McGehee and Santos, 2005). The extent that this occurs has been of considerable interest in published work, with some scholars arguing in favour (McGehee and Andereck, 2008) and others highly critical of this assumption (Simpson, 2004). The argument of this chapter is that volunteers have an ambivalent position identifying themselves as both being part of the community, but also being detached.

Evidence suggests that volunteers wanted to gain an understanding of the host community beyond that associated with traditional tourism practices. Indicative of this was the opinion of Claire, a volunteer in the Tsa'chila community:

> "I think it is important if you are visiting a country to not just see the tourist sites, and actually see how the people live and work, to understand their lives."

Similarly, Helen in the Kichwa community stated:

> "I didn't want to just go on holiday stay in a nice hotel and not meet any local people. I could do that with my family. I came here as I want to be part of the community and really understand how they live"

This opinion is widely held by volunteer tourists in both communities, with volunteer tourism interpreted as providing access to the 'real' community. The desire for such an experience lends weight to MacCannell's (1973: 592) thesis that tourists search back regions "to see behind the others' mere performances, to perceive and accept

the others for what they really are". The discursive positioning of volunteer tourism as providing such encounters is therefore appealing to these volunteers. However, volunteers did recognise that whilst in the community they were both volunteers and tourists, with these different identities sometimes not easily reconciled. This is evidenced by a conversation that occurred in the Tsa'chila community during focus group 3 with volunteers:

> Nicola: "We went to visit a friend of our guide, it was really good seeing inside her house, and just talking to her about normal stuff, it was the best day. Although I noticed that when we got to there she changed and put on her traditional dress. I thought that was strange. I don't know if it was something she felt like she had to do, or something she wanted to do. Why should she feel like she should have to dress up? I don't think she they should dress up for us."

> Sara: "But wait, honestly I don't think people would want to come here if they did not paint their hair and wear traditional clothes. It sounds horrible but it is true. If they are just ordinary people, what could you say you got out of it. It's like the red hair, it makes a good picture. People like extremes so [they] can tell people at home. If you say to people you stayed with some Ecuadorian people in the jungle and show some photos and they're all in jeans, it's not very, I don't know, people would not be so impressed. At the end of the day, it's all just show boating really".

The exchange between the volunteers during the focus group indicates how they aim to rationalise both their desire for difference and normality within the community. Therefore, they recognise their own contradictory position of desiring a real non-commercial experience, but also wanting to experience something unique which they can describe to their friends at home. Similarly, within the Kichwa community, a segment of an interview with Mary highlights the reflexivity of the volunteer, by utilising her own experiences of hosting an exchange student:

"I don't want them to have to act different. But to be able to communicate with them I kind of want them to be a bit talkative. So I don't feel like an outcast. I know when I had a German exchange student, my family would be on our best behaviour, and we were more talkative and friendly, as we wanted her to have a good time. I'm sure they are the same here. It doesn't mean it's fake, it's just good manners…Also there is no way of knowing what they are like when we are not here."

Mary recognises that the host community members may be performing in a particular way, accepting that it is not possible to know the extent to which this occurs. She demonstrates a degree of reflexivity and acknowledgement that the space they are in results in them both being part of the community, but also visitors or outsiders.

7.3.1 Moments of Clarity in the Volunteer Tourists' Understanding of their Position in the Indigenous Community

The narratives of the volunteers indicate certain moments in which they felt this ambivalence was replaced with a clear identity of feeling like a volunteer or a tourist. This is described by the following volunteers:

"One of my best moments was sitting around sorting beans and talking to the local women. Just having the time to hear about their life and understanding their culture." [Mary, Kichwa Community]

Whilst in the Tsa'chila community, Rachel stated:

"Our guide has been amazing. He really has taught us so much about Tsa'chila way of life. We have also taught him some phrases in English. It really has felt like a cultural exchange, I know we will keep in contact after we leave here. He took us to his house and he showed us all around and let us eat more than half the fruit from one of his trees."

These volunteers identify the opportunity to interact with host members, to an extent which transcends that associated with traditional tourism, as instigating feelings of being a volunteer. The importance of such interactions has been identified by McIntosh and Zahra (2007: 554), who refer to the volunteers valuing the "intense

rather than superficial social interactions" that occur through volunteer tourism. Similarly, Conran (2011: 1459) notes how volunteers valued feelings of intimacy between themselves and their hosts, an "embodied experience that arouses a sense of closeness and a story about a shared experience". Conversely, the volunteers also describe moments in which they identify themselves as being tourists in the community, Pam a volunteer in the Kichwa community states:

> "To be honest I did think we would be staying with local families, living like they do. But we are staying in the volunteer house playing games listening to music. It does feel like we are not part of the rest of the community sometimes. That is the bit I'm most disappointed about"

Whilst Kati in the Tsa'chila community notes:

> "I wanted to come and live with them and see how they lived. But here in the cultural centre we are kind of separated from the community life".

Both Pam and Kati, in this instance, identify the volunteer accommodation as being a barrier to their integration into the community. The accommodation provided in both communities was a source of displeasure to volunteers, as it appeared to draw uncomfortable parallels with a traditional tourism enclave, which challenges the volunteer tourist identity as being distinct from a tourist, and thus worthy of additional cultural capital. The continually shifting feelings between being a volunteer and host resulted in the volunteer tourists engaging in a number of different strategies to manage their experience to maximise desired rewards.

7.4   Strategies to Manage an Ambivalent State

Chapter Five discussed how certain host community members self-managed and presented an idealised version of themselves whilst in the presence of volunteer tourists. This chapter contends that, similarly, volunteer tourists self-manage their identity to volunteer in the 'correct way'. This reflects the 'moralisation of tourism' (Butcher, 2005), and how volunteer tourism has become an 'expected ritual' (Laurie and Baillie-Smith, 2017) in young people's transition to adulthood (Simpson, 2004), or transition from school to workplace (Baillie-Smith and Laurie, 2011). Ensuring the experience of being a volunteer tourist results in the maximum reward therefore results in volunteers adopting a performative role whilst in the indigenous

communities. As Sin (2009: 491) notes, "the 'self' is continually performed both externally to one's audiences (friends, relatives, and other people one comes across) and internally to strengthen one's self-identity".

The volunteers adopted a number of strategies to manage and narrate their experience of being in the community. This is currently an under-researched topic, with scholars largely focusing on making recommendations for how sending organisations can improve their product (Barbieri *et al.*, 2011), rather than exploring how volunteers are active agents in co-creating their experience. Illustrative of the reflexivity of the volunteers was a statement by Rachel, in the Tsa'chila community, who stated:

> "It's weird, at first you think volunteer tourism is really good. But then if you sit down and think about it, you realise there are negatives and you don't feel good about it anymore. So sometimes I think people don't like to think about it, as they are so set on it kind of being a good thing, that its almost better not to think about it too much"

Rachel acknowledges that, in some way, volunteers want to believe that the activity they are engaging in is worthwhile and would prefer not to be overly critical or reflexive. In this way, volunteer tourism's appeal of being able to make a difference, developing oneself, whilst engaging in an enjoyable activity, is one that volunteers would like to believe is true and buy into. The following section will highlight how volunteers with a desire to protect and maintain this illusion engage in a number of strategies to manage their experience. It begins by focusing on strategies relating to the volunteers work, followed by those relating to their interactions with community members.

7.4.1 The Volunteer Tourist's Strategic Management of their Volunteer Work

The volunteers engage in a number of strategies to manage their ambivalent position in relation to their work. A principal way this is achieved is by the volunteers spatially differentiating themselves from the community members. For example, Nicola, a volunteer in the Tsa'chila community states:

"I think there are many causes of poverty at the global level that we can't do anything about. But we can learn what it's like here and how people live, and maybe help a bit, like we are doing."

This volunteer invokes the world system and her feeling of powerlessness within this, to manage her feeling of only making a limited contribution to the lives of community members. Simpson (2004) similarly recorded how volunteers describe any tasks they complete as acceptable, as any contribution, no matter how limited, is viewed as better than the alternative of doing nothing. There was also evidence of volunteers taking this position further by arguing that even if their contribution was limited, the cumulative effect of volunteers may be greater, as Robert in the Kichwa community notes:

"I think it's really good that we are carrying on other groups' work and the next volunteers will continue ours. It's not like we are just doing some small task to make ourselves feel better…It would be nice to see the project when it's all finished, but still it's good to know that we are part of something bigger. I think that's what makes this project special."

Robert positions their group within the larger body of transnational volunteers, to emphasise the difference volunteers can make to the community. In addition, volunteers emphasise the cultural difference between the indigenous members and themselves as a strategy to manage their feelings of having a limited contribution. As Michela in the Kichwa community stated:

"We are not as driven as them, we cannot do 12 hours of manual labour. I'm ashamed that we have got lazy, we can't work like they do."

In this instance 'we' is used to signify Western society and its loss of the work ethic that appears prevalent within the indigenous community. The result is the project taking on a space of being like an interactive museum: the volunteers not only gazing at the indigenous members, but working as they do, and then marvelling at their own weakness in comparison. Figure 24, below, illustrates a typical day of working for the volunteers in the Kichwa community. It displays how the volunteers group together, away from the indigenous member, and separated by their guide.

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Figure 24. Picture symbolic of volunteer interaction with indigenous host members. (Source: Author's photograph)

The result is that, rather than having the opportunity to engage in a meaningful way with the indigenous member, they simply gaze at his work ethic. The volunteers therefore 'spatially other' the indigenous members, adopting the strategy of viewing the indigenous member's work in line with that of a 'heroic third world subject', emphasising their difference rather than any commonality.

In addition to separating themselves from indigenous members, volunteers would also distinguish different aspects of themselves, separating their 'volunteer self' from the 'tourist self', depending on the nature of the activity engaged in. As Michela in the kichwa community stated:

> "Some days we work hard and other days we rest more. I really appreciate the days off from working. We have spent time shopping, hiking, some of the boys played football with the locals. Things like that."

Separating themselves from both being a volunteer and being a tourist resolves the contradictory space that they find themselves in. Crossley (2012) similarly noted how volunteers on a project in Kenya interpreted any relaxing intervals as being appropriate reward for their hard work. Similarly, Tomazos and Butler (2012) argue that each day volunteers decide where on the spectrum of altruism and hedonism they will be located. Noting this trend in their study, Laurie and Baillie-Smith (2017: 16) reflect that it "reveals how poverty and development come to be seen as things that can be compartmentalised, so becoming physical and discursive spaces which can be stepped into and out of". The volunteer tourist, therefore, due to their position in the global economy are able to move into and out of these spaces whilst host members are fixed in their location.

The volunteers in both communities appeared to search out and emphasise signs which supported their adopted identity of being volunteers in the community. An example of this was the importance that they gave to the label of 'volunteer'. At dinner in the Kichwa community, I noted Tom, a volunteer, stating:

> "I like working at the school. One of the children called me a tourist and the teacher said 'no, he's a volunteer'. It felt really good knowing that she recognised me as being someone who is here to work and help, and not just a tourist."

Whilst in the Tsa'chila community, Bryan stated:

> "They do always refer to us as volunteers and genuinely do seem happy for us to be here. Like today, they thanked us for all our work and gave us these bracelets. It's only a little thing, but [it] does make me feel like they appreciate us being here."

The importance of the label 'volunteer' has been widely discussed in the volunteer literature; for example, Palacious (2010) describes 'being a volunteer', rather than 'volunteering', to reflect the importance given to identity by participants during a volunteer placement in Vietnam. The desire to avoid the tourist label is a phenomenon which dates to the onset of mass tourism; as Munt (1994: 119) notes there is a "craving for social and spatial distinction from the golden hordes". Through being designated 'a volunteer', this helps the volunteer tourist construct a narrative, in

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which they are engaging in a reciprocal relationship, rather than purchasing a desirable experience. Significantly, this hides the capitalist system in which volunteer tourism operates, providing greater opportunities for the volunteer tourist to instigate existential feelings within themselves, whilst also gaining additional cultural capital from the experience. The volunteer tourists' repeating the verbal confirmation of being 'labelled a volunteer' to the group, and in the interview, therefore is a strategy to reconfirm and cement their desired position within the community. The volunteers would also stress the hardship they had endured as part of their work-based tasks. This was noted in the following Diary Extract:

Participant Observation Field Diary Extract 27th June 2015

"It is notable at the end of a day how volunteers will frequently highlight bruises, bodily aches and profuse sweating that are the direct result of their work. Also, if a volunteer worked particularly hard this would be identified, with them then receiving additional praise and admiration."

Figure 25. Participant observation Field Diary Extract 8

The focus of such actions, and the description of such events, can be interpreted as a strategy to emphasise how they are engaging in serious work rather than a leisure activity. Crossley (2013: 145) similarly noted, during her ethnographic study of volunteers in Kenya, how volunteers would refer to the tasks which left "traces on the body" with satisfaction as proof of their hard work. Elsrud (2001) notes how backpackers construct an identity distinct from traditional tourists through displaying particular signs. This can range from wearing particular clothes or hairstyles, to marking their bodies through piercings and tattoos. He argues that this provides a sense of group belonging and these physical elements act as 'story tellers', indicating an adventurous identity. In a similar fashion, the volunteer tourists use injuries and their hardship to construct an adventurous volunteer identity and the subsequent cultural capital this conveys. The volunteers also appeared to utilise their bodies to convey subliminal signs to their hosts, namely by displaying overt signs of

disappointment if their expectations were not matched. Chris, based in the Tsa'chila community, described this:

> "Sweeping the leaves from the cultural centre just seemed so pointless. I think they could tell we were not happy. As we started messing around, doing stupid stuff, but then when our teacher told us to stop, we kind of just worked really slow, and I don't know, we just looked really disinterested in what we were doing."

The volunteers displayed bodily actions to strategically indicate to the host members that they were not happy with the given tasks. There is a broad literature that highlights the importance of matching volunteers' expectations with assigned tasks (Grimm and Needham, 2012; Coren and Gray, 2012; Lyons, 2003). This perspective seems to have encouraged Cousins *et al.* (2009) to title their paper *I've paid to observe lions not map roads*!, perhaps indicative of how volunteers desire to perform tasks that they view as fulfilling, rather than simply ones which host community members view as desirable. Rather than complain verbally about the assigned task, which may have contradicted their performative role as volunteers and their adopted position of being there to help, the volunteers utilise body language to display their displeasure to their hosts. In the Goffmanian (1959:2) sense, they signalled through the "impression they gave off", their unhappiness with the assigned task.

7.4.2 The Volunteer Tourist Management of their Encounter with Host Community Members

Thus far the chapter has argued that volunteers are ambivalent regarding their relationship with host community members, recognising that they are both part of, but detached from, the community. The volunteers, however, also emphasise their actions, that go beyond that which one would associate with a tourist. For example, Steph, a volunteer in the Kichwa community, stated:

> "We have a rota with two of us helping with the food preparation and another two washing dishes each day. It's really good to help them prepare the meals. It really feels like we get to know them better, and it shows them we aren't just tourists who want to have everything done for them. Although I do think we get in the way and probably slow them down more than help [laughs]."

Steph describes how the group have aimed to understand host members' lives by striving to go what MacCannell (1976) would describe as further 'backstage' within the community. Requesting to be involved in preparing food and washing up would appear to be a desire to be involved in the "mundane facets of everyday life" (MacCannell, 1976: 106) often hidden from the tourist gaze. The volunteers manage their ambivalent position by striving to gain greater insight into the local community members than they associate with tourism. The statement also indicates a recognition by the volunteers that this 'act of work' is symbolic in demonstrating a willingness to help, rather than a belief they are making an objective difference through these tasks. The stressing of this activity within the interview reflects an attempt by the volunteer to distinguish herself from a tourist identity, that which is catered for, and served, by host members. This is similar to the emphasis placed, during their work, on hardship the volunteers have endured as a sign of their cultural experience. As an extract of my field diary indicates:

Participant Observation Field Diary Extract 1st

September 2015

"The volunteers frequently highlight issues such as 'cold showers', the 'basic meals' or 'lack of technology' and 'illnesses suffered' as apparent evidence of their cultural immersion".

Figure 26. Participant Observation Field Diary Extract 9

The volunteers strategically utilise their discomfort as a tool to amplify their volunteer identity and deeper understanding of community life. Utilising the 'hardship' experienced in this manner fits with a narrative identified within the literature, that of volunteers 'experiencing' poverty as an important signifier of an 'authentic' volunteer experience (Mostafanazhad, 2013). In a discussion of the nature of the project, Paul in the Tsa'chila community insinuated the importance of this hardship when he noted:

> "I think the project has been commercialised, but they have been clever about it. They haven't just let some company take over. It's not like we are staying in a hotel, we still have to go to the toilet in a hole."

This volunteer interprets the use of basic toilets as an important signifier that the project has not been overly commercialised by the provision of facilities more associated with traditional tourism. Linking basic facilities with a non-commercial experience abides by Western imaginaries of an indigenous community as being adrift from modernity. The appeal to the volunteer tourists of the 'exotic other' living outside of modernity has a long history. As Week (2012) notes, it underpinned Europe's Age of Discovery and subsequent colonial expansion. Moreover, the emphasis placed by this volunteer on the rudimentary facilities encountered in the Tsa'chila community is illustrative of how the Global South is constructed as a place of hardship and risk for the Western volunteer who, through overcoming, demonstrates what Goffman (1967) refers to as 'strong character.' As Elsrud (2001: 601) notes, "risk and adventure separates long-term independent travellers from their bad cousins: the tourists". There was no evidence that the volunteer tourists felt in danger or at risk whilst in the projects, the symbols representing this risk were, however, important in the construction of the volunteer identity.

In explaining their position in the community, the volunteers also stress their own individual characteristics to spatially differentiate themselves from other volunteers. Haley, a volunteer in the Kichwa community, stated for example:

> "I think it has been good, as we have experienced both worlds here in the volunteer house, and seen from the outside some other houses that are more hut like, and the way some people dress in traditional clothing, for example. I realise that we are living better than other local people, although I do not think I could have adapted to more basic conditions."

This volunteer explains the space which she occupies through how she characterises her own ability to cope within certain environments. This self-regulation in identifying one's own characteristics, alongside the degree of difference or hardship to be experienced, has been identified as a common strategy within the literature. For example, Mostafahezhad (2013), in her analysis of 'geography of compassion', notes

how volunteers would choose Thailand as an introduction to volunteering, to gain experience before travelling to what they deemed the more challenging environment of Africa. Similarly, Laurie and Baille-Smith (2017) note how volunteers differentiate themselves from other volunteers who could work harder or commit longer time to a particular project.

Evidence from both communities' shows that volunteers also spatially separated host community members into those that they interact with and those with whom they have no contact. Volunteers emphasised the friendly, welcoming indigenous members and their interactions with them. On further probing, it was clear that volunteers recognised that they only interacted with a limited number of host members. This is evidenced by the following two statements:

> "We have only met the ones who run the programme. We do see some people walking around. But they don't speak to us. I'm not sure if they don't speak Spanish, or are just too busy, or what is the reason." [Robert, volunteer in the Kichwa community]

Similarly, in the Tsa'chila community, volunteer Rebecca stated:

> "We went outside the cultural centre and watched a football game. Everyone just kind of stared at us. I don't know if they didn't know what we were doing here, didn't want us being here, or what. It was a bit uncomfortable. We did not stay long before we left."

These volunteers acknowledged certain circumstances in which they felt uncomfortable with their role in the community. Responding to this, they left the area for the security of the cultural centre, or explained the situation through local members being unwilling or unable to engage with them. Crossley (2012) notes how volunteers would attempt to avoid young men selling bracelets and beggars demanding money, as this challenged their perception of host members as 'poor but happy' and being grateful recipients of their work. In this instance, it was evidence of the hosts not engaging in Western notions of hospitality, and the volunteer's own confusion of the perception of them in the community, that resulted in the volunteers feeling uncomfortable and avoiding contact. In the communities, the result of this

strategy was that the volunteers mainly interacted with the children of the community, as Tim a volunteer in the Kichwa community notes:

> "We have mainly talked to the kids, as they don't mind coming up and talking to us."

This focus on children has been widely noted in the volunteer tourism literature. Mostafanezhad (2013: 491) notes how children often represent an "innocence and dependence" which appeal to the volunteer tourist, whilst Kontogeorgopoulos (2016) observed that volunteers preferred to spend time with children, as they could communicate with them non-linguistically. The volunteers in both indigenous communities therefore interacted with a small spectrum of host community members, consisting most often of children or the elite of the community involved in the volunteer projects. This contrasts with findings such as by Zahra and McIntosh (2015: 117) who assert that volunteer tourism provides an "opportunity for volunteers to mix and talk to a range of people in the host community". However, it must be noted that Zahra and McIntosh's (2015) study relied on in-depth interviews with volunteer tourists, who may have overemphasised their interaction with host members to reinforce their volunteer identity. During this empirical investigation, I noted a reluctance of the volunteers to highlight the moments they felt uncomfortable within their predominant narratives, which in turn may reflect this challenging their desired volunteer identity as being close to host community members. As Goffman (1959: 141) notes, in the undertaking of a performative role, it requires "the over-communication of some facts and under-communication of others". Volunteers appeared to downplay those situations when they felt like outsiders and emphasise the moments they interacted closely with host members. The optimism and advocacy in early studies of volunteer tourism must be seen in the light of a reliance on how volunteer tourists interpret their experience, without critically analysing the message volunteers aim to convey through such a narrative.

The volunteers' ambivalent position in the communities led to them being concerned about how they are perceived by their indigenous hosts. This can be seen in the following statement:

> "I think it's really important for all of us that we don't come across as these loud Americans who think we know better. I don't think we have, as we all are very respectful and appreciate what they have to offer here". [Sarah, volunteer in Kichwa community]

This is an indication, for example, of how volunteers would avoid intensive questioning of community members during their work and daily life, in a desire to avoid appearing to project Western superiority. The volunteers therefore self-monitored their actions, in order to provide an 'idealised impression' of themselves in front of the host community members (Goffman, 1959). The volunteers' eagerness to project a particular image, however, constrained a detailed and frank exchange of views between themselves and their hosts.

> "We were carrying the equipment up the hill and the lorry was just literally over there. I don't know why we didn't use it. I don't think we could do things better, but maybe more efficiently." [Holly, volunteer in Kichwa community]

In this instance, Holly felt unable to question the indigenous community member about why the task was performed in a particular way, to protect her volunteer identity of respecting local way of life. The result of this is volunteers situating any practices within idealistic notions of community and pre-industrial way of life, rather than attempting to understand their reasons for any particular behaviour, or identify commonality between themselves and their hosts.

7.5 Volunteer Tourists' and *Buen Vivir*

In both indigenous communities, there is little evidence that volunteers gained any insight into *Buen Vivir* and its importance as an alternative to Western notions of development. This is because in both volunteer projects, during this study, the political situation in Ecuador or the Ecuadorian state's shift to *Buen Vivir* was not a focus of discussion for volunteers. Indeed, in both projects politics was absent from development discussions, instead the focus was on helping and immediate gratification. As the below statements from both projects indicate:

"I feel like the jobs we've done have helped them as we have provided extra hands, so it means that things get done quicker than if we weren't here" [Sam, Kichwa community]

"They told us that no-one comes to help them here. We are interested in them and come to help, maybe we only help a little bit, but they really appreciate it". [Louise, Tsa'chila community]

These statements illustrate how the volunteers interpret their role as helping the community with specific tasks, whilst avoiding any broader acknowledgement of the structural causes of poverty and inequality. Moreover, the absence of politics from the volunteer projects' results in volunteers confirming Western imaginaries that closely align with western tropes of the noble savage, a static traditional society adrift from modernity. This can be seen from the following statements:

"They have a very simple life and don't need a lot to be happy. I think we don't either but we kind of have the opportunity to have more, so we do. I like the way that they have a real community feeling and everyone works together. It's not like that where I'm from in the United States". [Taylor, Kichwa Community]

"I think its been really eye opening I'm from New York city so I don't see what I've seen here. The rest of the world modernising quickly, so it's good to see people can still live their lives more traditionally. They have a real sense of community, everything is slower and simpler, and they don't worry about always having to have more of everything."[Nicky, Tsa'chila community].

These reflections illustrate how the volunteers interpret the indigenous communities as functioning in an egalitarian system, based on reciprocity and solidarity, rather than following capitalistic principles. As outlined in Chapter Five this is reinforced by indigenous project members, consisting of the community elite, who are eager to satisfy Western imaginaries of an indigenous community. The result is that the complexity of achieving *Buen Vivir* in a heterogeneous and stratified community is neither recognised nor discussed by volunteers. In associating indigenous knowledges and practices as rooted in the past, rather than under constant

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construction, such a representation also reduces the potential for volunteers to consider a framework from the Global South as providing a viable alternative to Western development models. The apolitical nature of the volunteer tourism projects, with their focus on ameliorating the outcome of neoliberal policies, rather than striving for deeper structural change, aligns with a trend identified by Butcher and Smith (2015) in their critique of this tourism practice. This has important implications for the potential of this activity to develop a sense of global citizenship in the volunteer tourist.

7.6 Volunteer Tourism and Global Citizenship

The ability of volunteer tourism to instigate a form of global citizenship in the participant is an important attribute of this activity, particularly in response to critiques over its neo-colonial manifestations (as illustrated in Figure 1). In both volunteer projects studied there is evidence of volunteers developing a form of global citizenship, although this has a particular neo-liberal tinge. This is because there is limited evidence to suggest the projects challenge volunteers' understanding of the global political economy or their complicity in perpetuating this system. They also seldom seem to empower volunteers to engage with the deeper structural causes of global inequality. Instead, volunteers demonstrate a sense of global citizenship based on their individual identity. As the statements below indicate:

> "I think all of us here are so privileged it made me realise that you don't just have to be settled and have a 9-5 jobs. You can make a difference to the world around you, you can travel, you don't have to be stuck in a basic office job. You can immerse yourself in different cultures and that can be your life style". [Lisa, Kichwa Community]

> "In the future I would like to work in development, maybe in another country. I really think that is something I want to do, and this experience has made me think it is possible to make a difference in people's lives". (Taylor, Kichwa community]

The volunteers' reflections indicate that they have been inspired to make a change, although this takes a form of them being citizens of the world, desiring to travel to help address the outcomes of political decisions. Moreover, there is a focus is on

making a difference through their individual actions or life course, rather than focus on any collective political engagement. The possible future benefits from participating in the project is also recognised by Kati in focus group 5:

> "I love helping people and feeling like I can help and do good in the world. But it also helps in my resume and will help in the future if people know what I am doing".

Kati therefore acknowledges that volunteering has the potential to make herself more desirable in the future job market. However, she does not feel this diminishes her satisfaction in helping people, rather she views this as a win-win scenario of volunteer tourism. Therefore, Kati associates volunteer tourism with potentially helping her to secure future financial rewards, rather than unsettling her position and understanding of the global political system. The form of global citizenship emerging from volunteers reflections appears to be their guide encourages, as she comments:

> "What we hope is that when they go home they think about some of these scenes, some of these events. And this changes their course just slightly, their view of the world, and maybe what they want to do with their lives". [Melony, American guide]

The guide therefore views her role as one that encourages volunteers to be open to new cultures and experiences, in the belief that this may help them to be rounded individuals, who want to make a difference in the world. In this way, this guide positions volunteer tourism as an apolitical activity, which aims to nudge volunteers to reflect on their life course, rather than encourage deeper reflection on their status in the global political economy or the causes of poverty and inequality. Incorporating a critical pedagogy in volunteer programmes to develop a sense of global solidarity is widely supported in the volunteer tourism literature (Diprose, 2012; Raymond and Hall, 2008; Simpson, 2004). Such critical reflections can also be generated by the act of conducting research itself. The following focus group 4 discussion between Rachel and Louise in the Tsa'chila community illustrates this point well:

> "By talking to you, made us think more about the experience. If you had not asked questions I would not have discussed it. I have learnt different things

from expressing my opinion and listening. I think this discussion has changed my opinion of the experience, made me realise that it is very complex with no easy answers.

"Yes I agree it's been really good. It made me think it's important to think carefully about why we came here and what it is we want to achieve by being here. And also what it is the people here want from us being here"

It was not the intension of this thesis to actively alter participants' opinions, however, through conducting interviews and focus groups, the volunteers clearly began to reflect deeper on their experience. Incorporating a critical pedagogy in volunteer tourism projects that challenging assumptions and discusses political engagement at different spatial scales may therefore have the potential to develop a deeper sense of global citizenship, than the current focus on individual life course; this is explored further in the concluding chapter. [26]

7.7   Conclusion

This chapter has provided insight into how volunteer tourists interpret and manage their experience in a 'volunteer space' in two indigenous communities in Ecuador. It argued that volunteer tourists possess an ambivalent position whilst in the communities. This reflects an acknowledgement that they desire to engage with the host community ethically and to 'make a difference', whilst also receiving enjoyment from the experience they have purchased, as part of capitalist consumption. In both communities, the volunteers adopted similar strategies and utilised similar narratives whilst conforming to a particular volunteer identity. The volunteers' self-management of the experience to maximise their return of time and monetary investment illustrates their neo-liberal subjectivity. The performative roles of both the volunteers, and that of the host identified earlier in the thesis, indicate little evidence to support Mcintosh and Zahra (2007), research findings that reported

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[26] My influence on the research process as outlined in this discussion is identified in Chapter Three, as I recognise that I provide an account of volunteer tourism which is situated and constructed in collaboration with participants.

unconstrained cross-cultural communication between volunteer and host. Despite participating in two different indigenous communities with different cultural histories, the volunteers interpreted their hosts through the same Western romanticised gaze. As a result, it is difficult to argue that volunteers, during these projects at this time, gained any greater cultural understanding than available through traditional cultural tourism. Moreover, in reflecting on their experience, the volunteers appeared to develop a sense of global citizenship based on making a difference within the existing system. As a result, there is little evidence that their existing pre-conceptions or understanding of the global political economy became unsettled. They did not seem to be inspired to engage in the wider political system or to resist and challenge structural causes of poverty and inequality. The following chapter discusses in more detail the conclusions of this thesis and its contribution to our understanding of volunteer tourism.

8 Discussion and Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This thesis emerged from a desire to address the limited academic research available focusing on the host community in volunteer tourism. It developed into a multi-site analysis of volunteer tourism in indigenous communities in Ecuador, incorporating insights from the full spectrum of stakeholders, including the facilitating NGO, indigenous community members, and volunteer tourists. It has, moreover, presented my journey from a position of accepting volunteer tourism's discursive positioning as an alternative tourism practice based on reciprocity and mutual understanding, to one that is critical of its construction of a 'host' and 'volunteer' within a commodified experience. This journey has involved a thorough analysis of the relationship between tourism and development, from its neo-colonial origins in modernisation theory, to post-development perspectives, and finally to *Buen Vivir*. The shift to *Buen Vivir* in this thesis reflects the concept's importance as a development imaginary and political discourse in contemporary Ecuador, providing a progressive alternative to the neo-liberal model of development in the country. Moreover, there has been an overwhelming tendency within the volunteer tourism literature to analyse this tourism practice using limited analytical frames originating in the Global North (Wearing *et al.*, 2017; Sin *et al.*, 2015). Noting the limited scope of existing studies, Wearing and Ponting (2009: 512) argue that "alternative research paradigms are needed to enrich the field and to provide new ways of seeing, researching and doing tourism." The emphasis placed on *Buen Vivir* in this thesis provides one such alternative reading, by developing an analysis of volunteer tourism through an indigenous worldview, and thereby offering a contemporary and novel account of the practice of volunteer tourism in the Global South. This final chapter outlines the conclusions of this thesis and its contribution to the existing literature. It will provide a summary of the empirical chapters and their principal arguments. Finally, it shall suggest avenues for possible future research.

8.2 The Contribution of Thesis

This thesis has contributed to the volunteer tourism literature by illustrating how this tourism practice is emblematic of the neoliberal model of development under way in

countries of the Global South. It contends that, in spite of volunteer tourism's discursive positioning as an alternative tourism practice, volunteer tourism functions through and reinforces the structures and imaginaries of an unequal and uneven global economic system. This is because, while volunteer tourism flows across global boundaries through the premise of reciprocity and mutual learning as an apolitical practice, on grounding itself in communities of the Global South, it hooks these communities into the global tourism industry. The upward accountability structures typical of this industry result in the host community having to satisfy the demands and dictates of volunteer tourists, whether relating to health and safety, notions of comfort, and/or imaginaries of an 'exotic other'. As a result, indigenous host members are encouraged – by way of technocratic management techniques – to adopt knowledges and practices originating from the Global North, delegitimising locally embedded knowledges. Chapter Six thus highlighted the outcome of this process has been a focus on the individual indigenous subject and their professionalisation. The professionalisation of host members subsequently reduces the space for alternative conceptualisations of volunteer tourism to emerge. As Jenkins (2005: 613) notes:

> "professionalisation is a key instrument of the neoliberal project, contributing to the co-optation, incorporation, and neutralisation of alternative ideologies and ways of being."

The functioning of the volunteer tourism industry therefore entrenches existing hierarchies of knowledge, reflecting the unequal global system. After all, as Crabtree (2008: 25) notes, "knowledge is central to the maintenance of global power relations." This thesis has illustrated that this results in a privileging of individual autonomy and responsibility, over collective practices based on solidarity and reciprocity. Consequently, I argue that volunteer tourism embodies the spirit of neo-liberal development models, rather than being conducive to practically achieving *Buen Vivir*. Illustrative of this is how volunteer tourism maps onto existing inequalities in communities of the Global South, valuing indigenous subjects adapted or adaptable to the requirements of the global tourism industry whilst further marginalising those subjects unvalued by the neo-liberal capitalist system. This agenda is actively supported by elites in the indigenous communities, who are best positioned to take advantage of this model of development. Harvey's (2005) class-

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based analysis, regarding how neo-liberalism is embraced by elites to maintain particular nodes of power, provides insight into the discourses and practices employed by project members in the two communities studied. The elite in indigenous communities therefore actively support volunteer tourism to facilitate access to the global market, solidifying and enhancing their social and economic position in the community. Chapter Six illustrated this through the concept of capitals, highlighting how only community members with access to social, cultural, human, and financial capital have the potential to fully participate in volunteer tourism projects. Moreover, the projects require 'linking social capital', with a community member connecting and engaging with an actor outside their locality. This requirement increases the likelihood that it is a member of the existing elite, who is most likely to have the opportunity to position himself or herself as a conduit for the development of the project. As Figure 22 illustrates, this results in specific community members assuming powerful positions, to enhance their forms of capital and those in their social network, whilst other community members benefit little from the projects.

Kothari (2005: 444) asks, "how can critical voices be effective within a neoliberal development agenda?" This thesis provided little evidence of effective resistance to neoliberal practices in the two indigenous communities studied. However, it argues that the discourses of *Buen Vivir* provided an important framework through which marginalised host community members would critique the practices of volunteer tourism. It demonstrates how individuals side-lined from the volunteer projects, question the concentration of wealth and opportunities in the hands of the elite, and the project's failure to recognise and value the most marginalised in the community. Moreover, indigenous members proposed alternative practices that would use volunteer tourism to challenge, rather than reinforce, existing inequalities within the indigenous communities. The thesis therefore argues that the mobilisation of the discourses of *Buen Vivir* are an important means by which marginalised indigenous members could challenge and unsettle the hegemonic discourses originating from the Global North, and adopted by local elites.

The commodification of volunteer tourism to create a spectacle, rather than provide an experience based on reciprocity and mutuality, has become of increasing concern in the volunteer tourism literature. Particular unease relates to the proliferation of facilitators seeking to commercialise the discourses of development and global citizenship to maximise profits or secure additional sources of revenue (McGloin and Georgeou, 2016). For example, Wearing *et al*. (2017: 515) critique current volunteer tourism practices, stating, "Operators have neglected, to a large degree, the philosophies, ethics and values upon why many volunteers choose to volunteer in the first place". Similarly, McGehee (2012: 87) reflects that the main question surrounding volunteer tourism is whether:

> "The unique motivations and attitudes of volunteer tourists, the catalytic potential of volunteer tourism organizations, and the agency of the host community can overcome the predominantly western, capitalist environment in which they are often situated, an environment which depends upon production and consumption, supply and demand, and the perpetuation of inequality".

The critique of the commodification of volunteer tourism through its co-optation by the tourism industry is appealing, although it assumes this tourism practice can actually function through reciprocity and meaningful non-market based relations. This thesis has questioned such an assertion, illustrating that host community members and volunteer tourists engage with this tourism practice through a particular neo-liberal subjectivity, even if they perform the desired identity of operating outside market relations.

It is the contention of this thesis that, in spite of volunteer tourism's discursive positioning within Western imaginaries, host members and volunteer tourists have their own priorities for engaging in this tourism practice. This is because host community members interpret volunteer tourism as an enterprise in which they seek financial rewards for participation. Capitalistic motivations are therefore not an imposition of the tourism industry, but an expected outcome, reflecting the time and financial investment committed by host members to receive volunteer tourists. Moreover, host community members, as outlined in Chapter Five, consider volunteer

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tourism an important mechanism to challenge negative stereotypes which are propagated within Ecuadorian society, of them being "dirty, unclean or backward" (Swanson, 2007: 709). A priority of indigenous communities is therefore to ensure that a positive image of their community and culture is presented to volunteer tourists. Supporting, an observation by Hollinshead (2004) that tourism provides an opportunity for populations subjected by the state or colonial discourses to redefine themselves from externally enforced representations. As a result, indigenous members do not passively receive volunteer tourists in their communities, but actively strive to produce a successful product for the global volunteer tourism market. The locally embedded desires and priorities of host community members are not evident in the broad body of scholarly work on volunteer tourism. Existing scholarly work appears to fall in line with what Smith (2013: 44) terms "research through imperial eyes", with host community members either ignored (Simpson, 2004), spoken for (Palacious, 2010), or confined to a narrow pre-defined research agenda (Zahra and McGehee, 2013). The result is that understandings of the host community in volunteer tourism research have tended to take the form of an undifferentiated construct, formed through the imaginaries of the Global North. This construct is one in which communities of the Global South simply wait for 'help' by volunteer tourists, whilst being eager to engage with them in a non-commercial reciprocal encounter. This thesis therefore provides an important contribution to the literature, by providing the space for host community members to speak, and to challenge conceptualisations of volunteer tourism originating from the Global North.

In addition, the reality on the ground is that rather than being a hostage to the commercialisation of volunteer tourism, the volunteer tourist recognises their complicity in this process. Instead of the naive volunteer tourist I expected to encounter, the volunteer tourists in the two indigenous communities demonstrated a high degree of reflexivity in relation to their position in the community. Illich (1968: 314) noted this phenomenon as far back as 1968, in which he criticised volunteers for continuing to participate in volunteer programmes, despite acknowledging their limitations, stating:

> "Your very insight, your very openness to evaluations of past programs make you hypocrites because you – or at least most of you – have decided to spend this next summer in Mexico, and therefore, you are unwilling to go far enough in your reappraisal of your program. You close your eyes because you want to go ahead and could not do so if you looked at some facts."

A less critical stance is adopted in this thesis than Illich's, however, with Chapter Seven arguing that volunteer tourists' ambivalent position in relation to this activity reflects a recognition that they have both volunteer and touristic desires from the experience. This manifests in a desire for an ethical intimate engagement with host communities, but also the expectation that they are purchasing an enjoyable experience. Recognition that these dichotomous positions are not always compatible results in the volunteer tourist self-managing their experience, to maximise their desired rewards from this activity. The 'moralisation of tourism' and desire for differentiation from mass tourism, therefore encourages the spectacle of volunteer tourism as described in this thesis.

The reflexivity of volunteer tourists is widely noted in the academe, with scholarly work highlighting how the experience alters the 'sense of self' within the volunteer tourist (Zahra and McIntosh, 2007; Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004; Wearing and Neil, 2000). This thesis has argued that beyond this, however, focusing on how volunteer tourists are reflexive specifically in relation to the volunteer space they occupy. I have argued that in consuming the experience, volunteer tourists recognise that they may be gaining a filtered and partial understanding of community life. They acknowledge that their hosts view them as guests and so may strive to provide them with a comfortable, safe and interesting experience. As a result, rather than simply accepting the reality as presented, they are continually reflexive and question their experience in the communities. This indicates that, as active reflexive participants, volunteer tourists are to some extent able to resist the allure of the hyperreal environment presented. However, the experience provides little space for volunteers to experience the heterogeneity and hybridity of the lived realities of community members. Providing an opportunity for volunteers to experience this, whilst different actors pursue their own agenda, is clearly challenging.

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Through the lens of *Buen Vivir* this thesis has demonstrated that existing practices are not rational or inevitable, but rather reflect decisions made at multiple scales. Indeed, evidence from the level of the Ecuadorian State (Chapter Four) and the community level (Chapter Five and Six) illustrate the influence of neo-liberal practices on how tourism industry functions in the country, and how *Buen Vivir* is an important means of resistance at both levels. Adopting *Buen Vivir* as a guiding principle for volunteer tourism projects, with its focus on the community's capital rather than individuals, would increase the possibility of a wider range of community members being involved in the projects. Volunteer tourists may then gain greater insight into the heterogeneity of community life, and the value of *Buen Vivir* as a viable modern framework for communities in the Global South.

This thesis challenges the body of scholarly work suggesting that volunteer tourism provides a means to achieve greater cultural understanding (Sin, 2009; Raymond and Hall, 2008; Simpson, 2004; Nyaupane *et al.*, 2008) and global citizenship (Lyons *et al.*, 2012; McGehee and Santos, 2005). It contends that volunteer tourists and hosts strategically manage their performance of self during their encounter, resulting in 'spatial othering' rather than providing an opportunity for commonality and shared understanding to emerge. As a result, there was little evidence of volunteer tourism providing access to what Bhabha (1994) refers to as 'third spaces'. This is because, rather than provide an experience that challenges existing frames of reference, the projects operated to satisfy a desired imagined geography between the Global North and South. The complex and heterogeneous indigenous community therefore takes on a standardised and homogenous form, with the purpose of providing the volunteer tourist with a reprieve from Western modernity. This reprieve – consisting of a community, materially poor but rich in spiritual and communal well-being – sculptured to satisfy the Western subjects search for deeper meaning and sense of self.

The thesis identified the value of volunteer tourism as being to provide a space for the volunteers to discuss their position in the community, the purpose of volunteer tourism, and the nature and desirability of development. However, this took place in a relatively unstructured manner, with very limited involvement of host community

members. Butcher (2016) supports the lack of pedagogy in volunteer tourism, arguing that it provides the space for volunteers to develop 'moral autonomy' by navigating their engagement with the host community. The premise of such an assertion is that by negotiating a 'heterogeneous space' consisting of "dangers and messy sensuous geographies" (Urry, 2011:127), volunteers develop their own understanding of communities of the Global South. Chapter Five illustrates, however, that the volunteer tourist is presented with a Disneyesque vision of an indigenous community, masking the unequal power and neo-colonial constructions embedded within the experience. The result is that the volunteer gaze – framed by "historical, economic, political, environmental and cultural dynamics" (Hammersely 2014: 859) – perpetuates stereotypes and the imagined geographies of the Global North and South.

This thesis supports a growing body of literature calling for volunteer tourism projects to incorporate a critical pedagogy, to encourage volunteers to reflect on the nature of global political economy and the social and environmental injustices it perpetuates (Diprose, 2012; Raymond and Hall; 2008; Simpson, 2004). This should focus on developing the skills of the volunteer tourist, to transform the way they reflect on their experience in the host community whilst also providing a means to engage with the deeper structural causes of global inequality beyond market-based solutions. As Giroux (2004: 63) describes, the role of critical pedagogy:

> "lies not only in changing how people think about themselves and their relationship to others and the world, but also in energizing students and others to engage in those struggles that further possibilities for living in a more just society."

There is a need to incorporate host community members within this process, as Crabtree (1998) notes in his assessment of International Service Learning, the greater the involvement of the community, the greater the learning outcomes for students. Although theoretically desirable, Chapter Five and Six illustrated, implementing such engagement may be problematic. This is because those community members who interact with volunteers have a financial incentive to reinforce volunteer tourists' pre-existing imaginaries, rather than critically challenging their worldview. Moreover, this thesis has demonstrated that the community members involved with volunteer

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tourists form something of an elite. These members' understandings of the community's social, historic, and economic relations, and place in a national and global context, may vary substantially from those members marginalised and silenced within the projects.

8.3   Summary of Research Findings

RQ1 – How is Buen Vivir discursively constructed at the national level in Ecuador, and how does this relate to tourism development in the country?

Chapter Four answered RQ1 by adopting a genealogical approach, exploring the Ecuadorian state's relationship with tourism development in the country. It examined the Ecuadorian Ministry of Tourism's website, popular media content, and news publications, teasing out evidence of neo-liberal and *Buen Vivir*-oriented discourses and practices. It argued that the Ecuadorian state discursively associates tourism with the concept of *Buen Vivir*, positioning tourism as a means to achieve small-scale and harmonious development. However, at the same time, it employs practices typical of a neo-liberal agenda, focusing on creating an optimal business environment for the expansion of its tourism industry. The chapter therefore argued that, in spite of its discursive positioning, the Ecuadorian state is ambivalent towards *Buen Vivir*, utilising its discourses, but adopting policies fitting with neo-liberal development models. This strategy allows the state to rebrand Ecuador away from its association with political turmoil, to one of harmonious coexistence, which is essential for competing for investment within the global market. Moreover, it allows existing policies to be presented within the counter-hegemonic discourses of *Buen Vivir*, thereby disarming critiques arising from indigenous actors in particular. Through its analysis of tourism development, Chapter Four illustrates the lack of evidence for a movement towards *Buen Vivir* in Ecuador. This reflects the failure of the Ecuadorian state to address the structural causes of poverty and inequality that have persisted since the colonial period. As a result, it relies on redistributive policies contingent on economic growth, which encourage the adoption of neo-liberal policies and integration into the uneven and increasingly unequal global market.

RQ2 – How is an indigenous community in Ecuador constructed as a site for volunteer tourism?

Chapter Five answered RQ2 by analysing the processes and negotiations that occur when a community becomes a site for volunteer tourism. It argued that the host community is transformed from a place of residence, into a 'volunteer space' to be sold on the global tourism market, through a process of co-production. Facilitating this is the professionalisation of indigenous project members who, through their desire to maximise profits and engagement with audit cultures, adopt managerial norms and practices originating from the Global North. This reflects how the facilitating NGO and host community members are the producers of an experience, while volunteers are the consumers. There is a broad body of literature describing how facilitating agents market volunteer tourism through essentialised concepts of 'other', to produce and sell recognisable imagery (Simpson, 2004). This chapter advanced existing understandings by illustrating how this imaginary manifests in the creation of a volunteer space to satisfy the volunteer's desire to gaze at the 'romanticised other'. Chapter Five subsequently argues that a process of disneyfication (Bryman, 1999) occurs, creating a hyperreality (Baudrillard, 1986) of an indigenous community that never existed beyond Western imaginaries. This hyperreality represents an indigenous community in which *Buen Vivir* is the lived reality for community members, hiding the inequalities that exist within the indigenous communities and the capitalistic desires of its members.

Chapter Five challenges existing scholarly work, which tends to present the host community as passive recipients of the volunteer tourism industry (Palacious, 2010; Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004; Conran, 2011). For example, Steele *et al.*, (2017: 21) argue that "host communities are becoming increasingly disempowered and subject to the whims and shifts of a mobile marketplace". This chapter recognises the limited power of host communities in the global tourism industry. However, it also notes that members of the host community take an active role in creating and maintaining their product, to be competitive in the global volunteer tourism market. As a result, Chapter Five questions the broader body of scholarly work which focuses on the skills and attributes of volunteer tourists and their ability to make a difference in the community (Callanan and Thomas, 2005; Raymond, 2008; Palacious, 2010). Instead, it argues

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that volunteer tourism needs to be understood in terms of how locals adopt knowledges and practices to cater for the dictates of the volunteer tourism market.

RQ3 – How do different indigenous members interpret volunteer tourism, and what factors shape this interpretation?

Chapter Six responded to RQ3 by offering an analysis of indigenous members' participation and interpretation of volunteer tourism within their community. It contends that volunteer tourism functions through technocratic management techniques originating from the Global North. The result is the adoption of 'rational' business practices, which value certain community members whilst excluding others. To illustrate this, the chapter highlights the importance of social, cultural, human, built and financial capital to explain the likelihood of locals' involvement in the volunteer tourism projects. It therefore challenges a broad body of scholarly work which has tended to present the host community as a homogenous entity with all members having equal opportunity to participate and engage with volunteer tourists.

Through its analysis, Chapter Six argues that individuals involved in the projects framed their understanding of volunteer tourism through discourses aligned with neo-liberalism, emphasising individual responsibility and self-management. Subsequently, they interpret individual rewards from volunteer tourism as reflecting themselves – as enterprising individuals – seizing available opportunities. Moreover, they justify the marginalisation of other community members from the volunteer projects as reflecting a failure to develop themselves, a failure to be successful within the existing system. Indigenous project members thus ignore the structural constraints impeding certain community members from participating in the projects, such as their lack of particular individual forms of capital which are valued within the neoliberal capitalist system. This, therefore, undermines notions of solidarity and equality amongst community members, whilst delegitimising alternative conceptualisations of volunteer tourism practices. Conversely, indigenous members excluded from the volunteer tourism projects critique volunteer tourism practices by mobilising the discourses of *Buen Vivir*. Chapter Six highlights how these individuals refer to existing practices as causing disharmony, through their focus on developing the

individual, rather than the community as a whole. The result is the promotion of an ideology encouraging certain individuals to search for individual rewards and prosperity – or 'living better' – rather than communal well-being through 'living well'.

RQ4 – How do volunteer tourists interpret their experience in the indigenous communities?

Chapter Seven answered RQ4 by arguing that volunteer tourists display a neo-liberal subjectivity whilst in the indigenous communities. It provided evidence of the volunteer tourists strategically managing and narrating their experience, to provide an 'idealised impression' (Goffman, 1959) of themselves as volunteer tourists. This reflects how volunteer tourism is associated with the 'right way to travel', and the importance of distinguishing oneself from unethical and 'inauthentic' mass tourism. The moralisation of travel therefore influences the volunteer tourist beyond their decision to participate in this tourism practice, extending to the performative role they adopt whilst involved in the projects. The chapter supports a broad body of scholarly work which argues that volunteers aim to use volunteer tourism as a means of gaining distinction to gain cultural capital within their home country.

The chapter challenged existing scholarly work which has tended to present the volunteer tourist as a passive or naive consumer, in relation to their ability to bring development or have an intimate encounter in host regions. It contends that the volunteer tourists demonstrate a high degree of reflexive questioning; for example, regarding the extent they had 'selfish desires', 'the nature or desirability of development', and what it means 'to be a volunteer and tourist'. The projects therefore provided a space for this reflection to occur, although a lack of critical pedagogy resulted in many existing preconceptions being reinforced rather than challenged.

8.4 Future Research

This thesis has provided an account of volunteer tourism based on qualitative research in two indigenous communities in Ecuador. By incorporating the voices of host

community members it has begun the process of rebalancing scholarly work away from Western-centric understandings of volunteer tourism. I recognise that, as a researcher from the Global North, I was an 'outsider' to the indigenous communities, and therefore can only provide a partial and socially constructed account. To help reduce this distance, I used the concept of *Buen Vivir* to analyse this tourism practice, and the hierarchical structures and knowledges between the Global North and South in which it is entangled. I believe this approach was successful as it provided a means for myself as a researcher, to transcend my existing frames of reference and to offer an alternative reading of volunteer tourism. However, I recognise that as an outsider my understanding of *Buen Vivir* can only be considered limited, and that alternative conclusions may be drawn, from a scholar more deeply embedded in local knowledge and culture. As a result, future research on volunteer tourism by indigenous scholars should be encouraged and participatory methods employed, to incorporate indigenous community members in the planning, research, and analysis of the study. As Smith (2013: 2) observes, there is a complex web intertwining research and imperialism with "the pursuit of knowledge deeply embedded in the multiple layers of imperial and colonial practices". Indigenous individuals taking a full and active role in the research process may not allow new insights into – and understandings of – volunteer tourism to emerge (Howitt *et al.* 1990). However, it may help to minimise misrepresentation and simultaneously provide a fuller, more culturally appropriate account of indigenous interpretations of this tourism practice (Gibbs, 2001).

The shifting nature of this thesis resulted in my interest in *Buen Vivir* emerging relatively late in the study. As a result, I did not have the opportunity to explicitly explore indigenous community members' understanding of *Buen Vivir*. Rather I used its discourses to frame my understanding of certain critiques of volunteer tourism practices. Future research should consider directly exploring local interpretations of *Buen Vivir*, and examining whether this correlates with any specific interest or interpretation of volunteer tourism.

In this thesis I used the concept of capitals to interpret communities' heterogeneity and to explore how volunteer tourism projects mapped onto existing inequalities. This proved a useful concept even though assessing the difference between closely

interrelated and blurred forms of capital proved to be quite a subjective process. Future studies may consider if these forms of capital are influential in other communities hosting volunteer tourism projects. Moreover, the possibility of using volunteer tourism as a means of enhancing the community's capital, rather than certain individuals, is a priority. To achieve this greater understanding is required of how/if volunteer tourism can touch down in a heterogeneous community in the Global South and not exacerbate existing inequalities. Research on best practices from around the globe, offering examples of different engagement and capacity building strategies, in differing settings would be an interesting avenue for exploration. This thesis provides a snapshot of community members' understandings of volunteer tourism at a specific temporal location, during established volunteer tourism projects. This, as Laurie and Baillie-Smith (2017) note, is somewhat of an orthodox approach to studying this particular tourism practice. Future scholars should consider undertaking longitudinal studies to explore if there is any shift in community members' interpretations of volunteer tourism through the life-span of a project. Incorporating this with a study of *Buen Vivir* would also provide a deeper insight into how a community's incorporation into the global tourism market shapes community members' understandings of development and community. Finally, a broader range of empirical studies examining host community interpretations of volunteer tourism with different facilitating organisations and geographical locations should be considered a priority. Analysis of volunteer tourism practices through alternative knowledge systems of the Global South, such as *Ubuntu* in South Africa or *Swaraj* in India, would also compliment this thesis and the existing literature.

8.5   Conclusion

This thesis has argued that although volunteer tourism is positioned as an apolitical practice, it is emblematic of a neo-liberal model of development. This is because the growth in volunteer tourism stems from its successful marketing as an emotional and personal encounter with host community members, whilst hiding the underlying technocratic forms of governance which make such an encounter possible. Volunteer tourism therefore co-opts those indigenous individuals who possess the capacity to instigate radical change further into the neo-liberal capitalist system. Moreover, its apolitical positioning results in a focus on mitigating the outcomes of poverty and

inequality, rather than empowering the disenfranchised to actively engage and challenge the political system which causes such outcomes. It is through embracing the concept of *Buen Vivir* that this thesis has illustrated how these volunteer tourism practices are not rational or inevitable, but rather reflect the political environment in which it operates at global, national, and local levels. Hammersley (2013: 855) notes that:

> "volunteer tourism programs have been endowed with the power to educate, transform and make a difference to both volunteers and the communities who host them"

If volunteer tourism is to fulfil this promise, there needs to be a movement away from the spectacle of volunteer tourism and management solutions from the Global North, to one that provides space for alternative conceptualisations to emerge. This could involve a greater role for the host state, which can build the capacities of host community members over time, rather than relying on private institutions operating under neo-liberal parameters. Alternatively, if the state is unable or unwilling to engage in such a task, NGO's should focus on instigating volunteer tourism projects that align with, rather than challenge locally embedded cultures and practices.

8.6 Final Thoughts

This thesis has made a novel and important contribution to the volunteer tourism literature by providing an alternative reading of this type of tourism practice. It has achieved this by challenging endemic practices in the volunteer tourism literature, which prioritise ways of knowing and knowledge creation originating and perpetuated in the Global North. This is evident in the overwhelming number of published works that rely on the voices of volunteer tourists or facilitators predominantly based in the Global North (Barbieri *et al*., 2012 Palacious, 2010; Simpson, 2004). The result is a plethora of published research, which makes a valuable contribution to knowledge but provides little insight into how host community members interpret and understand this form of tourism practice. This is particularly problematic as the phenomenal growth of volunteer tourism is in part because of its representation as an activity that is beneficial (or at least less harmful than mass tourism) to host communities (Conran, 2011; Sin, 2009; McGehee and

Santos, 2005). By incorporating the voices of host community members this thesis has challenged certain neo-colonial and paternalistic attitudes that often frames volunteer tourism research. Specifically, it highlights how rather than be passively at the mercy of the volunteer tourism industry, host community members are active agents, shaping the volunteer tourism experience in line with their own priorities and agendas.

The thesis has documented how existing frameworks are inadequate for understanding the subjectivities of host community members in relation to volunteer tourism. As a result, by engaging with *Buen Vivir* new insights have emerged. The thesis has brought to the fore the alternative possibilities for volunteer tourism embedded in the voices of marginalised community members. It has shown how Global South frameworks can provide an important departure point for future analysis. In this way, it challenges volunteer tourism scholars to recalibrate their ideas about knowledge production, to look beyond established practice, and place greater emphasis on knowledge systems originating outside the Global North. This may then create a more nuanced and situated body of literature, and help volunteer tourism studies move in new and exciting directions.

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