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A Localised Perspective on International Volunteer Tourism：A case study of a Chinese organisation's practice in Mathare, Kenya

PhD Thesis

Yi Wang

Department of Sociology,

Durham University, 2020

Declaration

I, Yi Wang, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis. For some images without further explanation about the source, they are taken by me during the fieldwork research.

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Abstract

Volunteer tourism is becoming increasingly popular around the world in recent decades. The current picture of international volunteer tourism remains incomplete due to a research focus which privileges the group of volunteer tourists and the lack of a holistic framework for analysis. Given that volunteer tourism is deeply embedded in a broader context of international and community development, this thesis analyses volunteer tourism by employing theories and frameworks in the field. As power is identified as a significant concept and an important cause of inequality in volunteer tourism, a structural and systematic analysis of power dynamics is critically investigated. By doing empirical research on a Chinese volunteer tourism organisation's work in an informal settlement in Kenya, this thesis tries to fill in the research gaps by recovering perspectives from the receiving community and analysing interplays between the organisation, volunteer tourists and local people. Qualitative research was undertaken during two periods comprising interviews with key stakeholders, participant observation, a small participatory research project with local residents and an action component implementing organisational changes. The research findings highlight the complexity of volunteer tourism practice in a community development context. It reveals a different understanding of 'empowerment' between the Chinese group and the local group. Power of decision making was largely hidden in closed spaces not only by the Chinese organisation but also by certain groups in the community that developed privileged relationships with the organisation. To reform the community balance, organisational changes were addressed in the action research including the development of more formal processes and a more transparent communication system. The thesis concludes it is essential that volunteer tourism organisations understand the national and local contexts within which they are working, pay attention to the structural causes of local problems and work with local people as far as possible.

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Chapter 1 The Scope of the Research Journey

1.1. Introduction

In recent decades, you may find it common to see young white faces in the global South, especially less privileged areas in sub-Saharan Africa countries, and Asian faces have joined the group in the past few years. These young people are usually engaging in charitable works and volunteering projects for a short period of time. They probably reinforced a school building at a slum or built toilets for a community school. They taught creative arts and sports in a local primary school, or they worked with local community-based organisations advertising knowledge about HIV/AIDS. Among various forms of international volunteering, 'volunteer tourism', a combination of leisure travelling and volunteer work, is becoming increasingly popular. As volunteer tourists, young people get involved in well-organised volunteering, creating experiences as approaches to interact with local people and to understand a new culture. People and communities are at the centre of volunteer tourism projects (Barbieri, Santos, Katsube, 2011). Meanwhile, they might also go sightseeing during weekends or holidays (Wearing, 2001). Compared with traditional volunteering work that has a long history, volunteer tourism is a relatively new form of volunteering, which is still underdeveloped and thus requires more research attention.

As Raymond and Hall (2008) suggest, main groups of actors in volunteer tourism include volunteer tourists, organisations and receiving communities. The literature shows that a lot of studies have been done on volunteer tourists, in terms of their motivations and gains (e.g. Lyon and Wearing,2004; Sin,2009; Liegott, 2015; Franco et al., 2019; Wen, 2019; Magrizos et al., 2020), but mechanisms of volunteer tourism organisations have not been adequately studied and voices from receiving communities have been largely neglected. The needs of local community members, their views of international volunteer tourism and the power relations among different stakeholder groups remain less well known (Mohamud, 2013). In addition to the necessity to shift the imbalanced research focus, overall, studies of volunteer tourism require a more holistic review, linking it to the broader context of development and

applying relevant theoretical frameworks in the field for further critical analysis. Therefore, by doing empirical research on a Chinese volunteer tourism organisation's practice in an informal settlement, Mathare, in Kenya, as a case study, this thesis tries to fill in some research gaps. Throughout the research, the aim is to recover perspectives from local people, and critically investigate the power dynamics among the Chinese organisation, volunteer tourists and the receiving community.

A journey that began as a volunteer tourist

The origin of my research interest in international volunteer tourism stretches back to 2013. On January 12th, 2013, I went to Kenya for the first time with a volunteer tourist at a local agency connected by an international student organisation AIESEC[1]. During my stay in Kenya, I spent six weeks doing voluntary teaching at a primary school in Nairobi. Seeing the experience as a combination of leisure travelling and volunteer work, I also went around the country for sightseeing, safari and learning about local culture on weekends. The school I served was located near an informal settlement in southern Nairobi. Many children in that school were from less-privileged families living in the nearby slum, and a large portion of them were orphans raised by the principal of the school. I taught mathematics and English for children in Class Five, and I built up a very strong personal bond with those bright children during my stay there. Near the end of the project, one child said to me that his dream was to construct an airport, so that he could assign an aeroplane particularly for me to travel between China and Kenya conveniently. I was so touched and inspired by the children, thinking they were full of hope for the future even though they were living under deplorable conditions. This experience made me feel an attachment with those children, with the country, with people living on this remote land, even if it was on the other side of the world from my home. Six weeks was not a long time, but this attachment totally changed my later life.

After I went back to China at that time, I felt like I needed to do more. So, I initiated a

[1] AIESEC is an international youth-run, non-governmental and non-profit organisation. AIESEC was originally a French acronym for *Association internationale des étudiants en sciences économiques et commerciales* (English: International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences). The full name is no longer officially used now.

fundraising campaign for children in Kenya. In the end, I raised over 500 pounds and sent it back to the school in which I taught. However, at the moment I heard the good news that the school principal had safely received the money, I felt a bit lost. I started to question myself about the meaning of doing all this. I asked myself: You can help them once like this, what about the next time? You can help children in one school, what about other schools? Are you really helping them? What kind of role are you playing exactly in the lives of those children?

In the following few years, I kept going back to Kenya with those questions. In 2014, I did an internship in a social enterprise helping Chinese companies to better fit in the local situation and benefit the locals. I wanted to find if there were other better approaches, like the form of a social enterprise, to do charity works. At the end of the internship, I designed a social innovation project, helping women in an informal settlement (Kibera) to make a living through their handicraft skills. In 2015, I produced a documentary, telling stories of Chinese young people's attempts to do charity work in Kenya, discussing their motivations, their thoughts and their dilemmas. Throughout all those experiences, I was trying to explore my original questions: What are the meanings of doing charity and volunteering? How can it possibly be improved? By better understanding different forms of agencies, different models they choose for development interventions, and by listening to people who have similar experiences to me, I wished to find my own answers.

From a volunteer tourist to a researcher and an actor

As an important stop on this journey, I started my PhD research in 2017 on the topic of international volunteer tourism with a particular focus on receiving communities and power relations among different stakeholder groups. Both literature and my personal experience had told me local people were an essential part of the answers I was looking for, and they were the meaning of all those charity attempts in the first place. I cared about what local people thought and said about international volunteer tourism, and I cared what their expectations and experiences were. In the academic world, however, existing literature shows an imbalanced power relationship among three groups involved in volunteer tourism, namely volunteer tourists, organisations, and receiving communities. Local people were relatively

powerless, and their voices were largely neglected. In comparison, volunteer tourists are usually the main focus, and partially for this reason, academic research on positive aspects of volunteer tourism counteracts the negative aspects. The potential harm of volunteer tourism and its effect on receiving communities remains to be studied (Guttentag, 2009).

Therefore, I try to analyse international volunteer tourism more critically and more holistically in this PhD thesis, aiming at filling a gap in the literature about volunteer tourism. In 2018, I went back to Kenya for my first fieldwork research. I chose a Chinese organisation's practice in Mathare, an informal settlement in Nairobi, as a case study. The organisation is called the Dream Building Service Association (DBSA). I first knew them in 2015 when producing my documentary, and I covered some stories about their volunteer tourists. Because of that chance, I got familiar with projects DBSA was doing, and I got to know the director and some of their staff members personally. This connection and my previous knowledge about the situation in Mathare and Nairobi granted me some advantages in doing my fieldwork research and building trust with people. From July 4th, 2018, I spent three months in the field, with the first month and a half living with volunteer tourists and staff members, researching on their implementations of projects and the second month and a half interacting with the local people. By employing qualitative research methods, including participant observations, in-depth interviews and participatory dialogical workshops, I collected a lot of empirical data for the research.

After coming back from the field and finishing the first stage analysis of the data, I realised the complexities of international volunteer tourism, especially when putting it into the broader context of international development, and this made me struggle a bit to find my own positionality within this complexity. At that time, I did not feel persuaded to simply stop the research journey at the data collection and analysis. In particular, I found some problems in the organisation's practice, including a mismatch between the local community's expectations and interventions of DBSA and Chinese volunteer tourists, as well as the need to set up the structures, including more formality and efficient communication systems in the organisation. I felt that I needed to do something and probably could make some positive changes, though I

did not know what exactly they were at that time. Thus, I decided to return the field for the second time and do some follow-up research.

In 2019, I went back to Nairobi for my second fieldwork research for another month and a half. I was planning to undertake some follow-up interviews regarding the research findings from the first field trip. However, things changed when the director of DBSA asked me if I would like to join the team and lead one of their major projects as an unpaid volunteer. After cautious consideration and thinking of those questions about the meaning of the journey that were always in my mind, I accepted the role. I then turned from a researcher into a practitioner and started action research in my second field trip.

Overall, this thesis shows my considerations, observations, understandings, findings, reflections and actions on international volunteer tourism, within a broader international development and community development context. I see the piece of research as a journey, which is an integral part of my lifelong journey to look for the meanings in both my life and my research career. I may not yet find the final answer about everything. However, as Emerson said, "life is a journey, not a destination", and I will always continue with my travels.

1.2. Overview of the thesis

Research aims and research questions

Examination of the volunteer tourism literature within the contextual framework of international development shows that narratives of volunteer tourism from local communities, mostly in the global South, are rarely told. This research, therefore, aims to recover the voices of local people and to critically analyse the power relations among the three stakeholder groups in volunteer tourism. To meet these aims, I set the following broad research questions for the study:

1) How do people from the local community view international volunteer tourism, and how

does it fit in relation to their needs and expectations?

a) What kinds of community issues are local people concerned about most? Who do they expect to solve the issues and how have they been addressed already?
b) What are the views of volunteer tourists and the organisation's staff members on community issues and solutions? How are they different from those of local people?
c) What do local people think and say about volunteer tourists and the organisation's work? What are the positive sides and the negative sides? What do they wish to be further improved?
d) What is the relationship between the local community and the Chinese group? How do the views of the local people and the Chinese group differ from each other and why? How does the difference in understanding shape the practices?

2) What are the power relations among the three stakeholder groups in volunteer tourism, and how does power shape the practices?

a) What are the visions and intentions of the organisation in doing various development projects?
b) What are the expectations of local people in terms of their power relations to volunteer tourists and the organisation?
c) How are the power relations in practice different from claims and expectation? Why is this?
d) What forms of power occur in practice? What is the local community's participation like? How can it possibly be improved?

3) How do the dynamics of power at different levels interact and interplay, and what are the implications for community development?

a) What is power like at different levels? How do the levels link with each other?
b) How does power at one level affect power at another level? How do they interplay?
c) What are the implications and possibilities of community development for power across different levels? What are the solutions to improve development interventions of volunteer tourism?

The journey of choosing theories and understanding methodology

A wide range of theories has been used in researching volunteer tourism, but a more coherent and holistic theoretical framework is still under exploration to study the topic in more depth. In this thesis, key concepts, models and theories in community development are drawn on as the important theoretical framework to study volunteer tourism from the receiving end. The concept of power is deeply embedded in volunteer tourism and community development, which is especially recognised after looking at data collected from the fieldwork research. Thus, to further narrow down the research focus, different types of power exercises and different dimensions of power are examined. In dealing with the complexity of power dynamics in volunteer tourism, the powercube framework (IDS, 2009) that looks at the power from dimensions of forms, spaces and levels, is employed for structural and systematic analysis.

Additionally, as the research aims to explore the complexity of power dynamics and to challenge inequality, this is also reflected in the choice of methods. Different qualitative research approaches were employed, including the case study, participant observations, in-depth interviews, participatory dialogical workshops and an action research component. The research was based on a case study on the practice of a Chinese volunteer tourism organisation named the Dream Building Service Association (DBSA) that has been doing various development projects in Mathare, an informal settlement in Nairobi, Kenya since 2015. The fieldwork for data collection was undertaken in 2018, followed by the second field trip for action research in 2019. All the data was open coded and sorted by a hybrid method, employing both inductive (data-driven) and deductive approaches such as theory-driven and prior-research-driven coding. Throughout the research, practices, actions, evaluations and reflections constantly interplayed with each other and continuously fed back into the analysis, making the whole process cyclical.

Contributions

This thesis analyses international volunteer tourism critically, contributing to filling a gap in the literature. Seeing international volunteer tourism as one example of practices in the

broader context of international development and community development, it provides knowledge about this new trend. The thesis recovers perspectives of receiving communities, reveals potential negative impacts of volunteer tourism, and indicates power relations among different stakeholder groups in a holistic way. By drawing on key concepts in community development, theories of power and the powercube framework, it contributes to theoretical analysis of international volunteer tourism, especially from a bottom-up perspective. In addition, as a Chinese researcher doing a case study of the Chinese organisation's practice, this research tries to tell the narratives of development initiatives led by Chinese organisations, which is currently missing in studies of international development and community development overall.

1.3. Thesis summary

Chapter Two, 'International Volunteer Tourism in Context', reviews the literature of volunteer tourism but also that under the broader context of international development and community development. It highlights an imbalanced research focus that pays more attention to volunteer tourists while the practices of volunteer tourism organisations, as well as voices of receiving communities, have been neglected. The incomplete picture of international volunteer tourism reflects the broader inequality in international development between the North and the South, as the development discourses are mostly dominated by the North and narratives from marginalised and colonised people are hardly included. Development studies have witnessed debates around different dimensions and approaches for development. From the international level to the national level and the local level, various models of development have been widely introduced worldwide to address poverty and other social issues (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). A large number of non-governmental organisations from civil society are playing an increasingly significant role during the sprocess. Taking these contextual conditions into account, this chapter indicates the necessity of studying volunteer tourism as an example of international development practice, aiming to provide more knowledge about the relatively new phenomenon. Additionally, with the fast development of China in recent

decades, the chapter outlines the Chinese model of development. It explains some of China's ongoing policies like the Belt and Road Initiative, the 'going global' strategy and the Sino-Africa relations from past to present, which serve as fundamental knowledge about the Chinese volunteer tourists and the Chinese organisation's work in Kenya.

Chapter Three, 'Theoretical Frameworks and Approaches in Analysing Volunteer Tourism', discusses the theoretical approach of the research. The chapter begins with reviewing theories and frameworks that have been used in studying volunteer tourism. Limitations and challenges are addressed, including the need for a coherent theoretical framework and empirical evidence to underpin theories and the necessity for analysis from bottom-up perspectives. To fill in the gap of the theoretical analysis of volunteer tourism, key concepts, models and theories in community development are drawn on as the important theoretical framework for research analysis. It specifically discusses the radical approaches to community development, and it reflects different levels of participation, different types of empowerment, collective action and power relations within the process. Applying those to the volunteer tourism study helps to investigate perspectives from the receiving end and to explore acts and interplays between different stakeholder groups in a critical way. Finally, as the concept of power is deeply embedded in community development and as the main aim of this study is to challenge the imbalanced relationship in both international volunteer tourism practice and literature, theories of power are particularly examined for the more focused research. Different types of power exercises and different dimensions of power are discussed, and the powercube framework is adapted. By looking at power from dimensions of forms, spaces and levels, the research tries to understand volunteer tourism in further depth and to investigate the complexity of power dynamics structurally and systematically.

Chapter Four, 'Choice of Research Methods: Methodological Consideration', lays out methodological approaches and reflections chosen by this research. To reflect the research purpose to explore the complexity of volunteer tourism and to challenge the unequal power relations, this research employed qualitative research methods including participant observation, in-depth interview methods and participatory action research. The practice of a

Chinese organisation, Dream Building Service Association (DBSA) in Mathare, Kenya, was investigated as a case study. The research involved two periods of fieldwork research in 2018 and 2019, with a specific focus on actions and organisational changes for the second field trip. This chapter introduces the strengths and challenges of doing qualitative research by using each of these methods, and it explains the applications of thematic analysis by drawing on a hybrid method with both inductive and deductive approaches. Research challenges such as the change of the personality of the researcher and ethical considerations are reflected upon.

Chapter Five, 'Understanding the Field: Profiles of Mathare and DBSA', depicts a picture of the research field, an informal settlement called Mathare in Kenya, and introduces the Chinese organisation, the Dream Building Service Association (DBSA), whose practice in Mathare was selected as the case study in this thesis. The chapter starts with an introduction to Mathare from an historical perspective, and it addresses different aspects of poverty in Mathare, including unemployment, failure to meet basic life needs, inadequate infrastructure and difficulties in upgrading. Next, the education situation in Mathare is discussed, highlighting challenges of people's under-valuing of education and dissatisfaction with the teaching conditions of community schools. Additionally, the chapter explains the rising role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international communities in Mathare and local people's perspectives towards them compared with those of the government. It finds many Mathare residents had accepted the failure of the state, and they were counting more on the provision of NGOs and the assistance of international communities. DBSA is one example of those organisations, whose background and initiatives are finally explained in this chapter. DBSA's projects are specifically introduced, including those offering physical assistance and informal education training.

Chapter Six, 'The Complexity of International Volunteer Tourism: Needs, Practices, Relationships and Impacts', examines the complex understandings of volunteer tourism among local people, DBSA's staff members and volunteer tourists. It finds that the debate about prioritising the physical or psychological dimensions of community problems stood at the centre of the Chinese group's development narratives in Mathare. While DBSA's

interventions were more likely to address mindset change and personal level empowerment, local people seemed to expect more immediate physical provisions, which might be largely influenced by cultural factors. These different understandings had shaped the complex relationships among different groups. The chapter indicates that while volunteer tourists defined themselves more as 'givers' and 'helpers', local people tended to treat volunteer tourists as respected guests. Through the relationship contained a mix of insecurity, mistrust, worries and hope, in essence, the local community and the Chinese group relied on each other symbiotically. Additionally, the chapter reveals that volunteer tourists were more concerned about potential negative impacts they had brought to Mathare, while local people overall praised the 'Chinese group' as a whole in many ways.

Chapter Seven, 'Power Dynamics in Volunteer Tourism: Empowerment and Participation with Hidden Power in Closed Spaces', analyses power in volunteer tourism by applying the powercube framework. It finds a difference between the Chinese group and the local community in understandings of 'empowerment'. While DBSA staff and volunteer tourists were likely to prioritise non-relational 'power to' with the purpose of getting things done, local people were expecting more substantial and direct power to be shared by DBSA. It reveals the empowerment approach undertaken by DBSA was essentially about personal level empowerment, while the structural inequality in the local society and the empowerment possibilities at the community level remained unchallenged. Next, the chapter critically investigates the 'power over' mechanism of DBSA, analysing the visible and hidden form of power in closed spaces. Referring to Arnstein's ladder of participation, it suggests local people's participation remained at the non-participation and tokenism level. However, the occurrence of underdeveloped 'floating spaces' might provide some opportunities for collaborations across different groups to build a more formal organisational structure in practice. Finally, the chapter demonstrates the claimed spaces created by DBSA's local coordinators where they dominated and might be regarded as oppressing the rest of the community members. This caused conflicts of power at the sub-organisational level, a breakdown of the former community balance and the forming of a new order.

Chapter Eight, 'Making Changes: Actions, Choices, Reflections and Implications', discusses practices and reflections on the action research during the second field trip. Regarding issues illustrated in the previous research findings, this chapter begins with the explanation of the organisational changes I played a role in initiating, including improving DBSA's structure and creating a two-way communication channel between DBSA and the local community. Reflections on my changing positionality and the meaning of doing action research are highlighted. The chapter then reflects on power dynamics in action by employing the idea of 'domains' of community empowerment. It discusses approaches and practices undertaken in developing local leadership, building local capabilities and increasing control over programme management. The rights and responsibilities of both the organisation and local community are particularly emphasised, on the basis of which the potential for mutual understanding about power exercises and collaborations is indicated. Next, the chapter links power at the supra-organisational level, addressing some challenges and suggestions for DBSA. It introduces the ongoing partnership between DBSA and the Kenya government and DBSA's link to China's national-level policies and donors. It reveals DBSA remained in the non-political arena, focusing on project-based interventions rather than contributing to higher-level community empowerment for social and political changes.

Finally, Chapter Nine, 'Conclusion: Lessons for the Future', reinforces the key contributions of this study both empirically and theoretically. Overall, the thesis contributes knowledge on international volunteer tourism, especially from a bottom-up angle and a localised perspective. The thesis addresses the imbalanced research focus in the literature and thus offers a more holistic picture of volunteer tourism. By researching international volunteer tourism as an example in the broader context of international development and community development, the thesis reveals the complexity of volunteer tourism and it provides new insights into this trend. Through the analysis of a Chinese organisation's practice in Mathare, Kenya, the research also includes the narratives of the Chinese organisations' development interventions as part of the wider debate. Theoretically and methodologically, this thesis contributes to the application of the powercube framework in the sector of international volunteer tourism and community development with a combined analysis by drawing on an

empirical example from the field. It proposes the concept of 'floating spaces', raising discussions about possibilities and strategies for community empowerment in new and underdeveloped spaces. By linking power across different levels, the thesis makes recommendations for volunteer tourism organisations in the future.

Chapter 2 International Volunteer Tourism in Context

2.1. Introduction

Volunteer tourism, a combination of leisure travelling and volunteer work, is becoming increasingly popular around the world in recent years. Considering my previous experiences throughout the journey of exploring volunteer tourism, I might also be one figure in this rising trend as an individual volunteer tourist. Volunteer tourists, organisations and receiving communities are the three main acting groups in volunteer tourism (Raymond and Hall, 2008). However, literature has shown an imbalanced research focus, in that more attention is paid to volunteer tourists, while the practices of volunteer tourism organisations, as well as voices of receiving communities, have been neglected. Due to this, the picture of international volunteer tourism remains incomplete. To a certain extent, this reflects a significant challenge in the broader context of international development. For one thing, discourses of development have been dominated by the West for a quite long time (McEwan, 2009). Though there have been more voices from the global South in recent research[2], there remains significant gaps in research engaging the marginalised, the colonised and the oppressed. Understanding the contextual conditions of international development helps to locate the expanding importance of volunteer tourism across the globe. Among different practices, China's overseas development approach tells a different story compared with western actors. Although there are controversial opinions about China's strategy, China is indeed playing an increasingly important role in the international development sector (Taylor, 2013). This changing role is

[2] In the development literature, there have been many terms used to distinguish countries in binary language, such as 'developed' and 'developing'; 'western' and 'eastern'; 'global North' and 'global South'. In this thesis, the terms 'global North' and 'global South' are used, to collectively represent the respective distinction between higher- and lower-income countries. The words 'western' or 'West' are used when referring to China as there are controversies when considering different aspects, such as economic indicators or culture and social accounts. However, when quoting from literature, other terms may be used. It is recognised that this terminology can be contentious as it simplifies multiple layers of complexity to a geographical dichotomy, and it subsumes numerous, diverse countries in two overarching categories. But the division between the global North and the global South is still important in shaping development thinking (McEwen, 2009; Williams et al., 2014, cited in Lindsey, et al., 2017), so the terminologies are referenced in this research carefully to avoid essentialising their meanings.

particularly exemplified in the historical and contempory nature of the Sino-Africa 'partnership'. From the national level to the local level, there are a lot of interactions and exchanges going on under certain policies, including the rise of Chinese organisations that are conducting development interventions in African countries. This leads to the choice of a Chinese volunteer tourism organisation's practice in Kenya as the case study in this thesis. Furthermore, while economic growth used to be seen as the most important indicator of development, ignorance about social well-being, culture and identity in the development policies of some multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank has been criticised (McEwan, 2009). In searching for more appropriate approaches to development and learning lessons from the past, it requires a further critical and in-depth analysis of development practices, among which a study on the increasingly popular volunteer tourism may contribute.

This chapter begins with an introduction to volunteer tourism, seeing its connections and differences with traditional international volunteering. Different stakeholder groups of volunteer tourism are introduced as well as research focuses in literature. The chapter addresses some possible influences of volunteer tourism and highlights the need for academic research in order to paint a more holistic picture of it. Second, the chapter moves to discuss international development as a crucial feature of the contextual conditions in which volunteer tourism is researched. The chapter compares the roles of different actors in international development, especially the rise of non-governmental organisations and less formal civil society groups, including international volunteer tourists. Followed by an introduction to development in the context of Africa, the chapter addresses the role of China in international development from both historical and contemporary perspectives. The Sino-Africa relationship is looked into as well as interactions between different actors within the relationship. Finally, the chapter moves to the broader context of development studies and postcolonialism. By looking at controversies and debates in international development, it discusses possible dialectical exchanges among different perspectives and implications for research on volunteer tourism.

2.2. Volunteer tourism

2.2.1. Volunteering and volunteer tourism

In general, volunteering is considered as an altruistic activity where an individual or group provides services for non-financial gain to benefit another person, group or organisation (Wilson, 2000: 215). UNV (2017:1) explains that "volunteering is about action and service, about active citizenship, social cohesion, partnership and relationships". But volunteering is far more than special work that is in accordance with these features. As Brown and Green (2015) point out, volunteering has become a formal category within the development sector. From the local level to the national level and the global level of development, volunteering is closely embedded in the work of charities, philanthropists, non-government organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) (Prince and Brown, 2016). In recent years, volunteering has become much more professional in terms of more specialised competencies in service delivery and work mechanisms to ensure development (Brown and Green, 2015). As a large number of development organisations became quite dependent on voluntary labour, the demand for volunteers increased as well (Prince and Brown, 2016). Volunteers, thus, became important "intermediaries between development organisations and the community they serve" (Brown and Green, 2015: 2), allowing volunteering to move into forms of longer-term engagement.

However, regardless of the significant role of volunteerism, Redfield (2012, 2013, cited in Prince and Brown, 2016) calls for a more critical look at volunteering as a mode engaged with inequalities and at the actual group it is benefiting. In the development sector, voluntary actions are usually concerned with resolving poverty alleviation and social inequality, but international volunteerism is also deeply implicated in politics and economics (Prince and Brown, 2016). For example, Nihei (2010) argues that volunteering may replace institutions of welfare states, and volunteers may become politically governed. For volunteers, their mobilisation from the global North to the global South for development interventions is often accused of being self-interested (Prince and Brown, 2016). It is certainly arguable as to

whether volunteering is benefiting givers more than receivers, and if it reinforces inequalitiesgap between givers and receivers (ibid). Given that some volunteers feel superior to those expected to receive them, negative stereotypes about the global South may potentially be reinforced as well (Sin, 2009; Palacios, 2010).

Based on the model of volunteering, volunteer tourism is a combination of leisure travelling and volunteer work (Barbieri, Santos and Katsube, 2011). Brown and Morrison (2013, cited in Brown, 2005: 480) suggest there are two different types of volunteer tourism based on participants' mindsets: 'vacation-minded' and 'volunteer-minded'. For the 'vacation-minded' type of volunteer tourism, it is essentially an alternative to traditional tourism and a travelling product (Wearing, 2001). Volunteer tourists pay for volunteer projects that happen mostly in the global South countries (Clotst, 2011). During the period, they also go travelling around the country. The time length of this type of volunteer tourism is usually not long - less than one year in general, but mostly is less than one month (Ellis, 2003). As for the 'volunteer-minded' type of volunteer tourism, Duffy (2008, cited in Prince and Green, 2016: 21) sees it as a new form of volunteering work proliferated from traditional volunteering. One big feature of this type of volunteer tourism is that people and communities are at the centre of the product and more sustainable accommodation, food and transport may be involved (Barbieri, Santos, Katsube, 2011). Vrasti (2013:1) calls it the reflection of 'sustainable tourism', which is joined with social responsibility as well as ethical consumption. The aim of the 'volunteer-minded' type of volunteer tourism is not only about visiting new places or going sightseeing but, more importantly, getting to know about a new culture and contributing to development projects (Wearing, 2001). During experiences, mutual understanding and respect between different groups of people, such as volunteer tourists and local people are supposed to be created (ibid). Brown (2015) indicates the distinction between volunteering and volunteer tourism is quite blurred in many cases and some alternative words may be used to describe this kind of projects such as a mission or service trip.

The early decades of the 21st century have witnessed the dramatic expansion and increased prominence of volunteer tourism both in the global North and the global South (Young, 2008;

Wearing and McGehee, 2013). In 2008, 1.6 million people were participating in volunteer tourism projects, which created around 1.7 billion to 2.6 billion US dollars value (Chen[a] and Chen[b], 2010). By 2014, the number of volunteer tourists was estimated to approach approximately 10 million (McGehee, 2014). Accordingly, academic literature in this field is growing to address different aspects of volunteer tourism, such as studies on the experience of volunteer tourism (Lyon and Wearing, 2008; Magrizos et al., 2020); motivations of gap-year volunteer tourists (Simpson, 2004; Sin, 2009; Liebgott, 2015; Franco et al., 2019); impacts of volunteer tourism (Guttentag, 2008; Wen, 2019); and theoretical implications in volunteer tourism (Sherraden et al., 2008; McGehee,2012; Thompson and Taheri, 2020). Volunteer tourists in these studies are mostly from western countries like Britain and America, doing projects at sites in the global South. Similar to volunteering, volunteer tourism has also been criticised as a symptom of neoliberalism in the contemporary world (Vrasti, 2013). For instance, the research of Smith and Laurie (2011) exemplifies neoliberal ideas of individual autonomy, improvement and responsibility in international volunteer tourism. Vrasti (2013) locates volunteer tourism development in the context of social capital growth (Vrasti, 2013). However, remaining as a developing initiative, the field of volunteer tourism still requires further attention in academia. Compared with the pure volunteering work that has a long history, promoting volunteer tourism needs to be cautious about its practice by learning from lessons of volunteering studies as well as the broader field of international development (Smith and Laurie, 2011; McGehee, 2014; Thompson and Taheri, 2020).

2.2.2. Different stakeholders of volunteer tourism

Generally speaking, volunteer tourism mainly consists of three groups of people: volunteer tourists, receiving communities and volunteer tourism organisations (Raymond and Hall, 2008). For existing studies of volunteer tourism, the major focus is on volunteer tourists. Motivations of the increasing number of international volunteer tourists has been an especially prominent research topic. Lyon and Wearing (2008) claim that people participate in volunteer tourism programmes for pleasure, adventure and experience, together with

goodwill to alleviate poverty for local communities. Alomari (2002) agrees that motivation is a combination of self-healing with helping others. However, Sin (2009) argues that the most important reason behind taking part in volunteer tourism projects is relating to 'self' instead of 'others'. She indicates that volunteer tourists desire more to travel than to contribute (Sin, 2009). Likewise, Liebgott (2015) points out those volunteer tourists just want to gain independence or a feeling of being needed. Apart from that, other possible motivations for volunteer tourism include the love of history, archaeology and culture, or the desire for religious exploration or skill development (Etzrodt, 2012). Nevertheless, although a lot of research has been done on the motivations of volunteer tourists, the influence of different motivations on the outcomes has not yet been well researched.

The reason for focusing on volunteer tourists is probably that research into volunteer tourism is mostly written from the perspective of the 'more developed' world for a readership in the 'more developed' world. As is indicated by Guttentag (2008), the interest in such research reveals the market consideration of international volunteer tourism since volunteer tourists pay for the programmes. As volunteer tourists are seen as the main and primary actor in the booming industry, making sure their desires are properly met allows the promotion of participant numbers and profit-making (Guttentag, 2008). Especially when seeing volunteer tourism as an alternative product of tourism, it is considered as a business before a form of social development, which again indicates a form of neoliberalism (Lyons et al., 2012). Mostafanezhad (2013) further reveals a 'politics of aesthetics' in volunteer tourism, arguing that volunteer tourism plays a role in global economic inequality and aestheticizes the poverty of local communities to a certain extent. For volunteer tourists, the developing world is like a playground of the rich (Blackledge, 2013). Whether the needs of local people are met, and whether volunteer tourism is helping to alleviate poverty efficiently and properly for host communities remains unknown (Mohamud, 2013).

Compared with volunteer participants, the other two stakeholders of international volunteer tourism are less-studied groups. In particular, the voices from local communities, mostly in the global South countries, are still largely neglected (Mostafanezhad, 2013). This has led to

an imbalance in volunteer tourism studies which could have negative impacts in the long run. For one thing, Lyons and Wearing (2008) point out the over-attention on volunteer tourists might make volunteer tourism more commoditised and profit-driven. Without caring about other stakeholders, especially the receiving end, international volunteer tourism will "be geared towards profit rather than the needs of the communities" (Fitzpatrick, 2007, cited in Guttentag, 2008: 541). The 'industry' then loses the possibility of decommodification and contributing to further social development (Guttentag, 2008). For another, the lack of voices from local people might enhance the unequal relations between helpers and recipients. While helpers are always seen as generous and noble, recipients are labelled as needy, inferior and deficient (Kapoor, 2008, cited in Lough and Black, 2015). Brown and Green (2015) define the relationship between volunteer tourists and local communities as a 'guest-host' relation, which shapes gradients of inequality in a similar way. Moreover, Sherraden et al. (2008) point out that the outcomes of volunteer tourism can vary from different combinations of attributes and capacities of both individuals and institutions. The imbalanced academic research interest on international volunteer tourists might fail to recognise the interaction between various stakeholders and the complexity of the volunteer tourism phenomenon (ibid).

2.2.3. The influence of volunteer tourism

A large number of these studies have shown the benefit of volunteer tourism for both volunteers and receiving communities (e.g. Wearing, 2001; McGehee and Santos,2005; Barbieri, Santos, Katsube, 2011; Blackledge, 2013). As Jenkin (2015) claims, volunteer tourism creates a win-win situation in that it realises skill sharing and ideas exchanging between volunteer tourists and receiving communities. Specifically, for volunteer tourists, it brings them not only the pleasure of traditional vacation experiences but also an opportunity for a positive change in their social values (Wearing, 2001). Wearing (2001) reports that those involved participants are more likely to take social responsibility and think of others after their volunteer tourism services. This change could be lifelong even after they come back from their travelling places (Blackledge, 2013). In Lepp's (2008) research on volunteer tourism

projects in Kenya, he summarizes: “volunteers discovered an intrinsic need for meaning and purpose in their lives” (p98). Through volunteer tourism experiences, participants can benefit from learning about different cultures as well as being more open-minded and cooperative in their everyday lives at home (Barbieri, Santos and Katsube, 2011).

Receiving communities also get material benefits. For instance, Barbieri, Santos and Katsube (2011) indicate that in many cases, local communities get direct financial support and donations from volunteer tourists. Because of volunteer tourism projects, facilities like schools, houses, clinics, toilets are built in impoverished areas and attention is paid from the outside societies, which may bring more resources afterwards (Blackledge, 2013; Woosnam and Lee,2011). Additionally, since most volunteer tourism projects need relatively sustainable accommodation, food and transport, the employment opportunities for local communities also increase to a certain extent (Barbieri, Santos, Katsube, 2011). In terms of the social and cultural aspects, Brown (2018) suggests international volunteering and volunteer tourism create opportunities to promote a wider range of understanding and solidarity in social justice, as well as global collective actions in the future. The mutual understanding between volunteer tourists and local communities, which also represents exchanges between the global North and the global South, is expected to happen through the process (ibid). Moreover, Brown and Green (2015: 16) views volunteer tourism as “a natural progression of charity evolution”. As volunteer tourists pay for trips, the business model shows the potential to be embedded into charity. Especially when considering the fact that charities otherwise rely heavily on funding and donations, volunteer tourism might provide a possibility for an alternative approach (Blackledge, 2013). Overall, existing research on volunteer tourism tends towards an overwhelmingly optimistic perspective.

Compared with positive impacts, research on potential negative impacts of volunteer tourism, however, have not yet been given enough attention. A limited number of empirical research studies has been conducted on the impacts of volunteer tourism on local communities, and only a small portion of them are focusing on the negative aspects (Bargeman et al., 2018). As Simpson (2004) indicates in her research on volunteer tourism and development, regarding

volunteer tourism as an efficient strategy to reduce poverty may make international development too simplified. On the contrary, too many volunteer tourism projects could possibly harm initiatives of local development as they increase local dependency and even increase poverty in the long run (Simpson, 2004). Raymond and Hall (2008) argue that instead of creating mutual understanding between different cultures, volunteer tourism might strengthen stereotypes, especially in cases when volunteer tourists come to deprived communities with pride and prejudice, thinking local people are less able and inferior (Sin, 2009). The expansion of volunteer tourism then led to a disruption of local communities' cultural confidence and development agenda (Thompson and Taheri, 2020).

For the receiving communities, Guttentag (2008) highlights five specific potential negative impacts of volunteer tourism that could be used as guidance, calling for more attention and empirical research to facilitate study in this area, and some of them have been proven by later studies. First, Guttentag (2008) points out the desires of local communities are largely neglected and there is a lack of local involvement. Second, some volunteer tourism projects fail to complete satisfactory work due to unskilful volunteer tourists. Volunteer tourists' inadequate understanding of local culture and the short period of stay are the other two factors that may lead to the hindering of work progress (Simpson, 2004; Callanan and Thomas, 2005). As Kushner (2016) finds in his study, a large number of volunteer tourists lack knowledge and experience in social work and thus, and they fail to provide sustainable and professional work to local communities. Third, volunteer tourists may deprive local residents of the employment opportunities and the provision from international volunteer tourism might increase the dependency of receiving communities (Guttentag, 2008; McGehee and Andereck, 2008).

Fourth, the 'poor-but-happy' remarks from volunteer tourists about local communities raise concerns that they might have rationalised poverty which is a struggle as local communities accept (Simpson, 2004: 668; Guttentag, 2008). Volunteer tourists' 'Othering' of local people further leads to questions of whether stereotypes between people from different cultural backgrounds can be broken down (Guttentag, 2008). Finally, Guttentag (2008) argues that the

'demonstration effect', a term denoting "the process by which a host culture is impacted when tourists draw attention to their lifestyles and items of wealth", may be caused in receiving communities (Wall and Mathieson, 2006: 236, cited in Guttentag, 2008: 547). While local people perceive culture shock from the outsiders, it may result in a reduction in their self-identity and mental health problems, such as negative attitudes towards life (Wearing, 2004). Throughout volunteer tourism practices, organisations are playing a significant role. However, some organisations are simply driven by profit and take little responsibility for the outcomes (Kushner, 2016). As a result, unqualified volunteer tourists are not matched with the work they do and the desires from local communities are neglected (ibid).

2.3. International development as the contextual conditions

As international volunteer tourism is deeply embedded in the broader context of international development, this section discusses different actors in international development, the role of volunteer tourism as well as its associations and interplays with other actors, especially in the context of African development.

Different actors in international development

The millennium has witnessed the increasing cooperation among regional powers in the global South, which is considered to be a significant change for international development (Baud, et al., 2019). For example, in 2006, BRICS (the acronym of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) was founded and resources were mobilised within the association (ibid). Develtere and Bruyn (2009) call this type of governments' aid as the first pillar, referring to material supports such as loans, infrastructure building and technical advice set up by government bodies. The second pillar is the multilateral development aid built upon the United Nations or other similar international institutions (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009). As explained by Develtere and Bruyn (2009), these multilateral organisations are able to distribute resources and aid over the globe, especially focusing on macro-level policies. Additionally, since the 1970s and 1980s, the world has witnessed the emergence and

expansion of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as a development alternative (Banks and Hulme, 2012). More new players have participated in the system of development and aid with new sources of funds and initiatives (Baud, et al., 2019). Develtere and Bruyn (2009) call this type of development support as the third pillar that incorporates a wide range of organisations and usually is associated with NGOs. Compared with governments or multilateral organisations, the third pillar has closer links with local communities, and it plays important roles in multi-layered development interventions (ibid).

Overall, the three pillars work together closely and constantly interact with each other. Their partnership is believed to be crucial in international development. 'Public-private partnerships' (PPPs) are particularly strongly promoted, as "voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both state and non-state, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task, and to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits" United Nations (2008: 4). Building up PPPs with cooperative strategies is consider to help with resolving development issues more effectively and efficiently (Strongman, 2004). In academic research, Banks and Hulme (2012) reveal that the relationship between the state and NGOs, in particular, has attracted a lot of attention. Whether this relationship is tense or cooperative depends on multiple factors such as government policies towards NGOs and types of activities NGOs undertake (ibid). A positive relationship between governments and NGOs is possible, especially for those working in service and welfare provision (Banks and Hulme, 2012). Considering their innovative ability, flexibility, as well as their closer connections with the grassroots, those NGOs are likely to create a linkage between governments, markets and people (ibid). If they collaborate and cooperate well with the state government, they could link their work at the local level to the national level and international level to achieve more effective goals (ibid).

Traditional development co-operation involves the three specialised pillars, including governments, multilateral development institutions and non-governmental organisations (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009). However, these types of institution and organisation are no longer considered to be the only authorities in the field (ibid). In the recent decade, a fourth

pillar has risen rapidly, which refers to non-specialist bodies including non-development departments, associations in various fields, foundations, other non-specialist organisations, companies, groups of people and so on (ibid: 918). A large number of unregistered organisations and community-based organisations with rich local knowledge that might be excluded in the third sector now could be put in the fourth pillar (Banks and Hulme, 2012). Deeply grounded in the grassroots, one of the most important strengths of the fourth pillar in development is their abilities to understand and reflect "local context, needs and realities"(ibid: 12). As Develtere and Bruyn (2009) point out, fourth pillar initiatives do not necessarily stem from North-South relations. Hence, the advent of fourth pillar initiatives is not so much concerned about building the new world order, but rather it represents "a post-modern story of globalisation and international networking, even of individualisation" (ibid: 914). The existing institutional patterns and personal experiences determine how they transform into more globally oriented organisations and how they operate on development issues (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009). Nevertheless, the boundaries between different pillars, especially between the third and fourth pillar, can be blurred and shiftable from one to the other (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009). Some social movement organisations, for example, could move from the third pillar to the fourth pillar players after getting more autonomy and starting projects in broader areas (ibid).

The figure of volunteer tourism

In terms of international volunteering and volunteer tourism, it is closely associated with international organisations and most of them might fall in the third or fourth pillar of development in Develtere and Bruyn's (2009) frame. Prince and Brown (2016) explain that international volunteers first had a prominent presence in the South since the nineteenth century because of missionary purposes. Voluntary work in local and national churches at the beginning involved in poverty alleviation, social welfare as well as development aid, and big NGOs with church backgrounds came into being such as Christian Aid and World Vision (ibid). Rooted in this humanitarianism history, more international organisations and international volunteers emerged in the post-colonial period, and it has become a phenomenon that citizens from rich countries travel to the global South doing volunteering work (ibid). The most

recently rising volunteer tourism is organised by private organisations or companies, and volunteer tourists usually do less formal and less professional work. In this sense, volunteer tourism is more like a part of the fourth pillar, but some organisations might be more formal as the third pillar in development aid.

Either as the third or the fourth pillar, volunteer tourism is playing an increasingly significant part in international development nowadays, which tells a different story from the past (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009). Being both originated from and shaping the globalised world, volunteer tourism has created a large number of new initiatives and innovations and brings potential for development in the future (ibid). As Develtere and Bruyn (2009) suggest, fourth pillar organisations are not following or aware of the traditional script of development aid and their collaborations with local people are mostly shaped by personal experiences. While the work of international institutions and states sometimes stuck in bureaucracy, and interventions from big NGOs lack enough involvement from the grassroots, volunteer tourists as a part of the third or fourth pillar might bring more participation and enthusiasm, though meanwhile, also generate new challenges (ibid).

In addition, international volunteer tourism might represent a form of citizen engagement in the globalised world. As indicated by Gaventa and Tandon (2010), power from the local level to the global level has been reconfigured under the globalisation, which has brought great influences on people living on the planet and simultaneously reshapes "where and how citizens engage to make their voices heard" (p3). Over territorial boundaries, new conditions have been created for global citizenship to realise broader participation and human rights (Gaventa and Tandon, 2010). Some argue the concept of global citizenship undermines the legitimacy of nation-states and changes can merely happen at small scales (e.g. Heater, 2002; Schattle, 2008, cited in Gaventa and Tandon, 2010). Prince and Brown (2016) reveal the emergent global citizens might controversially cause cultural and identity conflicts in the longer run. But Gaventa and Tandon (2010) suggest the necessity to see global citizenship as an evolving concept, which can also be seen as an approach to view international volunteer tourism. By looking at it both vertically from historical perspectives and horizontally across

different contexts, it is important to understand how those changing patterns of globalisation work influence and inspire ordinary citizens (Gaventa and Tandon, 2010), which in this case refers to both actors and receivers of the international volunteer tourism.

Development and volunteer tourism in the context of Africa

Although the world has witnessed the significant economic progress of the African continent in the new millennium, the overall underdevelopment of Africa has long been recognised as a reality for over five decades (Pelizzo, et al., 2018). Numerous development projects have been undertaken in the post-colonial era by international donors working in and with African countries (Gatune, 2010). Pelizzo et al. (2018) see international assistance for poverty reduction and development in Africa as an essential reason for Africa's recent success. With a shift of understanding that development is not only about economic growth but also has political and social dimensions, new development approaches were undertaken by big international organisations like the World Bank and the United Nations from the 1990s onward (Pelizzo, et al., 2018). For example, the World Bank released 'Making Adjustments Work for the Poor' in 1990, dedicated to poverty alleviation (World Bank, 1990). The United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) introduced Social Development and Sustainable Human Development approaches to better work on intergenerational equality and justice (Anand and Sen, 2000, cited in Pelizzo, et al., 2018). In addition, later, globalisation brought new opportunities to attract increasing international capital. All these changes largely sustained the growth and development of African countries (Pelizzo, et al., 2018). However, some scholars, on the contrary, argue that all forms of aid from international communities have partially become the reason for Africa's under-development (Easterly, 2005, cited in Gatune, 2010). Being trapped in the cycle of under-development, African states are facing more severe societal conflicts (Taylor, 2009), which somehow reveals the other side of the globalisation story.

Apart from the international factor, Shaw and Nyang'oro (2000: 16) point out that other three types of actors, which reflect other three pillars, are playing significant roles in Africa's development as well: states, companies and civil societies. In the late 1980s, most African

countries received loans and aid from the west, conditioned on liberalising exchange rates and markets as well as the reduction of trade barriers (Brass, 2016). This made the state government's role in service provision change dramatically with inputs to social welfare and public good largely reduced (ibid). In Kenya, for example, the government's spending on education and health care dropped over 15 per cent of the budget during the 1980s to 1990s (Katumanga, 2004, cited in Brass, 2016). Meanwhile, civil societies and NGOs, which represent the third and fourth pillar in development, grew rapidly and replaced the government's provision of structures by 'informal, non-governmental arrangements' (Brass, 2016: 8). A certain percentage of international funds was directed to NGOs instead of their governments' counterparts because the former was believed by funders to be more efficient, flexible and participatory than the latter (Brass, 2016). At the international level, the World Bank's *World Development Report* 1997 also addressed the acceptance of cooperation with civil societies including diverse companies, NGOs and private players (Shaw and Nyang'oro, 2000).

Accompanied by the growth of civil society and NGOs, volunteers in African countries have become an essential feature, particularly in the field of development (Prince and Brown, 2016). According to Prince and Brown (2016: 3), "during the 1980s and 1990s, the volunteer occupied an important role in the NGO-dominated move towards 'community-led development' and its espousal of 'grassroots' participation." Until today, Africa remains one of the favourite destinations of international volunteers and volunteer organisations involved in development aid and humanitarian interventions (Prince and Brown, 2016).

2.4. Sino-Africa relations in development

2.4.1. China in international development

With the fast development of China in recent decades, the position of China has changed dramatically from the receiving side to the giving side in international development. While China has become the second-largest economy in the world, the rise of China is seen controversially in geopolitics (Golley and Song, 2011). A lot of debates are occurring about the

relationship and interaction between China and the international system (Huang and Patman, 2013). For example, McEwan (2009) indicates that China has posed an economic threat to western relationships with other developing countries. As "the stability of the balance of power and interests among states in the (international) system" is disturbed and the rebalancing process might involve inevitable conflicts, China is treated as a negative input in the equilibrium of the existing system (Huang and Patman, 2013: 12). Thus, the contemporary western image of China is as "unscrupulous, inhumanely cruel, despotic, devious and inscrutable" (McEwan, 2009: 150). Although it may be true that the rise of China would pose various geopolitical challenges to the globe (Golley and Song, 2011), the reconfiguration of the international system, the redistribution of power and capacity in the system, and the location of China within the system might also bring new possibilities in international development (Huang and Patman, 2013: 1).

As Renwick (2015) indicates, China is currently establishing itself as an international aid donor and it is playing a role in international development based on its own approach. Back in post-1949 after the establishment of People's Republic China, China started providing financial support to other countries from the global South for a substantial period (Renwick, 2015). In 1954, Premier Zhou Enlai put forward the *Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence* and announced the *Eight principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries* as an extension of the former. Some key attributes of the two documents include: practise 'self-reliance', 'imposing no political condition', 'equality, mutual benefit and common development', 'remaining realistic while striving for the best', 'keeping pace with the times and pay attention to reform and innovation' (Xinhuanet, 2011:4, cited in Renwick, 2015: 110). Those principles are still the vital underpinnings of China's overseas policies and strategies today (Varrall, 2013). After Deng Xiaoping's economic reform in 1978 and the change to 'market socialism' of China, China's overseas development approach shifted to an emphasis on economic cooperation (Renwick, 2015: 109).

In 2015, President Xi Jinping mentioned the Eight Principles in China's first Aid White Paper as providing the foundation for China's overseas development assistance (Xinhuanet, 2011).

Two years before that in 2013, President Xi announced the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is regarded as the most recent strategy of China's international development and diplomacy (Alon, et al., 2018). In the BRI Initiative, the 'Belt' refers to the 'Silk Road Economic Belt' and the 'Road' refers to the '21st Century Maritime Silk Road' (Liu and Dunford, 2016: 325). Massive projects of funding and infrastructure constructions are involved in BRI covered over 60 countries (Alon, et al., 2018). At the Central Economic Work Conference of China in December 2013, the BRI was announced as a specific notion that represents China's new thinking about open development and China going-abroad (Liu and Dunford, 2016). By January 2020, 138 countries and 30 international multilateral organisations have signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with China on jointly building the BRI (Belt and Road Portal, 2020).

In evaluating the literature on China's international development, most studies are focusing on the Chinese central government's working with other states through top-down channels. Renwick (2015) summarises China's approach as "oriented towards state-to-state level partnership relationships" and "centred on promoting growth through targeted debt relief, strengthening bilateral trade and direct investment buttressed by major infrastructure projects, social welfare provision and humanitarian aid" (p111). However, due to limited transparency and ongoing policies like the BRI, China's approach has met a lot of questions and criticism. For example, the West doubts China's statement of 'non-interference' principles and 'cooperation with no condition' in practice as they are usually tied to "the use of Chinese suppliers and materials, imported Chinese workers and technical expertise" (Renwick, 2015: 111). Because of the low-interest rate of China's debt and its flexible repayment schedule, China's approach to international assistance is seen against the traditional donors (Renwick, 2015). In addition, the BRI is believed to be an ambition of China to design a new global order and to take the role as leading world power (Alon, et al., 2018).

Regardless of how China's approach to development is viewed, there is no doubt that China is playing an important role in contemporary development. On the one hand, it is reasonable to be concerned that China's development could probably become a second 'colonial domination'

(Gao, 2018: 325) and that China's practices in developing countries can be viewed as neo-colonial interventions (Renwick, 2015). On the other hand, China is not positioned amongst the western countries and institutions that have dominated the discourse of development and the Chinese vision of development is significantly different from that of neoliberal globalisation (Liu and Dunford, 2016). Unlike the neoliberal model, the BRI is claimed to aim at inclusive globalisation by drawing on shared interests and equal partnerships to generate mutual benefit (ibid). Through infrastructure investment under the BRI scheme, an increase of employment opportunities and an expansion of the market are expected to emerge (ibid). Since the narratives of this China approach have not yet been fully heard, to a certain extent, the rise of China's voice may be seen as a process of recovering the marginalised as well. China's development practices in the global South could provide the world with a new possible view and form of change in terms of its relationship and partnership with other South countries (Huang and Patman, 2013).

At the sub-national level, people-to-people bonds are also one of the cooperative priorities of the BRI (Liu and Dunford, 2016). Non-governmental exchange and cooperation are expected as an important aspect to support the BRI practices and to sustain policies at the national level (ibid). For example, statistics from AIESEC (2016) show that there have been over 14,361 Chinese students participating in volunteer tourism projects since 2002, which consist of over 10% of the figure worldwide. This indicates China has become one of the largest providers of volunteer tourism. While the economic role of China and the extension of economic projects under the BRI may be a form of 'hard power', the people-to-people exchange invovling various NGO projects in local communities more resembles forms of 'soft power' (King, 2013). Compared with NGOs in China that are constrained in their operations as a result of strict national regulations, NGOs are encouraged by the Chinese government to go global and deliver overseas aid projects. However, compared with China's national policies and national relations under its international development approach, the people-to-people exchange at the local level has not yet been fully researched, especially from a bottom-up perspective.

2.4.2. Sino-Africa relations from the past to today

Africa has been an important partner of China since the late 1950s (Taylor, 2009). As Sutter (2008, cited in Taylor, 2013) indicates, China's foreign policy aims at sustaining a supportive international environment to ensure the country's economic growth. Of particular importance are Chinese aspirations to promote the countries international stature whilst simulatneoulsy emphasising their 'common interests' in the development of the global South (Taylor, 2013: 189). As a result, China has become the second-largest bilateral trading partner of Africa after the United States (ibid). Politically, Taylor (2013) points out that Africa has become especially important to China's diplomacy since the end of the Korean War and the Cold War. In the late 1980s, Africa countries' muted reaction or somehow supportive position towards Beijing during Tiananmen Square further underpinned the close relationship between China and Africa (Taylor, 2013). Compared with the western powers that colonised Africa in history, China built up a strong bond with Africa as the two share the similar pursuit of independence and the same status as 'developing countries' (ibid). In 2000, the first Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held in Beijing when approximately 80 ministers from over 40 African countries participated. Later in the summit in 2006, "a three-year action plan to forge a 'new type of strategic partnership'" was approved which involved in around one billion US dollars' aid to Africa and over five billion US dollars' development fund to encourage Chinese investment in Africa (Taylor, 2013: 186).

Compared with the remaining image of the West in Africa as exploiters (Gao, 2018), China's presence has provided an alternative development model for Africa (Taylor, 2013). Naidu and Davis (2009: 80; cited in Taylor, 2013) point out China is seen as "a refreshing alternative to the traditional engagement model of the West…Africa governments see China's engagement as a point of departure from Western neo-colonialism and political conditions." As one important principle of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence is "non-interference in each other's internal affairs" (Taylor, 2013: 193), China states it is a partner, not a coloniser with Africa (Gao, 2018). Unlike the tendency in the North to see Africa as problematic and inferior, it is argued that China shows respect and provides a lot of mutually beneficial opportunities

for Africa (McEwan, 2009). Though there have been debates about China's role academically and internationally, China casts itself as a 'responsible power'[3] while taking a sort of leadership of the world of the South and regards its rise as 'peaceful development'[4] (Taylor, 2013: 185). Within this relationship, a win-win situation and mutual benefits become possible (Gao, 2018). With China holding an economic model of African states, Taylor (2013) argues that Sino-Africa relations are more likely to be viewed as part of the globalisation process than colonisation.

With the proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and China central government's intention to encourage more Chinese corporations and organisation to 'go global'[5], Africa has become one of the most important regions for China's 'going outward' strategy (Gu, 2005:8, cited in Taylor, 2013). A lot of projects are conducted in African countries that are usually combined with aid packages (Taylor, 2013). Kenya, in particular, is seen as an essential partner of China in the Africa continent and one of three African countries included in the BRI (Ehizuelen and Abdi, 2017). The historical link between China and Kenya could trace back to the 15th century when Zheng He from Ming Dynasty first landed on the east coast of Kenya for culture exchange (Dossou, 2018). In addition to the important geographic location of Kenya with the port Mombasa linking to a number of Africa countries such as Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and South Sudan, Kenya is also becoming the African hub for China's BRI (Ehizuelen and Abdi, 2017). As a part of the BRI, China has made a significant investment in infrastructure in Kenya including the new railway project between Nairobi and Mombasa as well as the road infrastructure projects that involve over 500 million US dollar (ibid).

Apart from national-level and official developmentinitiatives, there is also increasing engagement between China and Africa in people-to-people exchange, as a form of soft power, that operates primarily at the local level and the community level. As Wen (2019) points out, volunteer tourism in China has witnessed substantial growth since late the 1990s with an

[3] "负责任的大国" in Chinese.
[4] "和平发展" in Chinese.
[5] "(中国)走出去"in Chinese.

enormously increased number of international volunteers in recent decades. Chinese volunteer tourists are engaged with various development projects overseas, among which Africa has become one of the most popular destinations after Southeast Asia and Europe (ibid). But regarding it is a relatively new phenomenon in China, and even in the globe, there has been a limited amount of research focusing on Chinese organisations and Chinese volunteer tourists' practices in the development field.

2.5. Development studies and implications from postcolonialism

In considering volunteer tourism in the broader context of international development, this thesis seeks to analyse how volunteer tourism may or may not adopt a 'development' discourse and any lessons that could be learned as a result. As McEwan (2009: 11-12) suggests, 'development' is one of the most complex words in the world in the sense of its changing meanings in different places and at different times, with little international consensus behind it. Slim (1995) points out development usually means change for the better. The origin of development studies, according to Sylvester (2006), is from economics and the main focus of development studies is socio-economic issues. As one major dimension of 'development' addressed by development studies, development theories and practices are developed to measure 'poverty', and furthermore, to assist poor countries in achieving economic growth and life improvement (McEwan, 2009: 13). Economic growth is important as it contributes to the foundations of many other things like education, health, and infrastructure (Goldin, 2018). Broadly speaking, however, development also involves changes in all cultural, social, political, technological and environmental aspects (Slim, 1995). There is, therefore, continuous evolution with the concepts of 'development' and development studies expected to move forward to meet additional social, environmental and people-centred dimensions (Goldin, 2018).

The impasse in international development and development studies

As Banks and Hulme (2014) point out, poverty has become a particularly important issue to

tackle within international development since the 1950s. In the late 1990s, the United Nations brought poverty to the frontline in adopting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which represented the achievement of a global consensus on development objectives and targets (Banks and Hulme, 2014). However, due to policy problems, practices in the global South by the end of 20th century represented a failure to a contested degree in that many 'developing countries' were stuck in debt and struggling with increasing problems in political and social dimensions (Strongman, 2014:1347). Succeeding the MDGs by 2015, the United Nations proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aiming at achieving a more sustainable future for all by 2030, and it started including issues such as inequality and social justice in the development agenda (UNGA, 2015). With the progress of development over the world, global partnerships between North-South and South-South is given greater priority (UNGA, 2015). This is indicative of not only the greater attention given to social dimensions of development, but also reflects potential changes in the orientation of relationships among countries during the development process.

The transforming focus in international development policies and practices is also reflected in development studies. From the mid-1980s onwards, development topics have been widely discussed, and development studies have been facing a lot of challenges and dilemmas, especially critiques from postmodernism and postcolonialism that challenged universal theories in the former local narratives (Schuurman, 2008). As Sylvester (1999, cited in Strongman, 2014) says, development studies have been "toing and froing between top-down and bottom-up creeds of developmentalism" under the western structure of power for quite a long time (p718). From the postmodern logic, the notion of development itself is problematic because it contains hidden "evolutionist, universalist and reductionist" dimensions (Schuurman, 2008: 14). To resolve existing shortcomings of research and theories in development studies, attempts were made to adapt to the more postmodernist intellectual environment in the 1990s (Long, 2001). More actor-oriented analysis and research, focusing on social change processes, has been conducted ever since (ibid).

Implications of postcolonialism

As McEwan (2001) argues, international development is closely linked with global-level power relations among countries in terms of development terminology, ideology and policies based on that. Regarding the power structure of development, postcolonialism particularly criticises the domination of discourse by the global North, which made the process of speaking and writing problematic (McEwan, 2009). In earlier years of development studies, places in the world were defined as 'developed' and 'less developed' (McEwan, 2009). Terms like the 'First/Second world' and the 'Third World', 'core' and 'periphery' were used to show the distinctions between regions or nations (ibid: 2). Behind the binary divisions, it demonstrates a kind of hierarchy of different parts of the world, under which the worldview links the global South to 'poverty', 'problematic' and 'inferiority' while the global North always represents 'modernity', 'progress' and 'superiority' (ibid: 2). These hierarchical divisions and stereotypes of places, to a certain extent, are criticised as representing a new form of colonialism.

McEwan (2009: 228) then further raised questions about agencies of power: 'Who voices the development?' 'What power relations are played out?' and 'Which voices are excluded?' She argues that a certain number of development studies and policies were based on the western worldview. The other part of the world was seen as so needy that external assistance should be drawn to help with their development and to fit them in the development framework that had already been presented by the West (ibid). The voices of the South, which are the subject of a lot of development interventions, however, are largely neglected in the dominant discourse of development. As explained previously, this critique in international development overall is reflected in the imbalanced power relations among different stakeholder group in volunteer tourism. Postcolonialism advocates the recovery of the voices and knowledge of the marginalised, particularly learning about their agency and resistance in both development theory and practice, so as to remove the stereotype of the South and to rethink and re-understand 'development' (McEwan, 2009). It is suggested that diverse perspectives and priorities should be acknowledged and embraced for more appropriate development (ibid), which is a lesson this thesis addresses by taking account of different perspectives in volunteer tourism, especially voices from local communities.

Additionally, there have been a number of postcolonial studies that apply social science methods and fieldwork research to focus on the voices of the unheard (Kapoor, 2008). For instance, Said (1978:2) points out that the western discourse depicts the very stereotyped 'Orientalism' as the colonial subject with its power of knowledge. Embedded in languages and ideologies, western power and influential intellectuals have othered the orient culturally, economically and politically (ibid). Said (1978, cited in McEwan, 2009: 28) calls it the 'imagined geographies', which shows a representation of how the global South is portrayed and how 'development' is understood from only one side of the world. Spivak (1988) tries to retrieve voices from "subsistence farmers, unorganized peasant labour, the tribal and communities of zero workers on the street or in the countryside" as well as "disenfranchised woman" (p228). These again enforce the motivation and focus of this thesis to recover the voices of people who are marginalised.

However, one limitation of postcolonialism is that while it emphasises local discourses and actions, more general and broader influences might be neglected (Kapoor, 2008). When it examines how global power is reproduced at the local level, it is hard to imagine how the micro-level agency can affect macro-level politics (ibid). In addition, advocates of development studies point out that postcolonialism neglects socio-economic issues of development and focuses too much on theory, but not enough in such material concerns as health or poverty (Kapoor, 2008). In other words, theories of postcolonialism are too abstract to connect with the realities of people's lives and to provide realistic solutions to material issues (McEwan, 2009). Thus, depicting a complete but critical picture of volunteer tourism still needs insights from different development approaches and appropriate applications from them.

Dialectical exchanges based on geospatial relations

As Christine Sylvester (1999: 703-704, cited in McEwan, 2009) puts it, development studies and postcolonialism "ignore each other's missions and writings" and both are "giant islands of analysis and enterprise that stake out a large part of the world and operate within it – or with respect to it –as if the other had a bad smell". However, in fact, development studies and

postcolonialism are aiming at and addressing different aspects of development and they are operating in parallel. Whether the focus is on socio-economic and material issues or cultural and ideological dimensions, top-down ways for effective and efficient solutions or changes from a bottom-up view, power relations in development interventions or discourses, they all interconnect and constantly interact with each other. The mutual critiques between the two fields, to a certain extent, are helping to illustrate the strengths and limitations of both sides (Kapoor, 2008), and different perspectives contribute to a more holistic picture of 'development'.

Particularly, Slim (1995) indicates at the heart of development lies the relationship and interaction between different people and groups. An appropriate approach to development should be achieved by people, should made sense in the context of people's lives and be consistent with their values and capacities (ibid). At the community, local and national levels, development is shaped by power relations, gender relations, ethnic relations and interactions among different groups of people (Slim, 1995). At the international level, imbalanced economic and political relations have become reasons for the inequality of development among different countries (ibid). In this sense, development studies and postcolonialism share an essential concern about geospatial relations, which is where the affinity between the two lies (Strongman, 2014).

Under the spatial imaginaries based on the perception of the North as the centre while the South is the periphery, development studies used to seek a shift in the balance of resources between the North and South, trying to help the South in dealing with socio-economic issues by a redistribution of the "justice-oriented post-development map" (Strongman, 2014: 1346). However, some practical attempts like microfinance have been criticised for being under the hegemonic power structure where subjects (the South) are at the bottom of the pyramid and rich countries take control of the capital and interest (Strongman, 2014). Postcolonial studies then question the spatial imaginaries and development interventions based on that, considering how these 'imagined geographies' happen and how development may affects the culture and identity of people (McEwan, 2009: 28). This commonality between

postcolonialism and development studies is described by Strongman (2014) that both "are interactionists in the name of geospatial history and progress" and both "are taking the perspectives of situated actors in order to interpret and explain human life work" (p1345).

Power in development

Behind the geopolitics and spatiality of development, power has been deeply rooted in and significantly shaped, how development is conceptualised. While postcolonialism addresses the significance of culture and identity in development as well as expressions under conditions, development studies show a synchronic perspective on effects of "both the policy and materiality of political ideologies" (Strongman, 2014: 1343). As McEwan (2001) indicates, knowledge of development has been controlled by people in the West. Western development interventionists are considered to hold power to 'define', 'represent' and 'theorise' (Sardar, 1999, cited in McEwan, 2001: 95). Even the concept of 'development' itself is rooted in colonialism that enables the West to control the rest (McEwan, 2009). Comparatively, the passive receivers have a less say about development. For instance, the concept of aid-dependence, which refers to people in the South as spoilt by international aid and always expecting direct delivery and quick fixes instead of making efforts by themselves (Baaz, 2005, cited in McEwan, 2009), shows an example of how the receiving side of the development is understood and represented.

From a postcolonialist viewpoint, the stereotypical discourse creates a relationship of mistrust. Postcolonialism attempts to recontest voices of the past and to recover the lost voices of the marginalised by opening up of spaces for diverse knowledge about development (McEwan, 2001). One progressive example is that the discourse of 'partnership' has replaced 'trusteeship' in development theory and practice, since the latter is criticised for its colonial or neo-colonial connotations (McEwan, 2009: 220). Postcolonialism does not deny all aspects of development studies or reject all 'western' knowledge as bad and support everything 'indigenous' as good (McEwan, 2009: 199). Instead, it tries to understand the power and ideas in different places and at different times in the world. Both development studies and postcolonialism aim at revealing the injustice and oppression and finding solutions to tackle

the problems. Hence, postcolonialism and development studies do not need to conflict with each other. Instead, postcolonialism provides the potential to recover the marginalised, to disrupt the dominant power relations of discourses and interventions, and to "create space for a more equitable development practice" (McEwan, 2009: 245). A re-examination of development knowledge from an historical, cultural and spatial view is suggested, especially looking at the culture and identity issues, and creating a new understanding from this (McEwan, 2009). Through discussions and debates around development topics, attempts are made to create a more appropriate and holistic 'development'.

After the crisis in development studies in the mid-1980s, development studies scholars have recognised that power is the central focus for the analysis of development (McEwan, 2001). The need for social welfare delivery and human rights, as well as and as distinct from economic growth, has become more acknowledged (Elliott, 2008). For instance, the basic needs approach (BNA) that addresses the universal provision of basic needs of all people was introduced to look for more human-centred and locally involved patterns of development (ibid). In addition, with the increasing respect for indigenous knowledge and local strengths, the acceptance of approaches like participatory development has widened (Mohan, 2008). Participatory approaches may be utilised for more efficient and effective development, during the course of which empowerment of the marginalised and changes in power relations may occur (ibid). The rethink of the conflicting needs between the global North and the global South and the redistribution of the power between the two started to happen (McEwan, 2009). After entering the millennium, the complexity of the world and development issues is further increased with interplays among a larger number of subjects and systems, each of whom has their own needs and interests (Baud, et al., 2019). This requires partnerships among academics from different disciplines, practitioners, policymakers and communities to engage in exploring problems and finding solutions (ibid). Applying all those in this study on volunteer tourism, a bottom-up view is particularly emphasised to challenge the existing power structures, while it also analyses interplays across different levels among different actors so as to explore possible solutions for change.

2.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, based on the literature review, there are several research gaps and general challenges of researching on the topic of international volunteer tourism.

First, in the existing literature on volunteer tourism, volunteer tourists are usually the main focus in terms of their motivations, expectations, pay and gains (Sin, 2009; Simpson, 2004; McGehee &Santos, 2005; Liebgott, 2015; Franco et al., 2019). Relatively small numbers of publications are found based on research with receiving communities or organisations. Thereby, we can see the academic world may be neglecting the voices from receiving communities. Apart from that, academic research on positive aspects of volunteer tourism counteracts the negative aspects. The potential harm of volunteer tourism and its effect on receiving communities remains under-researched (Guttentag, 2009). Moreover, a cohesive theoretical framework is needed to underpin various debates on the topic of international volunteer tourism (McGehee, 2012). More evidence and empirical research are required to facilitate theories. Therefore, this thesis analyses international volunteer tourism more critically, aiming at contributing to filling a gap in the literature to recover perspectives of receiving communities, to explore the potential negative impact of volunteer tourism as well as power relations among different stakeholder groups and to analyse volunteer tourism in a holistic way.

Second, with the trend of globalisation, there has been different actors in the international development sector. Governments and multilateral development institutions play key parts as the first and the second pillar in traditional development cooperation (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009). But in recent decades, roles of the third pillar that is associated with NGOs and the fourth pillar that refers to civil actors and less formal bodies have risen rapidly over the world as a development alternative, especially in the global South (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009; Banks and Hulme, 2014). While telling the alternative story of international development, their significance has not yet been fully studied in the academic world (Banks and Hulme, 2014). In the context of Africa development, because of the overall 'under-development'

situation, Africa has become one major playing field of international development and many development projects have been undertaken there (Gatune, 2010). Among different actors, the growth of civil society, NGOs and international volunteers have become an essential feature in African countries (Prince and Brown, 2016). Volunteer tourists, as a part of the third or the fourth pillar, particularly paint a different story from the past, which reinforces the necessity and importance of studying volunteer tourism in the international development context.

In terms of the role of China in international development, a lot of debates are underway about the Chinese model of development and China's interaction with the international system alongside its fast development in recent decades (Huang and Patman, 2013). As the development discourse has been long dominated by the West and there exist limited transparent resources on China's ongoing policies like the Belt and Road Initiative, the story of China's development has not yet been told holistically and completely. When it comes to Sino-Africa relations, most existing studies focus on the Chinese central government's working with other states through top-down channels (Renwick, 2015). The people-to-people exchange at the community and local level has not been fully covered. Thus, trying to fill in these gaps in the literature, this thesis aims at recovering China's part of the story in international development by researching on a Chinese organisation and Chinese volunteer tourists' practices in Kenya and investigating on their interactions with the local community.

Finally, in development studies, there have been many debates around topics about the ideology and discourses of development, different dimensions of development, and appropriate approaches for development. Traditional development studies are criticised in using dominant discourses of development by the West and many international development interventions are accused of being based on neo-liberal politics (McEwan, 2009). On the other hand, postcolonialism aims at recovering the voices of the marginalised, the colonised and the oppressed, especially focusing on the aspects of culture and identity (McEwan, 2009). This study benefits from insights drawn from both development studies and postcolonial studies through considering how volunteer tourism may or may not align with dominant

development discourses or alternative international development approaches. In seeking to bring narratives of receiving communities to the fore, the research aims to emphasise a bottom-up view of the existing power structure in volunteer tourism. Throughout this research journey, power has become important as one particularly essential factor in the development process, including power structures from history, the power of knowledge production, power relations between different actors, and the redistribution of power under the globalisation (Kapoor, 2008; McEwan, 2009; Strongman, 2014). This then leads to the theoretical focus of this thesis, which is further explained in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Frameworks and Approaches in Analysing Volunteer Tourism

3.1. Introduction

As discussed in the last chapter, the picture of international volunteer tourism remains incomplete due to the imbalanced research focus, which indicates the potential to apply a holistic framework to analyse the topic. Addressing the gaps in volunteer tourism literature requires the use of more theories in the field. While volunteer tourism is embedded in the broader context of international development, it substantially involves activities that engage with and are focused on development at the grassroots level. On the basis of that, when further considering volunteer tourism from a bottom-up perspective, there is a strong connection with community development. Therefore, key concepts, theories and models in the community development field are recognised as important in seeking to develop a comprehensive approach to analysing international volunteer tourism coherently and critically. For example, radical models of community development indicate the importance of recovering voices from receiving communities, which are relatively marginalised in volunteer tourism research, and they suggest possibilities for changes to happen. Furthermore, reflections on different levels of participation and empowerment help to explore the complexity of practices and interactions between varying stakeholders, especially in the case when external foreign agencies come into local communities and undertake interventions in the name of development. Fundamentally, as power is the most essential and prevailing concept in community development and also one of the most important causes of the imbalance identified in international volunteer tourism literature, a structural and systematic analysis of power dynamics is essential as a specific and in-depth focus for this study.

This chapter begins by reviewing theories and frameworks that have been used in studying volunteer tourism. Limitations and challenges are identified, including the significance of a coherent theoretical framework and the need for a practical approach to analysing bottom-up perspectives. Second, by looking at the rationale and approaches of social and community

development, possibilities of acceptable development practices at the community level are suggested, which leads to the research focus of this study on a bottom-up perspective in volunteer tourism. Next, the chapter explores key concepts and models in community development in more detail. Radical models for practice, reflections on participation, empowerment and possibilities for collective action are specifically discussed to be used as important theoretical frameworks for researching volunteer tourism. This, finally, leads to consideration of theories of power and John Gaventa's powercube framework to enable in-depth understanding of volunteer tourism and critical investigation of the complexity of power dynamics within it.

3.2. Theoretical frameworks from volunteer tourism literature

As McGehee (2012) indicates, a cohesive theoretical framework for volunteer tourism remains to be built up in order for more critical research and exploration of volunteer tourism to progress. At present, a wide range of theoretical models have been applied to analyse volunteer tourism, which have connected volunteer tourism to broader contexts and concepts such as globalisation and development. For instance, with Foucault's theorisation of power and knowledge as well as poststructuralist feminist theory, Wearing and McDonald (2002) reveal the negative impacts of western tourism management models on local knowledge. They analyse the volunteer tourism industry critically by shifting research focus from tourists to other stakeholders (ibid). By looking at volunteer tourism's existence and involvement of NGOs, Wearing and McDonald (2002) propose feminist theory to explore of possibilityvolunteer tourism's decommodification. They argue that some tourism products like volunteer tourism and community-based tourism could be oriented more towards international development rather than merely a profit-driven business (Wearing and McDonald, 2002). Thompson and Taheri (2020) draw on Bourdieu's practice theory to explore the exchange between stakeholders, finding significant influences on the exchange of capital, such as culture and monetary resources, through the interactions in volunteer tourism settings.

These applications of different theories have enhanced previous research on international volunteer tourism. However, there still exist three main limitations of theoretical application within volunteer tourism studies. First**,** as indicated in Chapter 2, volunteer tourists are the main research focus and receiving communities are less studied. This is also embodied in applications of theories and theoretical frameworks that are mostly applicable for volunteer tourists' behaviours. For instance, McGehee (2002) uses the social movement theory model in researching volunteer tourists. Employing both social psychological and resource-mobilisation theories to explore the actual effect of volunteer tourism on participants and resources network, he finds a positive impact on volunteer tourists' later participation in social movement organisations (McGehee, 2002). Palacios (2010) refers to neo-colonial theory, raising attention to challenges that international volunteer tourism faces and discussing the appropriateness of western volunteer tourists' participation in the global South countries. He indicates the danger of western participants falling under the umbrella of 'neo-colonialism', and emphasises the importance to "harmonize personal and institutional expectations with real volunteer capacities" (Palacios, 2010: 861).

Comparatively, perspectives from local communities remain to be substantially included when looking at international development and volunteer tourism at the conceptual level. Loiseau et al. (2016) apply a theory of change approach to research healthcare projects in volunteer tourism, believing it is an appropriate approach that could clearly identify problems and evaluate the impact of volunteer tourism. The theory of change enables a holistic analysis by considering how change happens and assessing the impacts of change. It is useful to understand complex programmes with various components and multiple stakeholders (Allen et al., 2017). With the assessment of community needs and consideration of influential factors such as different values, interplays between different stakeholders and funding mechanisms, Loiseau et al. (2016) indicate that volunteer tourism projects are expected to provide a measurable and sustainable impact on communities and to offer equitable access to good healthcare. They identify the importance of empowering local communities and awareness rising among volunteers (Loiseau et al., 2016). Nevertheless, as Loiseau et al.'s study is undertaken from a top-down view, it has not examined whether the expectations have been

met, and what practical challenges remain from the receiving side.

Second, a more cohesive theoretical and methodological framework is needed to link all different components and to examine volunteer tourism more systematically. As one of the earliest studies on volunteer tourism, Simpson (2004) relates gap-year volunteer tourism marketing to theorisations and practices of international development, although not in substantial depth. He reveals the lack of pedagogy for social justice in volunteer tourism and criticises the construction of the 'public face' of volunteer tourism, especially the underlying unequal relationships between volunteers and recipients (Simpson, 2004: 681). McGehee and Andereck (2009) further explore this relationship by applying the social exchange theory. Based on survey data, they investigate how receiving communities and volunteer tourists interplay and how the interplay supports volunteer tourism planning. Overall, however, because they are mainly focusing on volunteer tourists' narratives, many important concepts such as power, local participation, ownership and possibilities for community change have not been utilised as much. Further research by developing a more holistic theoretical and methodological framework is necessarily required to study volunteer tourism in more depth.

Third, more evidence from empirical research is needed to underpin theoretical frameworks that have been adapted in volunteer tourism studies. For example, Sherraden et al. (2008) apply a conceptual model for investigating the impact of international volunteering and service. They emphasise that both individual and institutional factors can significantly affect receiving communities, volunteers and sending organisations (Sherraden et al., 2008). The interaction of attributes and capacities at both individual level and institutional level result in different outcomes for different stakeholders (ibid). This conceptual model provides an initial framework for further exploring interplays in volunteer tourism. Nevertheless, it is admitted by Sherraden et al. (2008) that understanding of the phenomenon at the conceptual level remains insufficient. More evidence is needed to identify the actual impacts of international volunteer tourism empirically (ibid). Similarly, McGehee (2012) proposes a combination of critical theory and social movement theory as the foundation for the holistic study of international volunteer tourism. She suggests the use of theoretical perspectives from

postcolonialism, deconstructionism and feminism as they would bring insights to consider various issues of power and domination (ibid). McGehee's (2012) research indeed provides a foundation for holistic studies of international volunteer tourism at a theoretical level, and its potential effect on social movements and social change is addressed. However, she also admits that further research at the empirical level should be introduced to move the study of this aspect forward. All these challenges in the theoretical analysis of volunteer tourism then lead to examining theories of community development.

3.3. Social development and community development

Chapter 2 has discussed that development is not only about economic growth, but other social and cultural dimensions also matter. Moving from policies at the international and national level towards development practices and people-to-people exchange at the grassroots level, development strategies that are orientated towards addressing social welfare and social well-being are required (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). As people and communities are central to international volunteer tourism, there is also a requirement for a more people-centred focus to achieve development 'for' and 'by' people (Kelly, 2018). This leads to the need for further consideration of social development and community development in this study. This section explores the rationale, approaches and possibilities of alternative development approaches at the community level, which could be applied to volunteer tourism practices.

3.3.1. Social development: a different perspective from the traditional model of development

Since the 1950s, social conditions and social welfare have been addressed in the development world, and social development has been implemented across the globe (Pawar, 2017). While traditional development studies were criticised for focusing too much on economic growth and economic issues (McEwan, 2009), Midgley (1997) indicates the importance of social welfare and the social dimension in development. According to Midgley (1997: 5), social

welfare is defined as "a state or condition of human well-being that exists when social problems are managed, when human needs are met, and when social opportunities are maximised". In this definition, it is important to notice that social development includes: 1) addressing social problems such as unemployment, crime and violence, 2) meeting of people's needs and basic survival requirements, and 3) social well-being and opportunities for people to realise their potential (Midgley, 1997:5). By the twenty-first century, social development has seen some progress in managing social problems and meeting basic life needs (Pawar, 2017). Individuals' income in the global North has risen, people's lives have been improved and the literacy rate, as well as the overall health condition of human beings, have been increased (ibid).

According to Midgley (1997), social development is concerned with individuals, communities, regions and societies, and the process is essential to promote welfare for all. While there was some misunderstanding of social development as different or separate from economic development at the beginning, Midgley (1997) indicates that the two sides are closely connected with each other. In dealing with the important issue of poverty, for example, Hardiman (1982) suggest that the welfare indicator should include not only the measurement of income but also other social aspects to understand standard of living better. The promotion of social well-being can have a positive contribution to economic development in return when a larger group of people are able to engage and participate in economic activities in the long run (ibid). On the other hand, the process of social development cannot leave the support of the economy as a prerequisite to improving people's social welfare (Midgley, 1997). During the development process, economic and social dimensions act equally and go hand-in-hand (Pawar, 2017).

At the international level, policies for social development should be integrated with economic policies (Midgley, 1997). This is relevant to the whole world as an undivided entity and international collaborations are needed for social change to happen. The United Nations has promoted social welfare at the international level and included inclusive social development into the SDGs and *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (UNGA, 2015). Similarly, the *2030*

Agenda reflects Midgley's (1997) earlier argument that national governments are "the primary bodies through which social welfare issues are addressed" (p34). The government, policymakers, together with other specialist agencies, are the ones with most substantial resources to promote social development and to ensure its implementation (ibid). A statist strategy at the government and institutional level plays a crucial role in social development. As discussed in Chapter 2, there are four pillars in international development. The first pillar is governments' aid, the second pillar is the multilateral development aid built upon the United Nations or other similar international institutions, the third pillar refers to a wide range of organisations and usually is associated with NGOs, and the fourth pillar is non-specialist bodies including non-development departments, associations in various fields, foundations, other non-specialist organisations, companies, groups of people (Develtere and Bruyn, 2009). In this case, social development and social change at the global level echoes the importance of the first two pillars (the governments and multilateral intuitions).

However, in Sub-Sahara Africa countries, due to inadequate resources and national revenue, many governments are struggling to deal with the contradiction between economic planning and social welfare (Brown, 2018). As a result of needs being too great, scarce resources, as well as some traditional views of welfare, social development becomes a tough issue to tackle for African governments (ibid). Given that economic support is an important prerequisite to promote social development, embarking on developing social welfare provision before the economic development of a country is at a certain level is believed to be unrealistic (Brown, 2018). This means that the first two pillars of governments and multilateral institutions may not be able to work efficiently or ideally, especially when concerned with the inner-city poor living in informal settlements, rural dwellers and other marginalised groups (Midgley, 1997). To better deal with that, Midgley (1997) indicates enterprise strategies and communitarian strategies, which to an extent, address the role of NGOs and other non-specialist groups as Develtere and Bruyn's (2009) third and fourth pillars. In enterprise strategies, civil efforts from individuals and private companies are suggested to promote people's social welfare with governments providing support through lower tax rates and expanding employment opportunities (Midgley, 1997). At the local level, the role of communities is also essential to

organise individuals and engage individuals in productive activities, so as to ensure their social well-being (Midgley, 1997). During such processes, roles of NGOs and civil agencies are essential to assemble resources and to address inadequate provisions from the national level.

Additionally, in the context of Africa, Patel, Kaseke and Midgley (2012) highlight the significance of indigenous knowledge for welfare promotion to make up for the absence of government welfare support and to allow for change to happen at the local level. They find Africans have innovations in four specific types of welfare institutions: kinship supports between family members; community support networks among village elders, chiefs and community leaders; mutual aid association between certain groups of people; the religious obligation to support the poor (Patel, Kaseke and Midgley, 2012: 15-16). When social development programs are introduced to local communities by external governmental or non-governmental organisations, it is necessary for the indigenous systems to be taken into careful consideration (ibid). This reflects postcolonialist implications regarding power in development discourses and knowledge, and it leads to a discussion about concepts, principals, and strategies in community development.

3.3.2. Community development: core concepts

Generally speaking, community development happens at the local and community level. As the definition given by the United Nations (1955, cited in Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016: 6), community development is "a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation", and it addresses both social and economic dimensions of development at the community level. Meade et al. (2016: 2) describe community development as "a process through which 'ordinary' people collectively attempt to influence their life circumstances". In this sense, one purpose of community development is to achieve collaborations and participation among community members (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). This is also grounded in the inherent values and principles of social development that people communities should own development and sustain

development for their own good (Pawar, 2017). On the basis of that, social justice, equality and other common goals could be achieved throughout the process (Meade et al., 2016).

Newman and Clarke (2016) argue that community development is essentially a political practice that has been implemented, talked about and understood in different settings. This can be traced back to the colonial history of the global South. As pointed out by Craig (1989), community development is particularly associated with colonial powers and it was used (or misused) to work as an essential strategy to prepare populations for independence in the South. Community workers and educationalists were seen as agents for colonialism to maintain political and economic power. Even if they were able to promote community development with local people, available choices to decide priorities in practice were largely constrained by the colonial political context (Craig, 1989). In the process, communities were more likely to serve as "a device through which to fix governable identities among colonial populations" (Pandey, 2005, cited in Newman and Clarke, 2016:33).

Even in contemporary years, practices of some big international agencies like the World Bank are argued to focus too much on economic development agendas while undermining the social and economic structures of local communities themselves (Newman and Clarke, 2016). An increasing number of young volunteer tourists are going to the South to deliver development services, and such projects have been criticised for shaping community development under the former colonial rule as volunteer tourists from the North come with logics from their own world (ibid). Kenny (2016:47) further identifies the unequal power relations in community development roles, especially the distinctions between 'facilitation' and 'leadership' practices when external agents come into disadvantaged communities. This is again reflected in the growing popularity of international volunteer tourism that volunteer tourists as consumers are paid more attention than local people in relation to both practice and research. Kenny (2016: 59) suggests that instead of a binary distinction between 'external' and 'internal' or 'us' and 'the Other', a dualist perspective might contribute to a better understanding of power differentials and acknowledging elements of mutuality and solidarity.

As Gilchrist and Taylor (2016:99) point out, "community development takes time, commitment, resources, practical skills, self-awareness and a huge amount of trust". Effective practices require appropriate support and resources, practitioners with particular capabilities and skills, as well as a shared set of values and principles (ibid). To further address the challenges of community development, different approaches have been introduced by a wide range of NGOs across the world (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Community development projects that are instigated by international agencies are particularly required to meet accountability regimes (Kenny, 2016). Technical systems including evaluation, audit and reporting, are involved in meeting funding bodies' requirements (ibid). Community development practitioners need to understand local cultures and local situations, to have good skills in building up mutual-trust relationships with community members, and to bring people together for common goals (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016).

Growth of community development approaches in the global South were witnessed across the 1980s and 1990s (Nwaka, 2008). While the role of state governments has tended to become reduced over time, community development approaches may play an increasing part in applying new and sustainable approaches to support both economic and social aspects of development (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Nevertheless, the South is still facing a lot of challenges to turn the forces of globalisation and modernity to meet local people's own needs (Nwaka, 2008). As revealed by Kenny (2016), the deep causes of disadvantaged communities are rooted in colonial history as well as structures and ideologies from neoliberal globalisation. Therefore, it is important to enabling communities to address their problems and desires by themselves during development interventions. Dialogue should be created between policymakers and communities alongside the significance of increasing bottom-up participation so as to ensure that community development supports communities rather than being used for exploitation (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Through collective actions and their level of conscientisation being increased by participatory approaches, the relationships within communities and between them and external agencies must be enhanced (Mtika and Kistler, 2017).

All in all, when facing concerns and challenges of community development in the contemporary era, more reflections and attention on ideology and power are required for further research on the topic. To get a more critical insight into the power concept requires a closer look at some radical models of community development practice and more specific approaches of participation and empowerment in the following sections.

3.4. Theories and strategies in community development

3.4.1. Radical models of community development

As Gilchrist and Taylor (2016: 20-24) point out, different models of community development have been introduced for different sets of projects, including pluralist models, communitarian models and radical models. *Pluralist models* address the importance of including various perspectives in decision-making. *Communitarian models* are more conservative, aiming at allowing people to realise mutual benefits without changing the status quo (ibid). *Radical models* are based on the identification of imbalanced power relations, especially power held mainly in the hands of elites, which have resulted in "structural inequalities and systematic discrimination" (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016:20). Therefore, they call for collective actions to "provide a starting point for linking knowledge to power and a commitment to developing forms of community life that take seriously the struggle for democracy and social justice" (McLaren, 1995:34, cited in Ledwith, 2005). These radical models are particularly considered as a theoretical framework in this thesis because they address inequalities of power and aim at making positive changes, which that are at the core of the research undertaken on volunteer tourism.

Radical models of community development can be traced back to Freire's proposal of the 'conscientisation model' in 1972. As explained by Ledwith (2005), Freire's approach is centred on social pedagogy. Based on critical analysis about education and community development, Freire sought to achieve a synthesis of theory and practice in supporting communities of the poor and oppressed in Latin America (Freire, 1972, cited in Ledwith,

2005). Freire's radical model may be particularly applicable in the global South and African countries given the limitations of governments to tackle poverty issues and promote social welfare. The raising of conscientisation stands at the centre of Freire's radical model. According to Ledwith (2005: 100), conscientisation is "the process whereby people become aware of the political, socioeconomic and cultural contradictions that interact in a hegemonic way to diminish their lives". It is through this process of conscientisation that collective actions for change arise. As such, Freire proposes a process of critical education as a powerful approach to liberate, enable and transform and to develop trust and personal empowerment (Ledwith, 2005).

Specifically, three levels of consciousness are considered in Freire's framework, namely *magical consciousness* (people living passively and not questioning about injustices), *native consciousness* (being aware of the nature of some individual issues but failing to link them with structural discrimination) and *critical consciousness* (critically questioning the social structure and how it shapes people's life) (Freire, 1972; Freire, 1993, cited in Ledwith, 2005:100). Orientated towards conscientisation, critical pedagogy involves an educational process including "questioning, naming, reflecting, analysing and collectively acting in the world" (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016: 98). In this process, outsiders can be important actors as catalysts for change and community workers act as educators to call for a critical understanding of community needs and community issues (Ledwith, 2005).

Freire's critical pedagogy is closely linked with Gramsci's concept of *hegemony* and the role of *intellectuals*, which contributes to understanding the power of ideas during the liberation process (Ledwith, 2005). As indicated by Gramsci (1985, cited in Ledwith, 2005), hegemony means one class dominates over others, not only through coercion but also ideological persuasion. Hegemony is a process that the ruling class maintains continuing control over the rest, which makes critical education important to allow change to happen (Ledwith, 2005). In the consciousness-raising process, Gramsci emphases the vital role of intellectuals, which means "people who occupy a wide range of organisational or ideological/culture roles in society" (ibid). Some researchers argue that this intellectual understanding could result in

false consciousness (ibid:136). As indicated by Scott (1988, cited in IDS, 2009), if A (community member) is not aware of his or her real needs and interests, that could also be hidden from B (community educator)'s knowledge for consciousness-raising. In this case, conscious raising in community development becomes a paradox and it is unable to achieve a true educational purpose. However, the concept of 'false consciousness' is soon retorted by other researchers. For instance, Haugaard (2002) argues that 'false consciousness' implies a power to determine 'true' and 'false'. Gaventa (2006) points out that as long as consciousness exists, it can never be false to its holders, because tacit knowledge is experienced rather than articulated. Although Freire and Gramsci are still criticised for their dichotomous analysis of class (e.g. the ruling/ the ruled) and the ignorance of the complexity and plurality of oppressions, the pedagogy and the radical model has had a great impact on radical community development both theoretically and practically (Ledwith, 2005).

Thompson (2003) adapted Freire's conscientisation model and Gramsci's understanding of hegemony into the PSC model, which is widely used in today's community development practices. As the PSC model shown in Figure 3.4.1 indicates, interactions between three different levels are explored across the *P-level*, a personal/ psychological level that involves in thoughts, feelings, and actions; *C-level*, a cultural level that sees the commonalities and conformity experienced by local people; and *S-level*, a structural level that looks at the power dynamics and power relations between different bodies (Ledwith, 2005: 145). Beginning with personal empowerment, individuals and communities "become able to take control of their circumstance and achieve their own goal, thereby being able to work toward helping themselves and others to maximise the quality of their lives" (Adams, 2001:145). This personal level of consciousness reflects shared ways of thinking and doing within the group (Ledwith, 2005). Eventually, the senses of connections and belonging from common experiences provide a basis of movements for change through collective actions (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). From here, a structural transformation of existing power hierarchy might be realised (Ledwith, 2005).

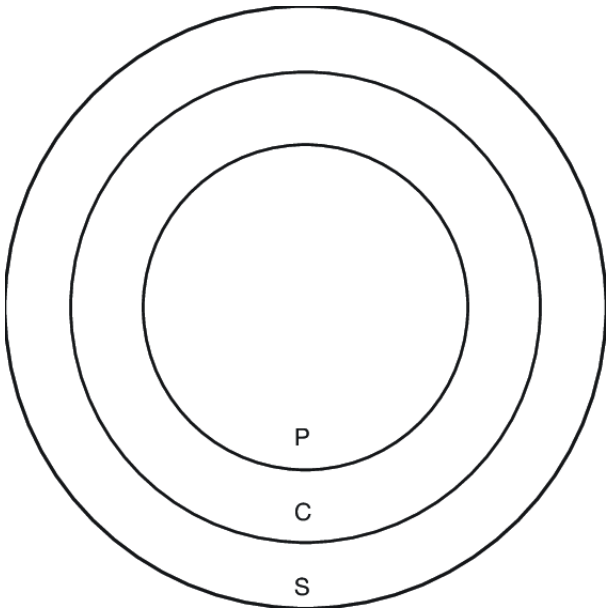


Figure 3.4.1.The PSC model (Thompson, 2003, cited in Ledwith, 2005: 145)

3.4.2. Participation and power relations

Participation is one of the most essential concepts in radical models of community development. As per the definition given by the United Nations, participation is "the creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development" (UN, 1981: 5; cited in Pawar, 2017). Pawar (2017:79) notes that "one of the inherent values and principles in social development is participation of people in their communities and their own development". Ensuring people can participate in identifying goals, planning interventions and collective actions is crucial for furthering and influencing the development process (Pawar, 2017).

The ladder of participation

However, while 'participation' has become a buzzword in the development sector, it might have different meanings taken from different ideological perspectives (Pawar, 2017). In many cases, some intended or so-called participatory practices may be disguised, so it is very important to analyse the concept of participation critically. Arnstein (1969) recognises that power connotations are closely embedded in participation. As she indicates, citizen

participation is "the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future" (Arnstein, 1969: 216).

Specifically, Arnstein (1969) categorises participation by eight levels in a ladder pattern, each with different means and purposes. As shown in Figure 3.4.2., *manipulation* and *therapy* represent non-participation levels since the real purpose of this participation type is to control and educate people for powerholders' governance. The bottom rung of *manipulation* refers to participation distorted by powerholders, and *therapy* assumes mental illnesses of the powerless and focuses on curing them in a masquerade of participation (ibid: 4-5). Above these non-participation levels, tokenism includes levels of *informing*, *consultation* and *placation*, which allow some voices from participants (Arnstein, 1969). While *informing* means one-way flow of information without channels for feedback or negotiation, *consultation* invites some opinions of citizens though there is no assurance those ideas will be included, and the degree of influence further increases in *placation* when community members are allowed to press their priorities (ibid: 5-7). In essence, powerholders still control access to decision making at these levels. At the top levels, citizen power, including *partnership*, *delegated power* and *citizen control*, refer to higher degrees of citizens' participation where they are able to get managerial power (Arnstein, 1969). Through *partnerships*, decision-making is supposed to be discussed and power is redistributed between the haves and the have-nots. Negotiations then result in *delegate power* where citizens might achieve further authority over certain planning and decisions, and when citizens are able to govern a program or an institution complete, that becomes *citizen control* (ibid:9-12).

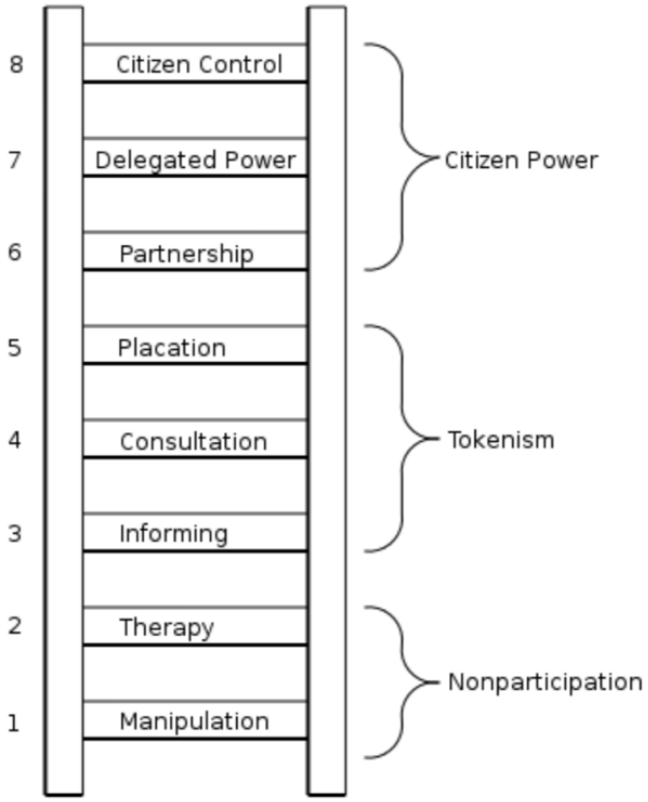


Figure 3.4.2. The ladder of citizen participation, Arnstein (1969:2)

Arnstein's ladder of participation informs interpretation of findings from this study as the model provides the most fundamental and coherent structure to understand different types of participation. While Arnstein's (1969) work remains important in shaping thinking about participation, there exist critiques of the ladder as linear and implying progress up the ladder, which might not always be the case in complex practice. Alternatively, Taylor (2003) suggests it might be preferable to conceive participation as a cycle or spectrum. Following Arnstein's ladder of participation, other scholars developed their own typologies of participation from different perspectives (e.g. Pretty, 1995; White 1996; Pawar, 2015). For instance, as shown in Figure 3.4.3, Jackson's model highlights the importance of considering different degrees of involvement happening at different levels for different stakeholder groups (Jackson, 2001, cited in Taylor, 2003). According to these different target groups, Jackson (2001, cited in Taylor, 2003:119) suggests objectives varying from informing, public education, testing reactions to seeking consensus and solutions, which represents characteristics of communication (one-way communication, two-way communication or shared decision-making). Notably, the various models imply the complex meaning and nature of participation

with various focuses and layers (Pawar, 2017). This leads to further discussion around power relations and how power is being shared within participation.

Degree of involvement ▼

SET OBJECTIVES	FOR WHOM?	CHARACTERISTICS
Informing	For those who are uninformed about an issue	One-way communication
Public education	For those who are aware of the issue but not of its technicalities or implications	
Testing reactions	For those who are progressively more informed	Two-way communication, consultation
Seeking ideas and alternative solutions		
Seeking consensus		Shared decision-making

Figure 3.4.3. Stages of public involvement (Jackson, 2001, cited in Taylor, 2003: 119)

Power relations within participation and partnership

Emerson (1964: 32) says that "power resides implicitly in the other's dependency". Understanding the complexity of participation is the basis for effective and efficient practices in community development. As Kyamusugulwa (2013, cited in Pawar, 2017:91) indicates, proper participation requires "a degree of homogeneity, relationship or trust, along with a common sense of identity and appropriate leadership". Especially when external agencies are engaged in the community development process, their roles and participation count significantly (Parwar, 2017). Although Somerville (2011) argues that development might be realised by the community itself, due to their limited access to resources and social networks, varying players are necessarily involved including outsiders, insiders and peripheral insiders (Taylor, 2003). Nevertheless, relations between practitioners and receivers, and also within practitioners, may be imbalanced if not carefully conducted (Dominelli, 2007). Since non-government organisations, non-profit organisations and community-based organisations from diverse backgrounds are usually in partnerships with local communities. Questions can be posed of power relations within these partnerships (Taylor, 2003). In many of these partnerships, local people might be involved in planning and design but still excluded from setting rules or decision making in the development process (ibid).

Therefore, to avoid false participation or tokenistic levels of participation, community practitioners should be clearly aware of existing inequalities and power structures among different groups, which requires a good knowledge of the local situation and diverse local culture (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). In response to constantly changing circumstances, community workers should be sensitive to communities' common interest and potential for change (ibid). Moreover, since local people could be relatively powerless compared with powerful practitioners (Adams, 2001), Eisen (1994, cited in Humphries, 1996:250) suggests community workers should "never assume you know the needs and priorities of people". Members of communities should be given the right to define their own needs and to propose strategies for solutions (Humphries, 1996). Linking to Freire's critical pedagogy, it is important for practitioners to always keep an attitude of understanding and respect instead of preaching or adopting a "high-handed giving approach" (Pawar, 2017: 92). Their role is to put problems into a broader context, to facilitate discussion and dialogue, to encourage people to come up with solutions creatively and collaboratively, to offer suggestions and to help with expanding resources and networks for communities (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Only in this way would participation itself become an empowerment process and would further potential for structural change and redistribution of power be possible (Pawar, 2017).

Considering that there are usually imbalanced relationships with groups such as the poor, the marginalised and the oppressed tending to have less access to participation, some scholars have addressed certain approaches to participation. For instance, Jennings (2003, cited in Pawar, 2017) suggests participation as a bottom-up development in which grassroots people make direct decisions and influence relevant policies with necessary collaborations with additional stakeholder groups such as governments and NGOs. On the other hand, Pawar (2017) suggests that the top-down level of participation is also important to generate spaces and possibilities for grassroots level participation. The involvement of nation-states and multilateral institutions may create dialogue and communication so as to better understand the needs and wishes of the grassroots people and to realise more effective development at the local and community level (ibid). Either from a top-down or bottom-up perspective, it is evident that participation across different levels is closely interrelated and constantly

interplays in an interactive fashion.

3.4.3. Empowerment approaches

Empowerment is another fundamental concept of critical community practice (Ledwith, 2005). As Humphries (1996) indicates, the execution of power is at the core of empowerment, and nearly all social practices are shaped by power and everyone has different degrees of power. It has been recognised that there are a great number of definitions and conceptualisation of empowerment in the development studies literature. As this research focuses on development from a bottom-up view, empowerment models from the community development sector are particularly relevant. As suggested by Craig (2002), empowerment in the community development context means "the creation of sustainable structures, processes, and mechanism, over which local communities have an increased degree of control, and from which they have a measurable impact on public and social policies affecting these communities" (p3). This implies an important aim of community development to 'empower', and empowerment is more than a simple outcome but a process (Humphries, 1996). The process should be looked into through "the lens of empowerment, as well as its opposite – that of disempowerment" (Toomey, 2009: 183). The subjects of empowerment are not only individual community members but also organisations and communities as a whole. This section discusses theories and models about empowerment in detail. The action research component in this thesis, which will be further discussed in Chapter 8, also draws on a combination of these different empowerment approaches to implement organisational change.

Routes to empowerment

Likened Arnstein's ladder of participation, Rocha (1997) developed a typology, a ladder of empowerment (as shown in Figure 3.4.4.), to understand 'empowerment' theories in a coherent way. This ladder of empowerment allows for complexity and variation, and it enables researchers, practitioners and policymakers to understand aims, goals, objects and

strategies for empowerment (Rocha, 1997). While Arnstein's ladder moves progressively along increasing levels of participation, the ladder of empowerment emphasises moves from the individual level of power experiences to the community level (ibid). As revealed by Taylor (2003), this multi-dimensional view of empowerment demonstrates the importance to understand both individual power and structural power when putting 'personal' into 'political' (p94). Being empowered individually is believed as a prerequisite for being empowered politically and for collective action to happen (Warren, 1996, cited in Taylor, 2003).

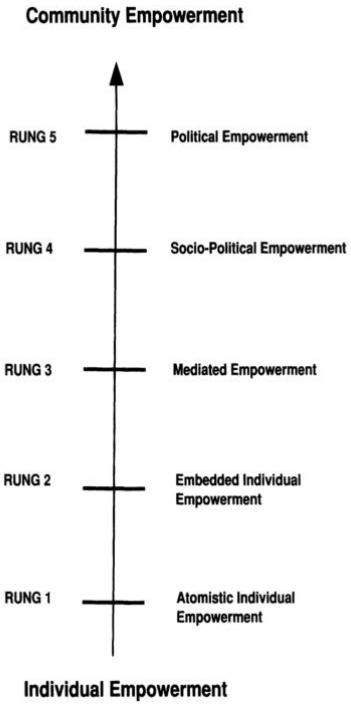


Figure 3.4.4. Ladder of empowerment (Rocha, 1997: 34)

Furthermore, Barr and Hashagen (2000, cited in Ledwith, 2005) designed a model for achieving better community development (ABCD). As shown in Figure 3.4.5., the ABCD framework is depicted as a pyramid with the key outcome to build a health community with satisfying living condition, sustainability and equity. To realise the goal, they highlight four methods to achieve community empowerment: personal development, positive action, community organisation, participation and involvement (Barr and Hashagen, 2000, cited in Ledwith, 2005: 8). Four empowerment dimensions interact with quality of life and support from governments and external agencies for policy and services delivery (ibid).

The ABCD framework addresses some similar dimensions of empowerment to Rocha's ladder of empowerment to plan out community development or evaluate practice. For example, the 'personal development' method is aligned with the type 'atomistic individual empowerment' in Rocha's model, and both refer to capacity building for individuals through knowledge learning and skill training (Rocha, 1996; Barr and Hashagen, 2000). As Adams (2001: 13) indicates, empowerment does not mean simply giving the power to community members, but also to increase the ability to gain power and control by themselves, which highlights the importance of 'self-knowledge' and 'self-control'. This means a transformation from relying on others to help out, to an increase of self-sufficiency and group consciousness to solve problems and to undertake individual responsibilities for collective actions (Adams, 2001). With the recognition of self-strength as well as the importance of the surrounding environment, individuals take actions to work with community issues and to change dominant power structures, which is the positive action dimension in ABCD framework and the rung 2 (embedded individual empowerment) in Rocha's ladder. On the basis of that, the unity among community members and community groups is created and participation is involved throughout the changing processes (Barr and Hashagen, 2000).

Figure 3.4.5. the framework of Achieving Better Community Development (ABCD) (Barr and Hashagen, 2000, cited in Ledwith, 2005: 87)

Additionally, Rocha (1996: 36) suggests a third type of empowerment in the ladder of empowerment – mediated empowerment - that refers to the involvement of experts and

professionals in the changing process. This links back to the previous discussion about power relations in participation and partnerships, and it further leads to considering the roles professionals may play in empowerment. Specifically, Toomey (2009: 184-201) indicates four traditional roles (*rescuer, provider, modernizer, liberator*) and four alternative roles (*catalyst, facilitator, ally, advocate*) that practitioners play in community development, empowerment and disempowerment. While traditional roles are likely to result in one-way relationships between agents and subjects, alternative roles suggest a two-way channel where agents and subjects can work together to find approaches for positive change (Toomey, 2009). Moreover, Toomey (2009) points out alternative role-players are likely to build empowerment strategies from the existing intrinsic motivation within communities, which is different from forms of external motivations that traditional roles tend to look for to ensure local people's compliance. Being catalysts, facilitators, allies or advocates in community development acknowledges the potential of community members to be agents of changing themselves (Kenny, 2016).

Collective actions

As Gilchrist and Taylor (2016: 10) introduce, empowerment for community development relies on three vital pillars: "informal education, collective action and organisation development". After being exposed to new ideas and knowledge through informal education, it is suggested that people in communities can develop or retain their consciousness and understanding of community issues and envisage community improvements, so as to come up with collective actions to bring them about (Mtika and Kistler, 2017). At the next stage, organisational growth, including the change of new structures and the expansion of community activities, is expected to occur depending on people's acquisition and action as well as an integration of both (ibid). To a certain extent, community development could be seen as a whole journey to active citizenship, a career goal or a sense of ownership and more empirical research analysing or testing this process remains highly needed (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016).

Particularly, collective actions in community development reflect the top two rungs of Rocha's model - socio-political empowerment and political empowerment - that focus on the change

process within a community locus (Rocha, 1996: 34). As causes of disadvantage and collaborative struggles come from deep social inequality, empowerment seeks to engage communities with structural changes in society, politics and economy and action toward redistribution of resources, which could in return grant people power in their individual life (Rissel, 1994; Humphries, 1996, cited in Ledwith, 2015). Also, the transformation of power relations requires challenging the existing structures and ideologies (Kenny, 2016). Through collaborations among community members with shared interests and common pursuits, the community itself can become a powerful actor to gather group resources and realise institutional change (Rocha, 1996).

More importantly, networks and alliances among varying actors such as community members, practitioners and external agencies are essential to ensure actions for change (Ledwith, 2005). Building solidarity and collectiveness enable people to "develop theory and skills that support working across difference" and offers "structures to harness collective power outside community" (Ledwith, 2005: 110). With Freire's approach to engage people in critical dialogues of everyday life, conscientisation at the individual level is the starting point of collective actions and the foundation for macro-level change (Ledwith, 2005). On the basis of an understanding about cultural, economic, political and social forces that have influence on people's lives, people get ideas about concepts like identity and autonomy and they gain skills like listening, dialogues and cooperation (ibid). Eventually, collective narratives get the chance to grow from varying individual stories, making the community actions expand from the local level to national and global movements (ibid).

Overall, the key models, concepts and theories in community development discussed in this section collectively provide important theoretical underpinnings for research on community development practice. They generate important insights into possibilities for action and change, especially from a bottom-up perspective. On the basis of that, a lot of useful lessons can be drawn to analyse development interventions in great depth, including the research focus of this thesis on international volunteer tourism practice. Additionally, key concepts like consciousness, participation, empowerment, collaboration and action have reflected the

complexity of development practices at the local and community level, as well as their interrelations and interactions with higher levels. This further leads to the exploration of power with integration in the next sections of this chapter.

3.5. Theories of power

As discussed previously, the distribution of power amongst different people and groups in a community is usually unequal due to the existence of the power hierarchies (Humphries, 1996). While some people who occupy 'higher' hierarchical positions tend to have more power, those who are positioned with less power are often amongst marginalised groups who have the least access to protect their rights or to get resources (ibid). Critical community practices aim to change the relationships between ordinary community members and people who are in positions of power and aim to develop community based on key principles of justice and equality (CDX, 2008, cited in Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Particularly in radical models, empowerment is one of the key concepts, and the analysis of ideology and structure of power is situated at the centre of both Freire's critical pedagogy and Gramsci's concept of hegemony (Ledwith, 2005). Therefore, a profound understanding of power is essential to search for possibilities of reshaping power relations and to develop strategic practices for change (Meade et al., 2016).

3.5.1. Understanding power in different dimensions and practices

Three-dimensional view of power

Understanding different faces and different manifestations of power is a good starting point to reflect the complex power dynamics in community development and it contributes to a critical comprehension of social justice, equality and inclusion (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). In 1974, Steven Lukes proposed a radical view of power, where he identifies the three-dimensional power.

In a one-dimensional view, power is identified in forms of overt conflict that powerholders directly dictate the actions of those who are less powerful (Lukes, 1974). A exercises power over B by forcing B to do things that he/she does not want to do otherwise. Rocha (1997) argues that in Arnstein's ladder of participation, power to participate refers to mainly this overt manifestation – "the ability to affect the behaviour of another" (p32). Lukes (1974) criticises the behavioural focus of the one-dimensional power view. He questions the issue of distinguishing power from structural constraints and reveals the structural constitution of power relations in society (ibid). In the second dimension, power is not only associated with observable forces but also covert conflicts (Lukes, 1974). The powerful people control the powerless by setting the rules of the game and by excluding others from decision making on issues of concern (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). A exercises power over B by excluding B from the process of agenda setting (Taylor, 2003). In the third dimension of power, further consideration is given to latent conflicts as well as contradictions between the existing power holders and those whose interests are excluded (Lukes, 1974). This third dimension includes invisible power such that it describes how the powerholders encourage internalisation on the part of the powerless and how it influences their ways of thinking about what is and is not possible (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). A exercises 'power over' the ideas of B by influencing, shaping or determining B's will without B's doubt or even recognition (Lukes, 1974; Taylor, 2003).

As Taylor (2013) suggests, Lukes' three-dimensional view of power is closely associated with the structuring process of power through which social values, languages and communication of information are utilised for manipulation and the exercise of power in social relationships. To maintain domination and subordination, discourses are essential for power being transmitted through knowledge (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Likewise, Michel Foucault directs our attention to the essence of power, especially the way that power produces knowledge in dominant discourses (Ledwith, 2005). Foucault (1980) contends that no matter whether agents of power are either individuals, institutions or the state, the mechanism of knowledge itself shows the 'capillary' nature of power. This means power is seen as fluid and ubiquitous, "not something that is acquired, seized or shared; something that one holds on to

or allows to slip away" (Meade et al., 2016: 8). Power is just like innumerable capillaries in our bodies which in this case, refers to all kinds of social relationships in both our private and social lives by analogy (ibid).

Power in development practices

To a certain extent, the theoretical understanding of power provides us with a sense of who we are and how to act in the world. In development practices, these different faces of power are reflected in various contexts. For instance, when speaking of traditional development approaches, Woost (1979:249) points out that "we are still riding in a top-down vehicle of development whose wheels are greased with a vocabulary of bottom-up discourse." Even up to today, a large number of development policies still come down from the national and international level and the local level practitioners have to spend time explaining and reinforcing policies to communities rather than involving local participants and perspectives in designing and planning that is supposed to be 'for' them (Taylor, 2003). This has reflected the second dimension of power in controlling the setting of the agenda across different levels at which power is exercised. Considering Arnstein's ladder of participation, even in cases where communities are involved in design and planning processes, they rarely have a say in core criteria by which a programme is selected, evaluated and supervised (ibid). There are usually stereotypes assuming that the decisions and policies are too complex for local communities to understand and, as a result, indigenous knowledge and voices are excluded (Taylor, 2003).

This is also linked with DiMaggio and Powell's indication of three ways in which organisational practices can be entrenched: *coercive pressure* by providers of resources and cultural expectations, *mimetic pressure* that makes organisations follow others' practices and *normative pressure* from professional group's norms and values, showing how organisational knowledge and behaviours have been structured by the 'rules of the game'. (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, cited in Gilchrist and Taylor: 68-9). The third way of normative pressure, in particular, reflects the third dimension of power, showing how the rules of the game are taken for granted (Taylor, 2013). The structure of knowledge and power constitutes our identities

which later forms our behaviours (Foucault, 1978). However, in practice, the identities and voices from the poor, the marginalised and the powerless are excluded in prevailing community ideologies (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016).

Therefore, for local communities, it is essential to understand how different forms of power work and shape people's lives, communities as well as societies (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Based on that, communities' own narratives of change can be developed actively and collectively (ibid). In addition to getting the structure and system right, it is also challenging to understand various power actors from different backgrounds, which cross the boundaries of different cultures, perspectives and ideologies (Ledwith, 2005). Paulo Freire's approach of conscientiousness raising and critical pedagogy, in a way, represents effort towards structural transformation and systematic change (ibid). With the emergence and recognition of local people's self-identity, self-esteem and self-rights, further critical autonomy as well as their higher level of participation can be realised in the constitutive potential of community development (Ledwith, 2005).

3.5.2. Exercising power

Understanding different ways in which power may be exercised is fundamental for effective practices in community development. Takar (2011, cited in Meade, et al., 2016) argues that power in social studies often manifests as a capacity owned by some actors to limit the actions of the others. This type of power arguably refers to the 'power over' in most discourses and practices (Meade, et al., 2016). To better empower the powerless in the development process, other forms of power in addition to 'power over', should be better understood, namely 'power to', 'power with' and 'power within' (Rowlands, 1997).

As Gaventa (2009) points out, 'power over' emphasises the ability to coerce and to affect the actions and thoughts of the relatively powerless. Regarding Thompson's PCS model, dominance and subordination happen at all three levels - personal, cultural and structural

levels and different levels interact with each other in operation (Thompson, 2003). Embedded in the economic and political context, 'power over' is usually exercised to retain the existing power structure by people with vested interests and to prevent transformation towards more equal rights among the unprivileged (Luttrell et al., 2009). Power holders can play a dominant role mainly because of the resources they have, such as wealth, cultural conditioning and education (Taylor, 2003). The 'power over' mechanism shows a zero-sum view in which power is finite so that one actor's gaining power means the other must give up some power (Gaventa, 2009). Luttrell et al. (2009) explain that a zero-sum approach to empowerment might focus on the increasing power of decision making and negotiation for those previously without power and stopping the powerful from domination. In this sense, the concept of empowerment is somehow a paradox because if A is able to empower B, it means A has superior power than B and A can retake that power if wanted (Taylor, 2003). Since people with invested interests rarely give up power, it is often hard to avoid conflicts during the process of seeking to change power structures (Gaventa, 2009).

On the other hand, however, from a pluralist perspective, power can be positive-sum and can possibly be generated (Clegg, 1989, cited in Taylor, 2003). Clegg (1989) points out that power can be seen as fluid, accumulative, negotiable and flowing through systems, rather than being static and always held by certain groups. This is supported by Gaventa (2009:6) who reveals that power "can be used, shared or created by actors and their networks in many multiple ways." Underpinned by key concepts like mutual understanding, respect and trust, a positive-sum approach to empowerment focuses on increasing participation among different stakeholders and addressing demands based on common interests (Luttrell et al., 2009). This links back to Max Weber's (1978: 53) definition of power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which his probability rests". Since power can be generated, empowerment is not to replace one form of power with another but essentially an increase of choices (Kabeer, 2001, cited in Luttrell et al., 2009). Those who are powerful in one way may not necessarily be powerful in another and all groups share the chance of being heard at some point (Taylor,2003). Under this view, power should not restrict the rights of others or widen

social inequality (ibid).

Therefore, instead of 'power over', empowerment should seek an increase of 'power to', which refers to the capacity to act, to organise the existing hierarchies by realising the potential of rights and by increasing access to resources and control over them (Gaventa, 2009; Luttrell et al., 2009). Some may argue that 'power to' still implies a transmission of the power from A to B and a separation between the two groups (Partzsch, 2017). However, when referring to the positive-sum approach, 'power to' can actually be non-relational and one can have the power to act without structural constrains (Pitkin, 1985, cited in Partzsch, 2017). As suggested by Parson (1963, cited in Partzsch, 2017), despite structural constraints where some agencies' goals are opposed, there still exist possibilities to act indirect relational ways. For example, in environmental movements in forms of NGOs, people may be able to make campaigns spontaneously without permission or interference from others (Partzsch, 2017). At the personal and cultural level, given that every individual is defined and affected by socially constituted relations in one way or another, Parson (1963, cited in Partzsch, 2017) indicates it may be more appropriate to link 'power to' with the ability to get things done.

Another positive-sum approach to empowerment is 'power with', meaning that power is attributed to both A and B instead of solely to A or B. During the process of developing 'power with', two participants find common good and common interests for further developing shared values, solidarity and cooperation on the basis of mutual respects and mutual commitments (Thompson, 2003; Gaventa, 2006). As summarised by Gaventa (2009), 'power with' stresses an increase of power generating from collective actions and alliances. Through partnerships and collaboration, 'power with' allows the strengthening of power rather than diminishing it (Luttrell et al., 2009). This collective attribute of power is linked with Hannah Arendt's definition that maintains power "corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert… When we say of somebody that he is 'in power' we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name" (Arendt, 1970:44). Beyond the development of individual competencies and self-reliance capacities, 'power with' also addresses empowerment at the group and organisational level which requires networks and

alliance across different groups and networks (Luttrell et al., 2009).

Finally, 'power within' means gaining individual consciousness, self-identity, self-confidence and awareness, which can be seen as a pre-condition for action (Gaventa, 2009). Both 'power within' and 'power to' show a focus on personal power and belief in self-capacity to change (Thompson, 2003). But in contrast to 'power to' which addresses potential access to decision making, 'power within' places more emphasis on building self-consciousness and self-esteem to realise one's rights, strengths as well as potential, and to develop capacities to influence (Luttrell et al., 2009). In this sense, empowerment includes recognition of identity, redistribution of material, education and training for skills, capacity building for self-help and mutual assistance (Meade et al., 2016). Additionally, Meade et al. (2016) point out that "confrontations with oppressive or constraining state and market forces" are expected to happen during the process to ensure the mobilisation of communities and people to "creatively reimagine their place in the wider economy, culture and society" (p8). In some practices, even if empowerment is claimed or promised, it can be unclear what form of power is undertaken, what is a good practice to exercise power or how the pursuit of empowerment interplays with social injustice at a higher level (Reed, 2000, cited in Meade et al., 2016). Thus, 'power within' is significantly needed to increase understandings and awareness of these power dimensions.

3.6. The powercube framework

Considering the complexities of power that involve different dimensions and manifestations, interplays and interactions across different levels, and varying actors and players, the powercube model, developed by Institution of Development Studies (IDS) serves as a useful framework to analyse power in a more holistic and critical way. By looking at power from various levels, spaces and forms, the framework helps to explore the interrelationships and interactions of those aspects, allowing different actors to understand their own situations in power dynamics, and to find possibilities for movement and change (IDS, 2009). Although

visually presented as a cube (as shown in Figure 3.6.1.) with each side representing a set of power relations, categories are not fixed or static. Each dimension constantly interacts and interrelates with each other, so dimensions of the cube could be seen as a continuum or a scale which, as a whole, constantly changes power dynamics in different settings (ibid).

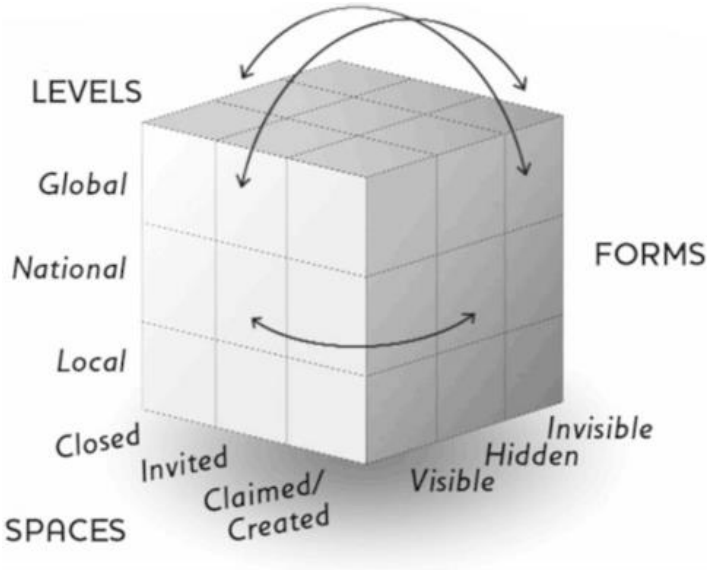


Figure 3.6.1. The powercube framework (IDS, 2009)

3.6.1. Forms of power

One dimension of the powercube focuses on different forms of power. On the basis of Lukes's three-dimensional views of power, forms of power in the framework specifically look at *visible power*, *hidden power* and *invisible power* (IDS, 2009: 9). *Visible power* refers to decision-making in formal execution bodies such as legislatures, governments or public spaces of decision-making when applied to institutions and organisations (IDS, 2009). Since those arenas seem relatively transparent, the public and the powerless amongst them are all are supposed to have access to get involved in decision making. By looking at the decision-making process, people should at least know who is in power and who loses (ibid). This comes from the first count of Lukes' three-dimensional view of power. However, Gaventa (2007) notices that relatively little attention has been paid to the excluded voices within visible power arenas and reasons for that. As it is usually assumed that participants are conscious about their rights and resources for their voices to be heard, common strategies for challenging visible power

include “lobbying, public advocacy, and mobilisation to affect what decisions are made, be they on policies, budgets, rules or procedures” (IDS, 2009: 11). That is not always the case, nevertheless. There are other ways to keep people away from getting access or becoming aware of access to decision-making arenas, which refers to hidden power and invisible power in the powercube framework.

Hidden power reflects the second dimension in Lukes’ theory of power. It focuses on the actual controls of decision makings through not only the pollical process but also organisational contexts (Luttrell and Quiroz, 2009). As explained by IDS (2009), hidden power means people with vested interests maintain their power and privileges by excluding key issues from the public arenas and by setting barriers for others to participate. The hidden form of power is closely linked to “mobilisation of bias” (IDS, 2009: 61), which means by creating barriers through policies or regulations, the rules of the games are set to be biased against certain groups or enable the dominant to take certain issues off the table (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970; Lukes, 1974, cited in IDS, 2009). With an understanding about who is setting the rules, how and why they are doing so, empowerment strategies include developing leadership and capacities to challenge, strengthening marginalised voices, building mobilisation to overcome barriers and questioning how issues are framed through all kinds of media (Luttrell and Quiroz, 2009; IDS, 2009).

However, hidden power still assumes people know what they need or want, from which invisible power may tell a further story. As mentioned in the previous discussion about the third face of power manifestation, the exercise of ‘power over’ could be done by influencing, shaping and determining wills of the powerless even without their recognition and it is the structure of power that reinforces imbalanced power relations (Lukes, 1974). Drawn from the third face of the three-dimensional power view, the powercube framework refers *invisible power* as “the ways in which awareness of one’s rights and interests are hidden through the adoption of dominating ideologies, values and forms of behaviour by relatively powerless groups themselves” (Gavanta, 2007, cited in IDS, 2009:12). Resulting from the domination of discourses, knowledge and ideology, people might be unaware of the rights they ought to have,

the need to express their thoughts as well as their capabilities to challenge their disadvantaged situations (IDS, 2009). Reflecting back to Freire's radical model in community development, he uses the term 'culture of silence' to describe people taking oppressions as natural, which is why he proposes critical pedagogy as an empowerment strategy (Freire, 1972, cited in Ledwith, 2005: 58). In addition to awareness-raising approaches from the bottom-up, other strategies to challenge invisible power include placing increased value on excluded knowledge and changing dominant discourses or stereotypes through various communication methods and participatory research (IDS, 2009).

In practice, these three forms of power interplay with each other. For example, as Gaventa (2006) illustrates, because the powerful hold power in public arenas (visible power), they are able to set the rules of games and barriers to shape policy agendas and to exclude certain groups from participation (hidden power). In the long run, the powerless, being influenced by norms and belief, take their disadvantaged situations as natural and accept the status quo without being aware of rights they should have had (invisible power). On the other hand, this means that empowerment strategies to challenge different forms of power also interrelate and one can be used to strengthen and change the other (IDS, 2009).

3.6.2. Spaces for the acting out of power

The notion of 'space' has been widely used in the literature of power, politics and policies. According to Cornwall (2002), participation is inherently spatial, and spaces for participation are not neutral but are shaped by power relations that determine the boundaries of different spaces, who is included and who is excluded on what basis and with what resources. In this sense, power is not only the capacity to control access to arenas but also abilities to define those spaces and boundaries among them, which echoes with 'invisible' forms of power (Foucault, 1978; Hayward, 1998). In the powercube framework, 'space' serves as one important dimension, referring to "the decision-making arenas and forums for action" (IDS, 2009: 15). More broadly, it also includes opportunities and channels that people can perceive

or use to shape the spaces by affecting decisions, policies and discourses (Cornwall, 2002).

Specifically, the dimension of space distinguishes how power is acted out in *closed spaces*, *invited spaces* and *claimed spaces* (IDS. 2009:14). *Closed spaces* are where the decision-making process is controlled and dominated by certain elite groups without wider participation (IDS, 2009). As Luttrell and Quiroz (2009) indicate, closed spaces usually occur in government systems or international institutions involving issues like trade, finance and military policies. Public involvement is rarely included, even though those policies could have a great impact on people's daily life (IDS, 2009). Strategies to open up closed spaces call for greater transparency of information, better forms of accountability, as well as more opportunities for relevant people's voices being heard or consulted (ibid). Comparatively, *invited spaces* involve a higher degree of participation. Due to external pressures in some societies or attempts to increase legitimacy, policymakers provide opportunities for outsiders' consultation or invite those who are previously excluded to share opinions (Luttrell and Quiroz, 2009). Although invited spaces increase chances for the powerless to make decisions within 'partnerships', the involvement is still on terms of the power holders and the participation can turn out to be tokenistic (Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Strengthening participation for the powerless requires further skills and knowledge to create 'claimed spaces' for citizen action.

As Gilchrist and Taylor (2016) point out, powerless groups can decide on their own agendas and operating practices in *claimed or self-created spaces*, within which solidarity can be developed without controls from the dominant (Luttrell and Quiroz, 2009). To a certain extent, relational power no longer exists in claimed spaces, because the relatively powerless are not invited or given power by the others, but they seek to generate power themselves (IDS, 2009). As Cornwall (2002) explains, claimed spaces are 'organic spaces' that emerge "out of sets of common concerns or identifications" (IDS, 2009: 16). These spaces are probably formed as a result of "popular mobilisations, such as around identity or issue-based concerns", where like-minded people gather together with common interests and common pursuits (ibid: 17). Compared to intuitional governance, self-created spaces may face challenges such as lacking durability, capacities and resources, so external agencies like non-governmental

organisations or foreign donors are usually involved (Cornwall, 2002). This can pose further issues about power games and relations within claimed spaces.

As indicated previously, in analysing different spaces of power, it is always important to look at who is participating and who is not. Generally speaking, those who create spaces hold more power to act within spaces (IDS, 2009). However, these spaces are not separable but exist in dynamic relationships and the boundaries among different spaces could constantly reconfigure (Cornwall, 2002). Those who are powerful in one space may not be in another (IDS, 2009). Those who are excluded from closed spaces could create their own spaces by increasing skills, knowledge and experiences or be invited into spaces due to the need of powerholders for legitimacy and transformation (ibid). There are perhaps opportunities to challenge old spaces, especially closed ones, by confronting existing power structures through ongoing social movements (Cornwall, 2002). Different empowerment strategies may allow constrained and isolated spaces to be transformed towards potential sites for engagement. Especially in the international development context, Cornwall (2002: 4) emphasises the significance of creating new spaces "between, within and beyond the domains of 'state' and 'civil society'", which leads to discussions about power exercises at different levels.

3.6.3. Levels of power

As IDS (2009) suggests, power exists and is operated across multiple layers, with the powercube framework addressing the most important ones including international levels, national levels and local levels, or alternatively the supra-national, the national and the sub-national level (p20). Since the 21st century, globalisation has created a wide range of opportunities for both state actors and non-state actors to participate at the supra-national level, and there have been some increases in chances for the marginalised groups to be engaged (Luttrell and Quiroz, 2009). Multi-national institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank have gained global agreements on some supra-national issues such as climate, gender equality and social justice, alongside which informal networks and private

sectors like NGOs and transnational corporations are largely involved (IDS, 2009). Nevertheless, many believe that the national level is still the most crucial layer for change. National-level changes focus on "parliaments, executive bodies, national political parties, courts, and the like" (IDS, 2009: 21). National governments are seen as the most official representation of citizen engagement in supra-national arenas and they hold the decision makings to implement those international treaties (ibid). Also, national governments are the most necessary foundation to facilitate the participation of people at local levels (Pawar, 2017).

Local or sub-national levels are where changes are mostly like to begin, as this is where ordinary people are able to act in everyday life (IDS, 2009). Depending on varying contexts and applications, this level can be divided into further levels such as regional levels, community levels, household levels and individual levels (ibid: 22). Again, different levels constantly interact with each other and it is important to see levels not as a fixed diagram but to link power vertically (ibid). As discussed previously, community development particularly requires the development of strategies for collective action outside communities or beyond local levels in order to get wider resources, campaigns, networks and alliances for change (Ledwith, 2005). Working with local government systems, for instance, can be an effective approach to engage people's participation at community levels and to increase power-sharing in decision-making (Pawar, 2017). Changes of power structure do not necessarily happen linearly across levels (IDS, 2009). In some cases, social movements at the grassroots level might first affect international bodies, who later give pressure to national and local governments and push changes forward at intermediate levels (ibid). Irrespective of the direction of change, vertical actions and alliances across multiple levels can always be the most influential and sustainable practice as well as the most effective strategies for change (Gaventa, 2007).

Across all three dimensions of the powercube, each single dimension should be seen as a continuum and they are closely interrelated. This has demonstrated the complexity of power as well as the significance of actions and movements across different dimensions

simultaneously, which could be challenging in practice (IDS, 2009). Transformative changes of power structure require multiple strategies on the basis of good understanding about different dimensions of power and constant reflections on the changing power relations in processes (ibid). This complexity has been demonstrated in many empirical studies. As is indicated by Gaventa (2019), the powercube framework has been applied in a wide range of fields including the analysis of power dynamics particularly related to "participation, policy and governance issues" (p120). In community power analysis, the applications of the powercube have provided new insights into both community-related issues and improvements of the framework. For instance, research in Tanzania calls for new categories of power, such as 'shadow power' of corrupted governments to address questions of livelihoods and economic empowerment (Rabé and Kamanzi, 2012: 89). Drawing on the different spaces in the powercube, Andreassen and Crawford (2015: 686-9) indicate the importance of self-reflexivity, strategic actions, the building of countervailing power, and the focused analysis of power and politics, by which right-based approaches can allow more civil society actors to participate in 'invited spaces' and to make 'closed spaces' more transparent. Volunteer tourism in this thesis enables the application of the powercube framework in a new field. As suggested by Gaventa (2019:132), it is important to recognise the complexity of the cube and to enhance its application by linking to personal experience, breaking research into parts under the framework to better understand those experiences and using visualisation as helpful presenting strategies.

3.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, a wide range of theories have been used in researching volunteer tourism, but there remain some limitations in theoretical applications in the field. First, the imbalanced research focus in volunteer tourism literature in which receiving communities have been relatively neglected is also related to the choice and use of particular theories. Apart from analysing volunteer tourism at the conceptual level, there needs to be a more bottom-up perspective in theory application and voices from local communities remain to be recovered.

Second, a more cohesive theoretical framework remainsunder-developed in seeking to study the topic in more depth by linking various components together systematically. Third, more evidence from empirical research is required to better underpin theoretical frameworks that have been applied in volunteer tourism studies.

Trying to fill in the gap in the theoretical analysis of volunteer tourism, approaches in social development and community development have been considered in this chapter. This study seeks to analyse international volunteer tourism as an example of community development interventions, aiming at providing more knowledge about actors in volunteer tourism and exploring their interactions with other players across different levels. In particular, key concepts, models and theories in community development are drawn on. Radical models and critical pedagogy address the significance of awareness-raising amongst the marginalised (Freire, 1972). Good practices of community development require not only an increase in knowledge and skills but also networks and alliance across various actors (Ledwith, 2005; Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). All those provide the study of volunteer tourism with an approach to investigate development practices from the receiving end and with possibilities for voices from receiving communities being heard. Additionally, empowerment represents a commonly claimed objective by external agencies and international organisations in community development, as well as in volunteer tourism. However, real practices imply the complex meaning and nature of participation with various focuses and layers (Pawar, 2017). Reflections on different levels of participation, different types of empowerment, collective action and power relations within the process are necessary to explore acts and interplays between different stakeholder groups in a critical way.

Finally, since the concept of power is deeply embedded in participation, empowerment and development, and since the main aim of this study is to challenge the imbalanced relationship in both international volunteer tourism practice and literature, theories of power have been considered in this chapter. Particular attention has been given to different dimensions of power and different ways in which power may be exercised. In addition to its visible and transparent forms, power can also be covert and invisible through being associated with

actions to influence, shape or determine the domination of discourses, knowledge and ideology (Lukes, 1974; Gilchrist and Taylor, 2016). Moreover, the distinction between a zero-sum or a positive-sum perspective of power can result in different power mechanisms and power relations amongst various actors involved in the exercise of power. While 'power over' emphasises the ability to coerce or influence, 'power to' and 'power within' address self-resilience and capability to act, and 'power with' stresses an increase of power generated from collective actions and partnerships (Gaventa, 2009). By looking at how different groups of people view power in practice and how they seek to exercise power, these theories of power serve to support not only identification of power relations in volunteer tourism but also an explanation of the existing structure of these power relations. Furthermore, in dealing with the complexity of power dynamics, the powercube framework is employed to support systematic analysis of power through the distinctions made across different forms, spaces and levels. This study also aims at contributing to applying the powercube in a new field and bringing in new insights into power analysis through examining international volunteer tourism.

Chapter 4 Choice of Research Methods: Methodological Considerations

4.1. Introduction

This thesis explores international volunteer tourism from a local perspective, trying to understand the complexity and power dynamics in community development. The primary research questions that this study seeks to answer are: 1) How do people from the local community view international volunteer tourism, and how does it fit with their needs and expectations? 2) What are the power relations among the three stakeholder groups in volunteer tourism and how does power shape the practices? 3) How do the dynamics of power at different levels interact and interplay, and what are implications for community development?

The choice of research methods are a reflection of the aim of the research to explore the complexity of volunteer tourism and to challenge imbalances in power relations in both practice and academia. Qualitative research was undertaken, including participant observation, in-depth interviews, a small participatory research project and action research. The previous chapters have identified that research into international development and volunteer tourism is still mostly written from the perspective of the global North (Lyons and Wearing, 2008). Considering theories of power, this domination has resulted in a considerable influence on international development interventions. Choosing qualitative research methods, to a certain extent, shows an attempt to seek for a more informative picture of volunteer tourism from the unrecovered side and to explore the depth in explanation of the social phenomenon. By doing empirical research on a Chinese volunteer tourism organisation's practice in Mathare informal settlement, in Kenya, as a case study, this research tries to recover not only perspectives from the receiving community but also China's part of the story in development and volunteer tourism. Although there are limitations of generalisation by using the case study and qualitative research methods, these approaches allow to access a richness of the data and to research volunteer tourism in-depth. More importantly, throughout the methodological journey, these qualitative methods ensure the engagement of

research objects as well as an effective reflection on power relations between research participants and the researcher.

This chapter begins with an introduction of qualitative research, discussing its philosophical basis, as well as subjectivity and reflexivity in the research process. Arguments about the generalisability of doing qualitative research are developed. Second, the chapter illustrates the reason for doing the case study, followed by discussions about using participant observation, in-depth interview methods and a small participatory research project. After that, the data analysis approaches are demonstrated, including the use of thematic analysis and the coding processes by employing the powercube framework. Next, the chapter raises a specific consideration of doing action research for the second fieldwork, explaining the reasoning of doing that and how the part of research fits in the whole study. Finally, some key research ethical issues are reflected, and the chapter closes with a summary of general challenges in research methodology.

4.2. Qualitative research

As Mckie (2002: 279) points out, the epistemological assumptions underlying qualitative research are often cited as "promoting the potential for participation and tackling the notion of power and authority between researcher and the researched." Compared with quantitative research methods that usually focus on fixed measurement and hypothesis testing, qualitative approaches are more flexible and fluid, allowing discovery of unanticipated findings and adjustments of research plans in response (Bryman, 1984). By exploring different perspectives from various viewers of 'reality', qualitative research attempts to enhance the voices and values of research participants (Mckie, 2002).

In the international development sector, some development interventions have been criticised of their inherent power relations and authoritarian implications (Ziai, 2009). Since the 1980s, there has been a transformation of emphasis on participation and civil society in

development discourse (Ziai, 2009), which is also reflected in the research focus of this thesis. By paying attention to what people from the receiving side think and what they do, qualitative research values the ways how people construct and interpret social phenomena (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). Moreover, qualitative research gives privilege to personal experiences and subjective views and it takes them as important data sources. Through the research process, the researcher and the researched get the chance to interact. In this sense, qualitative approaches also represent a form of interactive research which allows a certain degree of participation. During this process, "the complexity and multidimensionality of the local context and relationships" are addressed (McKie, 2002: 261).

Subjectivity and reflexivity

However, qualitative research is criticised for subjectivity and the lack of generalisability, especially from a positivist perspective. As Walkerdine et al. (2002) point out, research and subjectivity are created through fiction and fantasy. Because people's understanding and opinions are seen as good interpretations of the complex social world (Mason, 2012), research narratives are inevitably affected by the complex understanding of different positionings and how these positionings can possibly modify the constitution of discourse (Walkerdine et al., 2002). How research subjects produce knowledge and data, how fiction and fantasy of both researchers and the researched interact in qualitative research, all result in subjectivity (ibid).

In supplementing the degree of subjectivity, researchers need to consider and adopt 'reflexivity' when employing qualitative approaches. As Adkins (2002: 332) indicates, 'reflexivity' has been recommended as an essential practice for critical research. Apart from speaking of research participants, researchers should reflect more on themselves as well as their relationships with participants in telling research stories (Walkerdine et al., 2002). With full details and reflections on the research process, this self-reflexivity, on the one hand, is believed as a good approach to destabilise the relations among text, reader and researcher (Adkin, 2002). On the other hand, it also helps to increase sensitivity in research design and practice (Skeggs, 2002). Further consideration of power and responsibility between the researcher and participants, would be raised, and attempts like autoethnography,

participatory research and action research might be addressed (Adkins, 2002).

Irrespective of the approach to be used, a belief that the social world is constructed upon the subjective thoughts and ideas means that doing qualitative research can be seen as a journey of seeking the truth of the research subject. On this journey, good qualitative research tries to deconstruct the domination of researchers themselves and aims at challenging the structure of society's inequality and injustice (Walkerdine et al., 2002). As Walkerdine et al. say (2002:179), "the further, the deeper and more delving our questioning, the more profound that truth of the subject will be".

Generalisation

The lack of generalisability is highlighted as another limitation of doing qualitative research. As Williams (2002) points out, without generalisation, interpretive research might lose the adequate foundation for explaining a more comprehensive social world or making effective political actions happen. However, Smith (2017) argues that there might be a misunderstanding behind this type of claims since qualitative research emphasises different types of generalisability from quantitative analysis. While quantitative research usually talks about statistical generalisability, this is not applicable for qualitative research, because the ontological and epistemological assumptions behind the two types of research are quite different (Smith, 2017). With the belief that reality is multiple and can be based on the subjective knowledge, qualitative research is not aiming at the representativeness of their samples but to examine the social world in rich detail (ibid). That is not to say generalisability is not important at all for qualitative research, but generalisability is not always limited to the statistical focus. Like for this study, the purpose is not to get statistical generalisability but to understand it through other ways. The reliability of qualitative research can be increased based on different types of generalisability (Collingridge and Gantt, 2008, cited in Smith, 2017).

Specifically, Smith (2017:1) introduces four types of generalisability that are more relevant to qualitative research: *naturalistic generalisation*, *transferability*, *analytical generalisability* and

intersectional generalisability. *Naturalistic generalisability* is related to the recognition of similarities in people's personal experiences. By providing a great detail of research on participants' lives and explanations with theoretical adaptation, readers are likely to reflect on their own lives through linkages and commonalities (Smith, 2017). Through different qualitative methods, this thesis makes detailed descriptions and interpretation of a particular case about volunteer tourism practice. It aims at evoking the attention of readers to international volunteer tourism and drawing their reflections on their own lives when coming across some relevant experiences.

Likewise, but more practically, *transferability* refers to the adoption of some research findings to practice in different settings, on the basis of the epistemological assumption that knowledge can be produced through multiple subjective understandings (Smith, 2017). As Tracy (2010, cited in Smith, 2017) suggests, in addition to providing detailed descriptions, good storytelling strategies contribute to this type of generalisability since creative narratives are usually powerful approaches to resonate with people. This thesis tries to draw some of those strategies in telling narratives for depicting a more vibrant and complete picture of volunteer tourism. Reflective writing is employed as one important narrative strategy during interpretations of findings. Again, since power is a key concept for this study, my relationship with research participants, and with readers, is carefully considered in research design, choice of methods and research narratives.

Analytical generalisation focuses on the generalisation of concepts or theories rather than specific context or population (Smith, 2017). *Intersectional generalisability* addresses the production of anti-oppression and decolonized patterns, which usually occurs in community-based research and indigenous research (ibid). All these four types of generalisability emphasise certain purposes other than statistical representation. From these perspectives, both researchers and readers share a responsibility to make a piece of research more generalisable and valuable since readers' engagement plays a significant role in increasing generalisability of research (Chenail, 2010, cited in Smith, 2017). For practitioners and professionals in international development and community development sector, I hope this

research can contribute to implications for their future practice with valuable and reliable research findings.

4.3. Case study

The qualitative methodology offers a variety of research approaches to explore the social world, so there remain choices during the research process from identifying problems to developing conclusions (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). Since this research seeks to answer 'how' and 'why' types of questions about international volunteer tourism phenomenon, a case study enables in-depth empirical investigations (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) particularly emphasises the effectiveness of doing case study while the boundaries between a phenomenon and the context being blurred and unclear. Like this research, international volunteer tourism is a quite recent phenomenon that can be researched from different perspectives and disciplines. If putting it under the context of international development and community development, as discussed in the previous two chapters, it shows the extreme complexity and dynamics. Doing a case study on the topic helps to focus on its detailed operational process in practice and to retain a real-world understanding of the phenomenon (Yin, 2018).

The very first choice in undertaking case study research is to select a case that assists in studying the research topic and explore gaps in relevant theory. As Gerring (2004) explains, a simple definition of case study is "an intensive study of a single unit with an aim to generalise across a larger set of units" (p341). The selection of ideal cases should be based on the understanding of research objectives (Hamel, 1994). With the purpose of depicting and characterising social events or social groups, these units can be different people, locations, or bounded systems (Marshall and Rossman, 2016). Considering the complexity of volunteer tourism dynamics, I choose a Chinese volunteer tourism organisation's practice in Kenya as a case study.

More precisely, Yin (2018:50) points out that key types of studied cases usually include: critical, unusual, common, revelatory or longitudinal. For this research, Sub-Saharan African countries are some of the most common destinations for international volunteer tourism. As Brown and Green (2015) indicated, institutionalised voluntary labour is a more recent phenomenon in east African countries like Kenya and Tanzania, but growth in this form of labour has been rapid. According to the data from Republic of Kenya NGO Co-ordination Bureau (2011), there have been approximately 7500 NGOs registered in Kenya and around 400 new NGOs setting up on average every year, among which international organisations share a large portion. Kenya has become one of the most popular places for volunteering. Thus, selecting a volunteer tourism organisation's development practice in Kenya as a case study has its representativeness. Through the lens of one case, it helps to exemplify more general principles, qualities or issues, and to make recommendations on volunteer tourism dynamics in general.

Although there have been a certain number of studies on western organisations' development practice in African countries, it is rare to see representations of Chinese organisations, especially non-governmental ones. China's story has not yet been fully told. As explained in Chapter 2, China is currently playing an increasingly important role in international development in a way that might be different from the West. Recent decades have particularly witnessed some attempts of 'going outward' from Chinese organisations or agencies (Renwick, 2015). In this aspect, the choice of a Chinese organisation's development practice is a relatively new and unstudied area. It can be seen as an unusual case that is deviating from both traditional literature of international development studies and theoretical norms. It might also be a revelatory case that provides an opportunity to analyse a phenomenon that is not accessible previously (Yin, 2018).

After selecting the case, the next essential step is to define, understand and construct connections with the case, which is called 'bonding' the case (Yin, 2018: 5). As Stake (1995) suggests, each case is supposed to have a theme or unique life as an entity. By bonding the case, it helps to decide the scope of data and to distinguish the researching case from the

context of the phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Especially by doing a single-case study, researchers are allowed to "complete work more quickly, and in much greater depth and detail, than if the researcher were trying to cover several cases" (Payne and Payne, 2004, cited in Carey, 2012: 32). In this research, the receiving community in Mathare, Nairobi was selected as the case study site. Mathare is an informal settlement in Nairobi, also known as a slum in urban areas (Dakin, et al., 2014). Considering my personal connections in Nairobi and my previous volunteering experience, I connected with a Chinese volunteer organisation named Dream Building Service Association (DBSA) that is doing various development projects in Mathare. More detailed descriptions and explanations of both Mathare and DBSA are illustrated in Chapter 5.

Furthermore, Yin (2018: 33) indicates that 'bonding' could tighten the connection between the case, research questions and propositions including matching pattern, explanation logic and theoretical models. To define the case more clearly, my studied case is represented by the practice of DBSA in Mathare community. All relevant participants, including volunteer tourists, staff members of DBSA and people from the local community involved in these practices, are studied in terms of their thoughts and behaviours. During July to October 2018 and July to September 2019, I did two sets of fieldwork research at the site, working with DBSA. The first fieldwork was mainly to collect data related to research questions and the second one was to undertake follow-ups regarding the issues found from the research and to conduct action research implementing organisational changes. With familiarity to the case based on my previous in-practice experience, connections with relevant people, as well as a good cultural understanding of the research site, I saved a lot of time for building connections and was able to get in-depth into the case for research analysis.

Although the case study approach allows me to better explore the research topic and analyse interactions between the case and context under the limited time and resources, I am aware of the shortcomings and challenges in doing the single-case study. As Yin (2018) reveals, case studies are usually questioned by its ability for generalisation. Again, unlike experiment or quantitative research that focuses on statistical generalisation, the case study is seeking other

types of generalisability. As suggested by Lipset, Trow and Coleman (1956, cited in Yin, 2018: 21), the purpose of doing a case study is to 'particularise analysis', trying to expand and generalise theories from research. Particular strategies to increase the robustness of the case study are also recommended. Reliability of research can be increased by searching for promising theories or theoretical frameworks (Yin, 2018). Apart from that, the use of multiple resources as supporting evidence helps with a good case study research (ibid). A variety of methods and data collection tools can be employed to better understand different perspectives as well as dynamic interactions (Marshall and Rossman, 2016). In this research, qualitative methods including participant observation, in-depth interviews and participatory action research are employed as primary data collection tools. Data analysis strategies like thematic analysis are chosen to align with the case study approach. When applying each of those methods, choices and challenges arise, as discussed in the following sections.

4.4. Participant observation

Spradley (1980) indicates that we rarely think about what we are doing, and daily and cultural rules become tacit in many cases. As the case study is taking place in a real-world setting, it provides the chance for direct observations (Yin, 2018). Getting directly involved in the studied case and perceiving reality from insights of an insider are two major advantages of participant observation (ibid). For one thing, in doing participant observation for this thesis, I was not just a passive observer. I participated in actions and I undertook various roles in different fieldwork situations. Participant observation not only allowed me to fit in the community, but it enabled volunteer tourists, DBSA staff and local people and other get to know me. This was very helpful in undertaking research while I was in the field. Moreover, through participant observation, I became aware of things that were happening in everyday settings of volunteer tourism in great detail, and it gave the chance to interact with different groups of people. As Jankowski (2002) points out, data collection and data analysis happen simultaneously in participant observation, which makes internal and external validity integrated. He calls this 'face validity' which is granted by the directness that allows a

researcher to closely observe a particular object and to record what he or she sees, and this 'face validity' is closely linked with the relationship between observation and representation during the research (Jankowski,2002: 145).

However, there are challenges in data collection through participant observation. For instance, dealing with potential biases is one significant issue in considering how observed events are represented (Becker, 1958, cited in Yin, 2018). With a participant role in many studied practices, it is hard to maintain absolute neutrality. The technical capacities of researchers affect the filtering system of data gathering and everyday choices during observation (Jankowski, 2002). Subjective feelings and experiences also importantly matter in this case. Instead of keeping a distance from the observed, the participant researcher follows a commonly known phenomenon, gets profoundly involved or even becomes a part of the studied group or organisation (Yin, 2018). Sometimes, it can be challenging to decide whether to participate in or to observe certain important occasions. Choices arise when facing dilemmas in the field. As Jankowski (2002) indicates, it is their knowledge base and personal background that determines a researcher's judgements in various fieldwork situations. In this research, my Chinese cultural background and my previous experience in volunteer tourism inevitably affected choices I made in the field as well as my interpretation and judgement of what I observed. Adding the time one spends in the field and the degree of interactions between the researcher and the researched (Emerson et al., 1995, cited in Jankowski, 2002), all those factors should be recognised and taken into consideration in methodological reflection.

Furthermore, Jankowski (2002) reveals other two practical obstacles in participant observation that are quite relevant to this research. First, it matters whether the studied actors are behaving and acting in a different way to 'normal' (Jankowski, 2002: 231). In some cases, observational objects may avoid negative attributes or present themselves the way they believe the researcher wants to see (ibid). To overcome this challenge, I got permission from DBSA to conduct this research and to do participant observation on their projects in Mathare. As both a researcher and a participant, I was deeply involved in their practice during my two

fieldwork stays. I participated in the organisation's recruitment of volunteer tourists, project planning, and project implementations on the ground. On the basis of this engagement and involvement, I was able to observe directly how volunteer tourists and local people in communities reacted. As an insider of DBSA, I spent time living with and conducting projects with volunteer tourists. Doing so made volunteer tourists quite familiar with me and they were likely to act in ways that would be usual when I was absent. On the other hand, from perspectives of local community members, this approach made them see me as a representative of DBSA, even though I tried to address my role as an independent researcher on multiple occasions. I was worried they might avoid behaving negatively towards DBSA or talking about it negatively, but it came out that most of them expressed their thoughts quite openly as time went along and as they accepted me as doing good things for the community.

Another obstacle indicated by Jankowski (2002) refers to the sequencing of observations. The substance of doing participant observation includes observing, communicating and interacting with various actors in the field, but it also poses a dilemma for the researcher to record and recount properly (ibid). For instance, in my fieldwork situation, I focused on a lot of meetings, discussions as well as activities, and I interacted quite often with different actors. Sometimes it was hard to take notes while observing and participating, let alone while I was also playing the role as a practitioner. In addition, Spradley (1980) notices that the complexity of social phenomena requires researchers to think beyond conscious awareness. This means it is important not only to take records on what is happening in an everyday setting but also to constantly reflect on those practices. To address these difficulties, I sorted out field notes every day, including texts, diaries and pictures. I tried to record as much detail from daily observation as possible seeking to remember thoughts, questions and reflections in the moment.

There are never simple answers to solve such issues. Like Jankowski (2002) suggests, as an approach which is based upon flexibility towards continuously developing situations in the field, participant observation "presents an irrational system full of ambiguity for systematic comparability and replication" (p148). This echoes the previous discussion about the

subjectivity of qualitative research. Based on the epistemological assumption that the social world could be interpreted and represented by subjective thoughts and communicative behaviours, the essence of conducting qualitative research involves the researcher's direct encounters with the real-world (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). More importantly, the way people see, perceive, construct, interpret and give meaning to those social events and experiences matters (ibid). Direct engagement of participant observation provides opportunities to investigate complex relationships between words and behaviours of people (Hammersley, 1992). Moreover, it allows exploration of "how people are embedded in larger social and cultural contexts and how, in turn, they actively participate in shaping the worlds they inhabit" (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002: 203). During the process, subjective meanings are established and given by the researched to their own or other actor's actions (Jankowski, 2002). Instead of thinking participant observation may produce biases, it can just be seen as a part of understanding and constructing social reality (Jankowski, 2002).

4.5. In-depth interviews

Apart from participant observation, multiple choices arose in doing in-depth interviews. As Mason (2012) indicates, qualitative research helps to explore various dimensions of social reality. Instead of focusing on objective events or facts, interviews give us information about the ways people construct and interpret things (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). With the recognition of the complexity of the social world and constant changes within it, interviews provide opportunities to understand individuals' life experience and the way they interpret it at the micro-level (ibid). Through interviews, individuals' experiences are substantially taken into account through data collection (Mason, 2012). People's understanding and views of the complex social world shape and, in return, are shaped by a larger-scale landscape and macro-level social transformations (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). In my research, I have formulated the research questions from both literature and theories to understanding international volunteer tourism from the perspectives of local communities and focusing on interactions across different stakeholders. In-depth interviews allowed me to examine what people think

and say about volunteer tourism, and to learn about their experiences in depth (King and Horrocks, 2010).

Groups	Demographics[6]
Volunteer tourists	• 4 males; 10 females • 14 in total[7] • Age from 22 to 30 (by the year 2018)
Staff members of DBSA	4 in total • 3 males; 1 female • 3 Chinese; 1 Kenyan
Local community members	30 in total • 20 males; 10 females • 19 school principals/directors[8] • 5 school teachers • 4 local youth • 2 local community-based-organisation workers

Table 4.5.1. Overview of the interview sample

As Gerson and Horowitz (2002) suggest, an appropriate sampling strategy for interviewing is essential to answer research questions effectively. The sample of interviews in this study was drawn from three groups of people, who are three main stakeholders in volunteer tourism (McGreen, 2012): volunteer tourists, the staff from the organisation, and people from the receiving community. Interviews were undertaken mainly in the first fieldwork research. In undertaking a case study of the Chinese organisation's practice in the receiving community, the total number of targeted people itself is relatively small. Eventually, as Table 4.5.1. shows, the sample included 14 volunteer tourists from DBSA; all 4 staff members working for DBSA; and 30 local people from the community who were involved to lesser or greater extents in DBSA's projects.

Since DBSA's projects mainly engage with community schools, such local interviewees were

[6] It should be noted that I did not ask interviewees in this research to self-identify in terms of any diversity characteristics such as ability/disability, gender identity, as this did not seem appropriate.

[7] There were 16 volunteer tourists in total in 2018. Interviews cannot be undertaken for the other two because they left the project earlier for personal reasons.

[8] The difference between a school principal and a school director is that a school director is usually the owner of the school, but a school principal is someone who makes the executive decisions that govern and manage the school. In some cases, the school director and the school principal is the same person. In other cases, the roles are undertaken by different people.

mostly teachers or school principals. These interviewees cannot be considered as representative of Mathare residents, considering that school staff usually held better education qualifications than most people who live in the community. Nevertheless, as DBSA's projects mainly engage with community schools, such local interviewees were those who worked most closely with DBSA and had the most direct experience with DBSA. The sample covered all community schools that have partnerships with DBSA in at least one project plus some youths involved in specific projects of DBSA. It should also be noted that more male local interviewees than females were approached for the interview, which showed that men might typically have more educational opportunities than women in Mathare. Interviews with local people and the local staff members were undertaken in English, and interviews with Chinese volunteer tourists as well as Chinese staff members of DBSA were taken in Chinese. The more specific demographics of the interview sample can be found in Table 4.5.1.

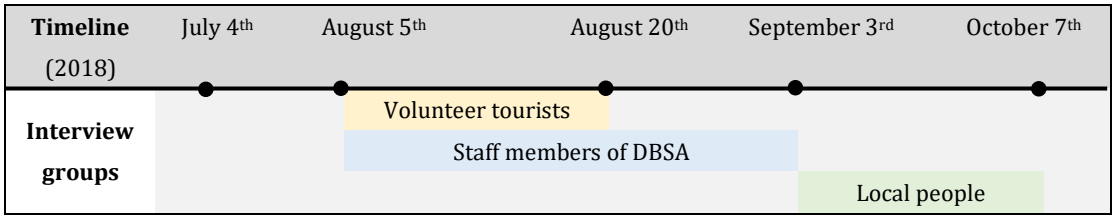


Table 4.5.2. Timeline of interviews

As illustrated in Table 4.5.2, I undertook interviews with volunteer tourists and staff members at the end of their involvement in projects. After the completion of volunteer tourism projects, I also asked some additional questions to the staff. The interviews with local people were undertaken after all volunteer tourists left. The reason for doing this was out of concern that research participants from the receiving community might find it sensitive to talk about volunteer tourists during their stay as some of my interview questions involve their experience of power relations in the projects. In this way, the timing of interviews was designed to help increase the reliability of data by minimising the external influences but also allowing recollection of what happened immediately after the projects ceased.

In addition to the sampling and time planning, there are some other challenges in designing interview research. The primary one is to build up a good relationship with research

participants. As suggested by Gerson and Horowitz (2002), good interviews should guide respondents to work through the maze of their own lives and to depict a robust picture of it within a limited time. Researchers require both a range of emotions and skills in doing so, including sympathy, engagement, concentration and commitment (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). On top of that, mutual trust and understanding between the interviewer and interviewees are essential (ibid). Personal bonds can also help the researcher and the researched work together to illuminate the issues and to construct meaningful knowledge (Mason, 2012). Therefore, during my fieldwork research, I only started interviews after I spent around one month living with volunteer tourists, interacting with the locals and after the interviewees became familiar with me. Comfortable spaces were carefully chosen to conduct interviews such as the intern house for volunteer tourists and school offices for local participants.

Moreover, interview strategies matter for effective research. Technically, pre-planned and pre-constructed interview questions are helpful to gather information in a manageable way and to maintain consistency across varying research participants for later data analysis (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). On the other hand, it is also necessary to leave room to discover the unexpected and to make adjustments during interviewing processes. In summary, Gerson and Horowitz (2002) point out that well-organised interview questions are to "enhance full disclosure in order to get to know the person as a unified whole" (p205). Hence, semi-structured interviews were utilised in this study. Questions were mostly open-end so as to better capture different perspectives. An interview guide was prepared in advance based on reviews of literature and theories as well as the understanding of the local situation. Interviews for volunteer tourists and staff members included questions about their expectations and experiences, aims and visions, thoughts and ideas, and their knowledge of receiving communities. Likewise, interviewing questions for local people from the receiving community focused on their experiences in volunteer tourism, but also their self-identity and desires, their pays and gains, and issues they want to improve and their suggestions. A more specific interview guide can be found in Appendix 1. Some interviews might inevitably provide information in more detail or greater insights while others may not. Nevertheless, the

complexity of the social world can never be revealed in any single interview or interviews dominated by researchers. As indicated by Gerson and Horowitz (2002), only by adding all those individual stories together can a final collective narrative be told and understood.

An interviewing process is led by the researcher, helping the researched to travel the unknown, to rework experiences and to explore particular intricacies (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). In the end, the last choice the researcher has to learn about is how to say good-bye to the respondents properly. The whole journey, as Gerson and Horowitz (2002: 209) reveals, requires "energy, courage, persistence, confidence and unassailable commitment" from researchers. When looking back, doing fieldwork using qualitative approaches like participant observations and in-depth interviews became as much an art as a science (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). The way how the researcher behaves with professional capabilities and personal integrities affect how the social world is studied and constructed. Like Mason (2012:231) says, "the types of questions an interviewer asks, and the way they listen to and interpret the answers they given, undoubtedly help to shape the nature of the knowledge produced." For me, this is also the journey of life lessons.

4.6. Participatory research

As explained previously and deeply connected to the concept of power, this research aims at changing the imbalanced power relation and recovering the voices from the marginalised in volunteer tourism. The study intends to be 'with' and 'for' the research participants, especially those from the receiving community, instead of undertaking research 'on' them. Therefore, when it comes to the representation of methodological choices, consideration of the relationship between the researcher and the researched is of great importance. Trying to share more power with local people, participatory action research was identified as one important research method. According to Banks and Miller (2019:1), "participatory research involves people whose lives are the subject of study in some or all aspects of research design, process, dissemination and impact, with a focus on generating socially just change". The

epistemology of participatory action research (PAR) assumes that knowledge is co-produced by groups of people in certain historical and social contexts (Kindon, et al., 2007). Those who are systematically excluded and marginalised are specially believed to have significant wisdom to contribute (ibid). Thus, participatory action research is also seen as an approach to challenge the hegemony of knowledge production (ibid).

As Banks and Miller (2019) point out, PAR is closely linked with community development and activism practised in the international development sector. Paulo Freire's (1972) critical pedagogy of community development mentioned in Chapter 3 develops community-based research to promote people's participation in knowledge production. His work is commonly acknowledged as one origin of PAR. To a certain extent, PAR is more about an orientation to the world than a research method because it holds a belief that knowledge is power, and knowledge can be gained through the various life experience of ordinary people (Foucault, 1979; Banks and Miller, 2019). PAR researchers usually have a participatory worldview. They emphasise the possibility of diverse interpretations of social phenomena, which could be constructed by both researchers and participants (Greenwood and Levin, 1998, cited in Kindon, et al., 2007). If thinking of the powercube framework, participatory action research opens up spaces of knowledge generation to the researched, which in the case of this research, refers to those from the receiving community. Through methodological innovation, research participants are invited into those spaces that used to be closed or even invisible to them. On the basis of that, collective actions among them can result (Kindon, et al., 2007).

Participatory research was employed in this study because I hoped that local participants could have more chance to express their thoughts and ideas about community issues, as well as their needs and their expectations as to how problems could be solved. Apart from participant observation and in-depth interview approaches mentioned above, I conducted several workshops by using the participatory element in the fieldwork. Through dialogues, discussions and debates, on the one hand, local people got a chance to learn skills and reflect on their own situation. This experience might have a positive impact on them and attract more resources if it can be shared with a wider range of audiences. On the other hand, they also

generated valuable knowledge about community issues from perspectives of the receiving end. This is something that I, as an outsider, was not able to reach otherwise.

As suggested by Kindon, et al. (2007), participatory action research values the research process as much as the result. The process is usually a recursive research cycle involving steps of planning, acting, recording and reflecting (ibid). Equality across all research contributors is a key principle, together with adaptation to specific community issues and needs (Reason and Bradbury, 2006). Whether using qualitative or quantitative approaches, the method is supposed to be participatory, empowering, educational and preferably be able to lead to actions and changes in the end (ibid). Kindon, et al. (2007) further point out that participatory techniques commonly focus on shared learning and shared knowledge. Various hands-on activities, such as dialogue, storytelling and art-based approaches, can be employed to generate collective information (ibid). Data generated by participants in workshops of this participatory project, for instance, included diagrams, pictures as well as their discussions throughout the project. The data from the workshops was later used to compare with what DBSA thought about so as to improve their services and practices.

In real practice, the level of participation of research participants might vary significantly. It is always important to be aware of 'Faux PAR' that refers to a veneer of participation with little real power-sharing (ibid). Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation, for example, can be applied to recognise such situations and to constantly reflect on power relations between professionals and community participants. On the other hand, since PAR breaks the monopoly of professionals and researchers in terms of identifying research questions and controlling research designs, its flexibility and uncertainty for constant changes also pose a great challenge of doing research (Kindon, et al., 2007). Thus, considering the limited capability, time and resources that I was subject to, it is acknowledged that this study did not use a fully participatory action research method but approaches with participatory components. Some parts of the participatory research project were communicated and negotiated with the research participants like specific topics they wished to explore. Still, some others were pre-determined by me such as research methods and research schedules.

Since the practice of DBSA in Mathare community was selected as the case study for this research and the target groups of DBSA's projects include all youth and children in Mathare, learning about needs and desires of those target groups was important. Therefore, research participants in the participatory dialogical workshops were recruited from the youth in Mathare. Specifically, I cooperated with a local organisation in Mathare, the Mwelu Foundation, that usually organises creative activities and learning for young people from the community. After an information session in which it was explained who I am, what kind of research I was undertaking and what the dialogical workshops were about, twenty young people registered to take part in the project (9 girls and 11 boys, aged from 14 to 19 years old). I ran three workshops at the site of Mwelu Foundation on a weekly basis from 9th August 2018 onwards.

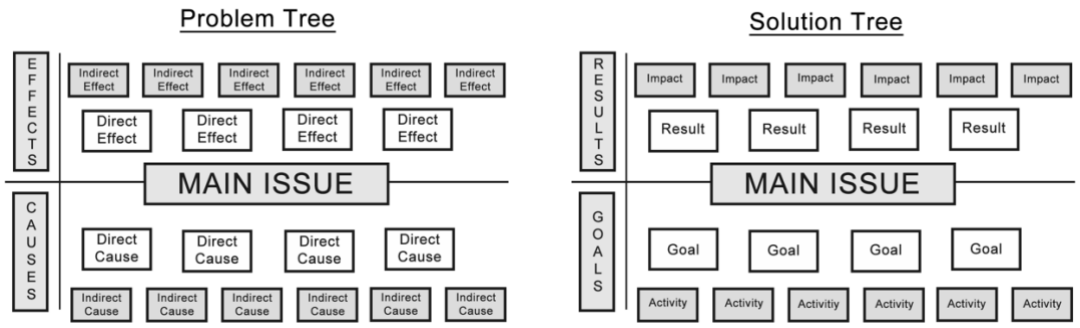


Figure 4.6.1.Diagrams used in the participatory research project

In the first workshop, I discussed with participants about the project and we got the chance to know each other. I introduced some basic skills of doing research, the research process, different research approaches, research techniques and research ethics. The twenty participants formed into four groups and each group identified one community issue they were concerned about and wished to discuss further. After discussions and voting, the topics they chose included: school fees, talent facilities, water, garbage. In the following two workshops, I organised some dialogical activities for them to discuss their issues and to exchange thoughts between groups. For instance, as Figure 4.6.1. shows, I designed diagrams of a 'problem tree' structure and a 'solution tree' structure to help participants explore topics they had chosen in more depth. As workshops were undertaken on a weekly basis, during

break times, participants were provided with cameras to collect evidence in the community as an approach to express their experiences and to support their arguments. In the end, each group did a small presentation followed by questions and answers from the others as a closure activity of the project.

Throughout the research process, I attempted to practice inner reflexivity. My role in the workshops was largely as a facilitator. More than anything that I may have specifically sought, I was interested in learning from others' valued knowledge and discussing what the research participants cared about. As Groot and Abma (2019) suggest, mutual respect and the mutual trust in everyone's capabilities are central to such partnership relationships between the researcher and participants.

4.7. Data analysis

After data collection, the analysis and interpretation of data become an essential task, during which process field notes, conversational interviews and other types of data are transformed into coherent and meaningful arguments and findings (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). As Mason (2012) suggests, it is necessary to avoid imposing researchers' own ideas and attitudes but to deal with the data in a sensitive and meaningful way during the interpretation. In this study, thematic analysis was used as the main approach and the research data was open coded by Nvivo.

4.7.1. Thematic analysis

Understanding thematic analysis

Daly, et al. (1997, cited in Boyatzis, 1998) explain thematic analysis as a process of encoding qualitative data, using themes to describe and interpret social phenomena. In Boyatzis's words, it is a way of 'seeing' the moment (understanding and recognition), 'seeing it as something' (encoding and deconstruction) and preceding interpretation (constructing)

(Boyatzis, 1998: 4). He further defines a theme as "a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (ibid: 161). It can be identified at both the manifest level where information can be directly observed in the data and at the latent level, where the underlying phenomenon might be hidden (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis was chosen for my research not only because it is one of the most common approaches to encoding qualitative data, but it is a systematic means to interpret different types of qualitative information (ibid). The type of analysis strategy, in turn, contributes to increasing the reliability and sensitivity in understanding the complex research topic and provides important insights to research (ibid).

Considering the philosophical basis of thematic analysis, it is in line with Schutz's philosophical framework of social phenomena. According to Schutz (1967), studying social phenomena involves two sense of *verstehen*. The first refers to the process of how people make sense of social phenomena, and the second involves the generation of different ideas to interpret and describe those social phenomena (ibid). Since both constructs need to be grounded in the subjective meaning of human actions, Schutz (1967, cited in Fereday and Cochrane, 2006: 3) further proposed three essential postulates for the process of thematic analysis: *logical consistency*, *subjective interpretation* and *adequacy*. As explained by Fereday and Cochrane (2006), the first postulate of *logical consistency* is about a structural consideration in the whole research project that involves "in-depth planning, careful attention to the phenomenon under study, and productive useful results" (p3). The second postulate, *subjective interpretation*, requires preserving participants' subjective views properly and acknowledging the context within which the social phenomena are studied (Horsfall et al., 2001; Leiniger, 1994). This thesis takes both postulates into account in data analysis, as the research employs several qualitative research methods and different sample groups are involved. Using thematic analysis helps to communicate with different types of data from varying objects and to keep consistency throughout the analysis process.

Different types of thematic analysis approaches

The third postulate of *adequacy* requires consistency between the constructs of the researcher and the primary data resources (Schutz, 1973). This could be affected by using different types of thematic analysis approaches. According to Boyatzis (1998), a code means the pattern to process thematic analysis. A code can be a list of themes with labels and definitions, a model with themes and related indicators, or a form between the two (ibid). Followed by the pattern, a code helps to organise the description of data and to interpret the studied phenomenon (ibid). This process is called coding. As described by Coffey and Atkinson (1996, cited in Boyatzis, 1998: 27), "coding can be thought about as a way of relating our data to our ideas about these data". Specifically, there are three different approaches to coding and developing themes: a) theory-driven, b) prior-data- or prior-research-driven, and c) data-driven (Boyatzis, 1998: 29). While the data-driven approach is considered as inductive, the other two ways are more deductive (ibid).

Sometimes, the theory-driven approach and the prior-data or prior-research driven approach can be seen as a continuum that starts from existing theories or knowledge and develops thematic codes consistent with these theories or knowledge (Boyatzis, 1998). However, as themes and elements of the code are drawn from existing research, theories or theoretical frameworks, deductive approaches might face the uncertainty and ambiguity in the analysis and might only include anticipated results or anticipated meanings of the context (Boyatzis, 1998). Highly dependent on theoretical sensitivity, the theory-driven approach requires a choice of the appropriate theories to underpin the research analysis effectively (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, cited in Boyatzis, 1998). The data-driven approach, on the other hand, is more likely to involve a complete view of the data because it deals with raw information directly and is more sensitive to the context (Boyatzis, 1998). This might enable the data-driven approach to have a greater likelihood of achieving reliability (ibid). Whichever analysis approach is chosen, it requires the capability of the researcher to keep the sensitivity about what the data tells (ibid).

4.7.2. Approaches employed in this thesis

This research has multiple units of analysis, including different groups of people, different types of data, and different languages of data (English and Chinese). Therefore, the theory-driven approach was utilised to assist with identifying research-driven codes, as it could help me to sort out the wide range of data and to understand the complexity of the topic in a strategic way. Key concepts in the community development field and the powercube framework were chosen as important insights to develop thematic codes (Boyatzis, 1998). Being aware of the limitations of using the deductive approaches, a hybrid approach was adopted with inductive analysis also allowing themes to emerge directly from the data and to discover what data might be saying. In undertaking a hybrid approach, the data analysis was split into two stages (as shown in Table 4.7.1).

First Stage	- Prior-research-driven analysis and data-driven analysis - Explore the complexity of international volunteer tourism	
Second Stage	- Theory-driven analysis - Explore the power relations and interplays across different stakeholder groups in volunteer tourism	
	Phase I	- Answer 'what' types of questions; - Look at 'power over', 'power to', 'power with', and 'power within'.
	Phase II	- Answer 'how' and 'why' types of questions; - Adapt the powercube framework, looking at power in different forms, spaces and levels.

Table 4.7.1. Stages and phases of data analysis

Data-driven approaches to coding

At the first stage, the complexity of international volunteer tourism was examined by applying frameworks that have been previously utilised in researching the topic. Main concepts and theories from community development and international development were employed, such as empowerment, involvement, level of participation, respect and understanding, justice and equality. The framework from volunteer tourism studies that look at the potential negative impacts indicated by Guttentag (2009) was taken into account. For example, this thesis specifically compared the desires and expectations of the receiving community with the

practice of DBSA. The relationships between local community members and volunteer tourists were investigated, and the participation of local people in the organisation's projects was analysed. Those themes were developed as codes and applied to the data overall. As research data was drawn from different methods including participant observation, interviews, and participatory workshops, triangulation of data was undertaken as a strategy to understand the topic and to inform the research findings more holistically (Mathison, 1988).

After analysis by the prior-research-driven approach, the data was explored again inductively to see if other themes or findings emerge as a supplement for the uncovered (Boyatzis, 1998). To create appropriate codes, data from particular samples of interviewees were used as subsamples. Themes were identified in sub-samples and compared across sub-samples. Developed codes were then applied to the remaining data (ibid). For instance, when looking at interview samples from volunteer tourists, the research found 'getting out of the slum' was a theme constantly arose when they were talking about community issues. This theme was then applied in all interview data of volunteer tourists and DBSA staff members.

Additionally, as interview data from local people was in English and the rest are in Chinese, two parts of data were looked separately but both coded in English. However, there was awareness that themes occurred in English could be different from those in the Chinese part of data. When comparing with the interview samples of local people, it came out the important theme of 'getting out of the slum' identified in the Chinese interview samples did not appear as much. By contrast, local people tended to address improving physical conditions in the slum to a greater extent. Another example was about the relationship between the Chinese group and the local community. When the 'relationship' became an important theme that emerged from data, how two groups (the Chinese and the locals) defined and viewed this relationship were quite different from each other. Thus, further in-depth analysis led to the creation of sub-themes such as 'host-guest', 'giver-receiver', 'mistrust' and 'symbiotic'. As suggested by Boyatzis (1998), it is crucial to maintain consistency of judgement during the process of labelling, coding and interpretation. Hence, the codes were compared with each other constantly as the analysis went along to check how they linked with each other or if they

could be integrated.

Theory-driven approaches to coding

The second stage of the analysis primarily used a theory-driven approach. The power relations and interplays across different stakeholder groups in volunteer tourism were explored. The research questions investigated in this phase included the 'what' type questions like 'what is the power relation between the two parties', as well as the 'why'/ 'how' types of questions such as 'why do these kinds of power relations occur', 'how do the relationships come into being', and 'how can they possibly be improved'. To better answer those different types of questions, two particular phases of data analysis were undertaken.

As explained by Boyatzis (1998), the theory-driven approach generates coding from theories and previous studies in the field. After choosing appropriate theories and frameworks, the code is supposed to be reviewed and rewritten to make it applicable for the data and to determine the reliability of the analysis (ibid). In doing so, Fereday and Cochrane (2006) suggest the need to use a template or a codebook to integrate a number of codes, so the data can be well organised, and the richness of the data can be well captured before further interpretation and analysis. In particular, Boyatzis (1998) outlines that good thematic code should have five elements as listed in Table 4.7.2.

1) a label;
2) a definition of what the theme concerns;
3) a description of how to know when the theme occurs;
4) a description of any qualification or exclusions to the identification of the theme;
5) examples, both positive and negative, to eliminate possible confusion when looking for the theme.

Table 4.7.2. Five elements for good thematic coding (Boyatzis, 1998: 31)

- ***Phase I***

In this study, Phase I mainly looked at 'what' type of questions by using theories of power for analysis. The sample was divided into the group of the Chinese organisation side (including DBSA staff members and Chinese volunteer tourists) and the group of the local community

side. Their expectations/claims (what they say about or what they say they want) were differentiated from the practices in reality (what they say is done) in dealing with the interview data and the field notes. In terms of the code, four themes (power over, power to, power with, power within) were derived from theories of power. Accordingly, a codebook for was made as Table 4.7.3. and Table 4.7.4. show.

	CLAIMED/EXPECTED		**REALITY**	
	Organisation	Local community	Organisation	Local community
POWER OVER				
POWER TO				
POWER WITH				
POWER WITHIN				

Table 4.7.3. Phase I: the framework for coding by using theories of power

Code 1	
Label	**Power over**
Definition	To influence and coerce
Description	People take actions to affect the actions and thoughts of others through discourses and holding superior positions in the hierarchy, underlying resources and controlling.
Code 2	
Label	**Power to**
Definition	To act, organise and change the existing hierarchies
Description	People have the individual capacity to take action and gain opportunities to access the potential of rights or voice.
Code 3	
Label	**Power with**
Definition	To increase self-confidence and capacity to influence and take actions by collective action and partnerships
Description	Different stakeholders achieve synergy through partnerships and collaborations with each other or through the process of collective actions and alliance building.
Code 4	
Label	**Power within**
Definition	To have the individual consciousness of self as a person who has the capacity to influence and act for change.
Description	People have awareness, self-identity, confidence, and desires for change.

Table 4.7.4. Phase I: codes derived from theories of power
(Rowland, 1997; Kabeer, 2001; VeneKlasen and Miller, 2002; Gaventa, 2007)

- ***Phase II***

In Phase II, reasons and solutions in relation to the findings that emerged from the first phase of data analysis were sought by using the powercube framework. For example, considering the claims of the Chinese organisation and the expectations of the local community side, a symbiotic relationship between the two parties was identified. Nevertheless, there was also inconsistencies between the claims or expectations of 'empowerment' and the 'power over' mechanism in practice. The reasons why that happened were investigated. Suggestions were made on how the inconsistency could possibly be overcome and how a positive-sum partnership could be realised. Codes on the basis of the powercube framework were created for this phase's data analysis. As pictured in Figure 4.7.1 and as explained in Table 4.7.5. and 4.7.6., power at different levels, forms and spaces were analysed. The powercube framework was useful for data analysis at this stage as it allowed the use of a visualised diagram to map out different exercises, relationships, and forces of power among different stakeholders (IDS, 2009). Possibilities for movement and change were explored (ibid).

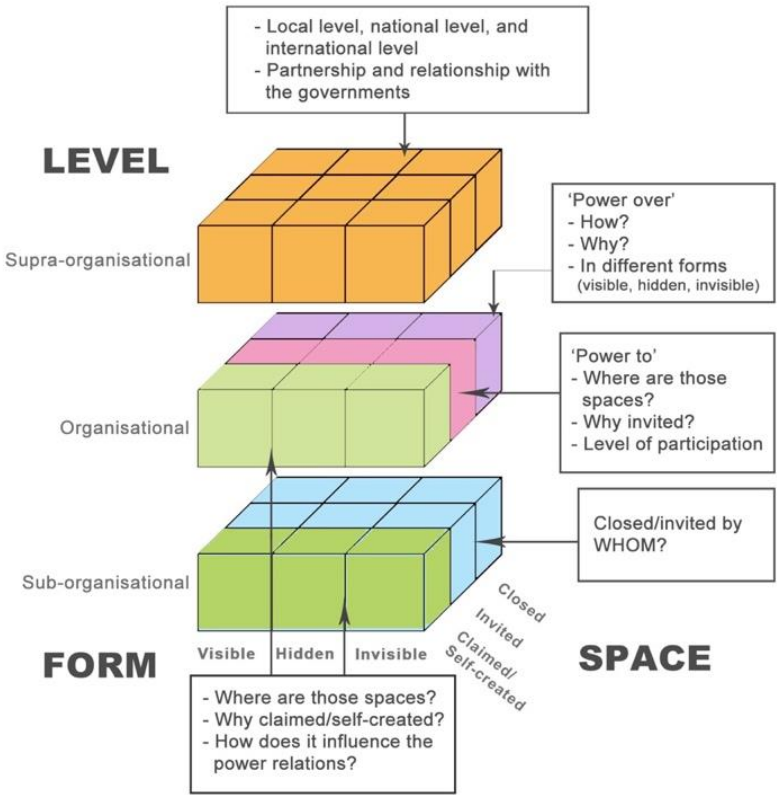


Figure 4.7.1. Adapted version of the powercube framework (IDS, 2009)

Closed space	Spaces that are fully controlled by a certain group of people.
Invited space	Spaces where power holders invite others/outsiders to share opinions.
Claimed/Self-created space	The less powerful people develop their own power without control from current power holders or even constrain the power of them in a way.

Table 4.7.5. Different spaces in powercube framework (IDS, 2009: 14-17)

Visible	Decision-making arenas that are open to the others, or at least are transparent to people to know who maintains the power.
Hidden	The vested interests of the dominant group are hidden by excluding the key issues from the public arena to maintain the power and privileges of them.
Invisible	Less powerful people have no awareness of their rights and interests through the adoption of dominating exacerbated ideologies, values and forms of behaviour by relatively powerless groups themselves.

Table 4.7.6. Different forms of power in the powercube framework (IDS, 2009: 9-13)

In terms of the level, power is usually recognised at multiple layers spanning global, national and local levels. However, as this approach can be applied equally to alternative levels according to the research questions (IDS, 2009), I utilised modified levels of power to encompass a 'super-organisational level', an 'organisational level' and a 'sub-organisational level' in this framework:

1. **Supra-organisational level.** This refers to all levels above the Chinese organisation-local community relationship, including the national level (relationships with and policy influences from the governments), and international level (global engagement and international relations between the two countries).
2. **Organisational level.** This is the core level to analyse the power relations among and between the organisation, volunteer tourists and local people. Specific practices and actions of the Chinese organisation's projects, volunteer tourists' behaviours and local people's experiences and reactions were carefully investigated with the analysis of different spaces (closed, invited and self-created) and different forms (visible, hidden, invisible) of power.
3. **Sub-organisational level.** At this level, I mainly examined the power and interactions among the local people themselves within the community, especially

making a comparison between the core group of the Chinese organisations' projects and the peripheral group that was excluded from the benefits.

Data analysis at Phase I was the foundation of Phase II. Each unit from Phase I was put into different cubes of the framework at Phase II to better understand the power dynamics in practice. The two stages of analysis were not separated, but the process was more like a circle to constantly check back and forward between the two. As Figure 4.7.1 shows, the data was coded into different levels according to the definition and description of each theme. At the organisational level, in particular, different spaces and forms of power were analysed for further explanation and exploration. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the powercube is not static but evolving and dynamic, and each dimension is constantly interrelating with the other (IDS, 2009). The interactions between different spaces, forms and levels were examined based on the understanding of each dimension with its multiple faces (ibid). For example, national policies at the supra-organisational level had an influence on the practice at the organisation's level. Power relations at the organisation's level between the organisation and certain local groups shaped the power dynamics at the sub-organisational level within the community. Further discussion of such empirical findings can be found later in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

4.8. Action research

After my first fieldwork research in Kenya and data analysis, I identified some key issues in my findings. For example, I highlighted a mismatch between the intentions of the Chinese organisation (together with volunteer tourists) and expectations of the receiving community. Some organisational limitations of DBSA were identified, including the lack of formal processes and transparent communication systems, which had resulted in unequal power relations with local community members. Those problems were practical dilemmas that both DBSA and the receiving community were experiencing. Thus, I decided to go back to the field and conduct research with an action component, and my role changed from an academic researcher to a practitioner in the second field trip.

It is generally believed that the term 'action research' was first introduced by Kurt Lewin. He saw action research as a means of knowledge production about the social system, while also seeking to change this system (Lewin, 1946, cited in Hart and Bond, 1995). Linking to the discussions about participatory research previously, some scholars distinguish action research from participatory research. They suggest action research is more focusing on social actions and social changes by increasing the voices from the marginalised and transforming power inequality in a wide range of social contexts (Kindon, et al., 2007). After Lewin, many other types of action research were introduced. Hart and Bond (1995:37-8) indicate seven criteria to distinguish different types of action research: educative based, individuals in groups based, problems focused, change intervention focused, improvement and involvement focused, cyclic processes focused, research relationship based. Under each parameter, there are four types of further application: experimental, organisational, professionalising and empowering (Hart and Bond, 1995:39). In my second fieldwork doing the action research, I particularly used problem-focused, change-intervention-focused and improvement-and-involvement focused approaches as explained in Table 4.8.1, trying to implement some organisational changes. More detailed discussions and reflections on these practices will be explained in Chapter 8.

Problem focus	- Problem-sensing action research, problems emerge from daily practices and participants' experiences; - Researcher involved in problem situation and resolution directly with other participants.
Change intervention	- Action research with designed and planned interventions; - Taking various forms of empowerment, including building alliances, opening up lines of communication and reframing issues.
Improvement and involvement	- Linking closely with 'cyclic process'; - Improvements with renegotiation with increased understanding and evaluation of action.

Table 4.8.1. Three action research approaches (Hart and Bond, 1995: 52-54)

While recognising that some action researchers may take more positivist approaches (Hart and Bond, 1995), I mainly follow the model of action research put forward by Stringer (2007) in this thesis. According to the definition given by Stringer (2007:1), "action research is a

systematic approach to investigation that enables people to find effective solutions to problems they confront in their everyday lives." Instead of finding a generalisable explanation of social phenomena, action research focuses on specific cases and aims at finding specific solutions with a collaboration between academic researchers and practitioners (Stringer, 2007). Theories behind this model of action research are quite different from positivistic science because it is based on the belief that the nature of the social world is not a fixed reality but a constantly changing and evolving dynamic (ibid). People's interactions, activities and actions can modify the social world in various ways (ibid). In essence, "humans are, to a large extent, what they define themselves to be in any given situation" (Stringer, 2007:193). Grounded in a qualitative research paradigm, the purpose of action research as Stringer's model is to get a better understanding about an issue and to learn about how things are happening, or even to further realise human development through collaborations among relevant stakeholders.

Furthermore, action research aims to "enable us to 're-see' the world or see through taken-for-guaranteed conceptual categories that are oppressive or no longer helpful" (Reason and Bradbury, 2006: 451, cited in Stringer, 2007). In this sense, Stringer's model of action research is more or less problem-focused and change-intervention-focused when referring to Hart and Bond's (1995) typology. To realise a transformation from rational social management to more structural change, problems are supposed to be identified in practice and in process-led empowerment from the bottom-up (Hart and Bond, 1995). Solutions to specific problems and actions for change are emphasised. Various forms of interventions can include developing partnerships, creating communication opportunities and reframing issues (ibid: 39). From this point of view, for researchers who wish to investigate social phenomena and human affairs, their expertise and their access to 'scientific knowledge' for social issues have a great limitation (ibid). As Stringer (2007:193) points out, "scientific knowledge is partial, incomplete, and reductionist". It can never provide a totally comprehensive explanation of social reality (ibid). A best practice for a social problem never exists in a 'scientific' formulation. Instead, all groups should speak in their own voices and those 'other voices' should be accepted into authenticity and legitimacy (Huyssens, 1986, cited in Stringer,

2007:193).

Drawing on the methodological literature on action research helps to illuminate the aims and meanings of my second field trip in acting as a practitioner. For one thing, accepting diverse perspectives of different people was a basis to investigate relevant problems and to find solutions in a collaborative way (Stringer, 2007). Based on data collected in the first fieldwork from observations, interviews and the participatory research project as well as interactions with local people, I got the chance to understand the field, to identify problems and to listen to people's suggestions. Knowledge and expertise were drawn from people's daily experiences, which has provided a standing point to make improvements. For another, in doing the action research as a practitioner, it enabled me to rethink some of the research findings. The process of research analysis, practices, actions, evaluation and reflections was likely to be cyclic in that each component constantly interplayed with each other (Hart and Bond, 1995). My engagement and involvement in development practice and in specific volunteer tourism projects allowed me to have a deeper understanding of the exercise of power and the power dynamics throughout the process. The methodological journey was not only about a simple explanation of a social phenomenon, but also about what the meaning of research is about. Using William's (2002:138) words, "the social world is such that in social science, one needs both the richness of interpretation and the ability to move beyond this to make claims about processes and structures". Especially if a piece of research is aiming at undertaking action for change, the researcher should always take the responsibility to provide the best evidence in whichever format (William, 2002).

As the timescales in Table 4.8.2 indicate, this study was undertaken through two field trips and different research methods were employed each time. This might pose a challenge to attain consistency over time and event. Although the second field research was mainly focusing on action, there were some differences and changes in people's practices and perspectives over the period of time. Therefore, making sure of the consistency of judgements was of great importance. Reflections from my second field trip about findings and changes were particularly recorded honestly, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

The First Fieldwork Research			
Time	July 4th 2018	——	October 7th 2018
	Participant observation		
	In-depth interview		
	Participatory workshops		
The Second Fieldwork Research			
Time	July 17th 2019	——	September 3rd 2019
	Action research		

Table 4.8.2. The timescale for the two field trips

4.9. Research challenges

Changing positionality

One of the biggest challenges in undertaking this study was my changing positionality throughout the research. Different groups of people were involved in the study, including volunteer tourists, staff members from the organisation and local people from receiving communities. This made my research position a combination of insider and outsider, and it varied from one occasion to another. As Bridges (2001, cited in Cui, 2014) suggests, researcher's insider or outsider role is related to similar life experiences, "because life experiences may outweigh structural or biographical characteristics in shaping one's individuality" (p357). Pre-existing relationships with the participants, coupled with the professional status, can determine how they perceived the researcher's identity during the research (Cui, 2014). When I worked with those volunteer tourists, due to our similar cultural background and my previous involvement in volunteer tourism, I was likely to understand their thoughts and experiences. Additionally, during both my fieldwork visits, I was quite involved in DBSA's projects as a participant, just like other volunteer tourists. We lived together and implemented projects together, and we built up a quite close personal relationship with each other. The situation with DBSA staff members was very similar, and I was even more involved as a practitioner to help with their improvement during the second field trip. Therefore, I see myself more as an insider with the Chinese group. Even though sometimes I had to ask them critical questions to better investigate the research topic, their reactions and interactions with me, as well as their open answers to my interviews, indicated

a degree of acceptance of me as a part of their team.

As for working with local people, on the one hand, I was mostly an outsider because I was a foreigner and a total 'stranger' for most of them at first. As a result of this cultural barrier, it took me some time to let them know me and accept me. During the research, no matter how I explained and clarified my role, many local people still perceived me more as a part of the Chinese organisation because of my Chinese appearance, not recognising my researcher role very clearly. But after spending time in the field and after letting them get more familiar with me, my research 'on' them through interviews and 'with' them through participatory workshops and actions, did not seem to be affected very much by this perception, though this might still be considered as one limitation of this thesis. On the other hand, one initiative of doing this research was to recover voices from the receiving community and to improve projects to better meet their needs and desire. Especially in my second field trip, the organisational changes that I instituted were more like doing research 'for' them. In this sense, local people in Mathare appeared to also accept me as an insider or at least an ally to a degree, telling me about their needs, concerns and expectations to improve their situations and make positive changes.

Ethics

Doing participatory research and action research that involved a lot of collaboration particularly raised ethical issues about power relations and potential challenges (Banks and Miller, 2019). As Groot and Abma (2019) suggest, the partnership and the balance of power between researchers and participants might change constantly. In some cases, there might be a tension between being a researcher and being a practitioner, especially during the action phase (Hart and Bond, 1995). Rather than being a detached researcher, I believe it is always the responsibility that matters. The researcher should make responsible and ethical decisions across different aspects of the research and should follow key ethical principles such as mutual respect, equality and inclusion, democratic participation and personal integrity (CSJCA, 2012:8). In the second field trip as a practitioner, I also explained these principles to the volunteer tourist team and constantly reminded them of power sharing on the basis of

understanding and respect. The importance of recognising local knowledge was particularly addressed and local strengths were brought in when designing the formal process of DBSA's projects. More discussions of these elements are included in Chapter 8.

In terms of ethics and risk management, this thesis has followed the formal ethics approval processes. Some sensitive topics were involved in the interviews, especially when I asked about power relations and negative comments on the Chinese organisation. I was worried that some participants might find it distressing and uncomfortable in answering these questions, or they might feel guilty or a sense of betrayal if they were too critical. For local participants, since their daily lives may be exposed to the researcher, I was concerned that my research might make them feel vulnerable or upset. Although none of these situations happened during the research, I had illustrated to every participant in the consent form that they have the right not to answer any questions they may have been uncomfortable with. They could withdraw from the research anytime without giving any reason and without any penalty. In addition, I assured them that identifying features of their lives would be removed and I would take responsibility for maintaining confidentiality as well as anonymity of all the research data and participants.

It should also be noted that, while English is the official language in Kenya, I was concerned that people in informal settlements like Mathare might not be able to speak English due to the limited education conditions in the community. Later it came about that most people in the research field spoke English quite frequently and the language barrier was not a very big issue in practice. Nevertheless, to address potential illiteracy in English of Mathare interviewees, I made distinct consent forms and information sheets for local participants in which simpler language was used, and more oral explanations were provided in advance of data collection. Further examples of Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form can be found in Appendix 2.

4.10. Conclusion

In conclusion, the choice of methods in this study reflects the research purpose to challenge the unequal power relations in volunteer tourism and to empower marginalised groups. Overall, the use of qualitative research methods provides an opportunity to promote the participation of the researched and to enable the voices of the researched in the production of research knowledge. Qualitative richness of data was central to this study as well as the potential to evoke attention and reflections on the research topic. For volunteer tourism and community development practice, the research aimed to contribute to identifying possibilities for future improvement.

The practice of a Chinese organisation, DBSA, in Mathare, Kenya is specifically investigated as a case study and two field trips in Mathare were undertaken for data collection. In the first fieldwork visit, participant observation, in-depth interviews and a small project of participatory research were conducted. Participant observations provided the chance to engage in volunteer tourism projects. In-depth interviews helped to capture the views and thoughts from all three groups of volunteer tourists, DBSA staff members and local community members. Participatory workshops created a space for local young people to identify community issues and to explore solutions by themselves. Multiple units of analysis and the wide range of data were sorted by a hybrid method, employing both inductive (data-driven) and deductive approaches including theory-driven and prior-research-driven code. Key concepts and theories in international volunteer tourism, community development, theories of power and the powercube framework were applied in the data analysis.

To support findings and make organisational changes, the second fieldwork visit focused on action research. I took the role as a practitioner within the Chinese organisation, making adjustments and improvements to their projects in response to my research findings in the first field trip. Solutions to tackle practical issues included the setup of more formal processes and more transparent communication systems. DBSA's implementation of projects was adapted to seek more equal power relations with the local community. Throughout the

research, my positionality varied from an insider to outsider when working with different groups, and I transferred from a researcher to a practitioner between the two field trips. Research, practices, actions and reflection interplayed with each other and the whole research process was cyclic. I constantly checked back my research findings throughout as I reflected and as my understanding of different situations changed.

Chapter 5 Understanding the Field: Profiles of Mathare and DBSA

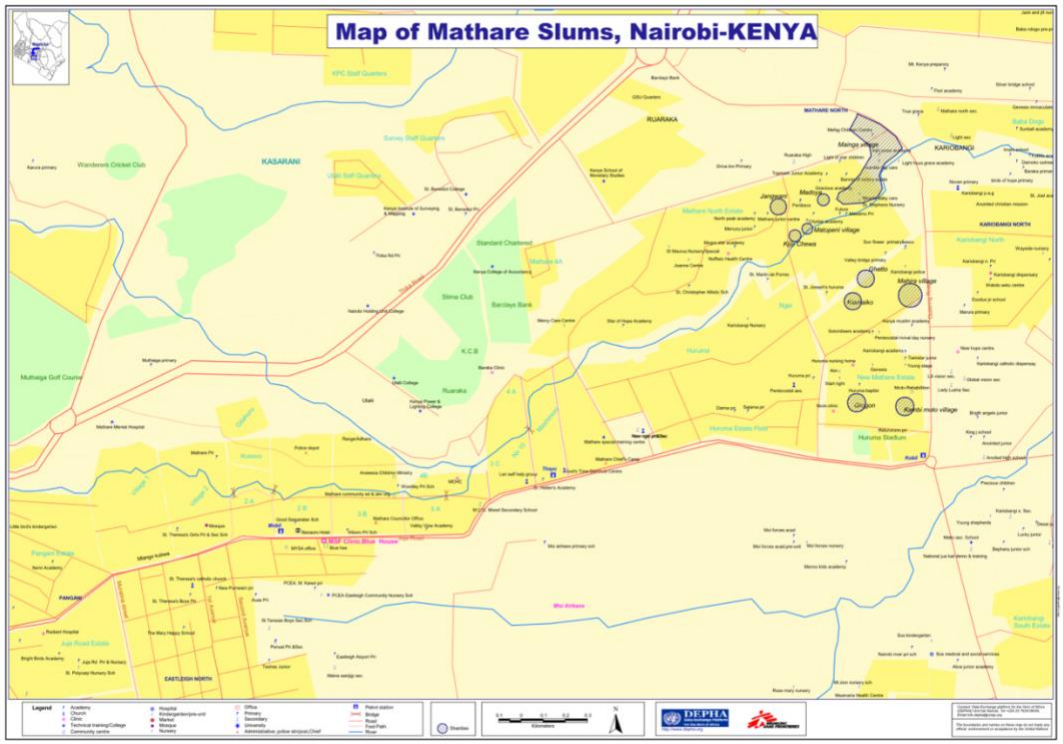
5.1. Introduction

Mathare is an informal settlement with fairly clear borders in the wider urban area of Nairobi, Kenya. It is usually referred to as a slum, which signifies the non-provision of services from governments (Wamucii, 2011). Geographically, Mathare is located at the northeast of Nairobi, bounded by Thika road in the north and Juja Road in the south, beginning in the southwest at Muratina Street and ending up at the Outer Ring Road (see Figure 5.1.1., Andvig and Barasa, 2014:16). As reported by Wamucii (2011), informal settlements not only lack formal municipal services, but they typically have extremely large populations. According to the official data from the 2019 Kenya population and housing census, the population of Mathare is around 206,000[9] (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). While urbanisation is taking place in Kenya rapidly, Mathare has been recognised as a slum for more than five decades (Etherton, 1971, cited in Andvig and Barasa, 2014). Over 70% of residents living in informal settlements like Mathare fall below the poverty line, according to an expenditure-based calculation (Amendah, et al., 2014). If using non-monetary indicators, lives of slum residents would be even more deprived (ibid).

In this chapter, a more complete profile of Mathare is offered, as well as an introduction to the Dream Building Service Association (DBSA), which has been doing development projects in Mathare since 2015. Firstly, the chapter introduces Mathare from a historical perspective and makes an explanation of its governance from the past to the present. Secondly, it describes the economic situation in Mathare and addresses poverty issues from various perspectives, including unemployment, informal economy, poor infrastructure and difficulties in upgrading infrastructure. Thirdly, it looks at the education system in Mathare, which is quite different from that in non-slum areas. Informal education in Mathare is explained, as well as the challenges of the low value placed on education and poor parenting. Fourthly, the chapter reveals the increasingly significant role of non-government organisations (NGOs) in Mathare

[9] It is recognised that census estimates might be not completely accurate and usually under-estimate.

and local people's view about them compared with the view of the government. Throughout the discussions about Mathare, local people's perspectives on certain issues are presented, drawing on data collected from fieldwork research. Finally, the chapter gives an introduction to the Chinese organisation, DBSA, including its background, vision, mission and projects addressing both physical and psychological dimensions of local needs.


Map of Mathare Slums, Nairobi-KENYA
KASARANI
RUARAKA
MATHARE NORTH
KARIOBANGI
KARIOBANGI NORTH
PANGANI
EASTLEIGH NORTH
Standard Chartered
Barclays Bank
Sima Club
K.C.B
Mathare 4A
Mathare North Estate
Huruma
Huruma Estate Post
New Mathare Estate
Mathare village
Kiamutisko
Mlango village
Jamaame
Mathare special training centre
Mathare Police Station
Mathare Chief's Camp
Mathare Community 4A & 3A Org
Mathare Mental Hospital
Mathare Primary
Mathare Pri.
Mathare Sec.
Mathare Counsilor Office
Valley View Academy
Mathare Special Training Centre
Mathare Police Station
Mathare Chief's Camp
Mathare Community 4A & 3A Org

area of Nairobi. Furthermore, the government used a 'housing permit', resulting in Africans only getting legal residential houses in certain small areas (Andvig and Barasa, 2014: 33). The price of limited residential areas and houses increased rapidly, and housing in some settlements became informal and even illegal (ibid).

In addition, the colonial state made the 'labour market control policies' to restrain migration and movement of local people, especially males (Andvig and Barasa, 2014:33). A *Kipande* system[10] was built up and hawking licenses were required for private servants (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). A significant number of males in Nairobi held illegal statuses at that time. This made it hard for them to get formal jobs and many become involved in illegal economic activities. Large number of migrants also moved into informal settlements and high density settlement (ibid). As Andvig and Barasa (2014:35) describe, "large pockets of informal or illegal settlements were created with a high share of illegal residents". The state control of the internal workings of informal settlements from the outside became extremely costly and difficult unless internal residents were willing to provide information and mutual monitoring of illegal activities or rebellious, which was obviously unlikely to happen (ibid). As a result, the government left those informal settlements as "pocket(s) of statelessness", as long as they did not threaten the state and provided little economic value (Joireman, 2011:129, cited in Andvig and Barasa, 2014:9).

The stateless status of Mathare was pushed to the extremes in some cases. Because of the governance dilemma mentioned above, some informal urban settlements, including Mathare, became controlled by local 'gangs' and local 'elders' (Andvig and Barasa, 2014: 40). According to Mamdani (1996, cited in Andvig and Barasa, 2014), these gangs in Mathare were dominated by Kikuyu people, who were from the largest ethnic group in Kenya and Mathare (Primus, 2014). In the 1950s, it was extremely difficult for external policing to control the inner spaces of those informal settlements, where a lot of violence and rebellions happened (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). In 1952, the Mau Mau Rebellion broke out. This was a well-known violent

[10] *Kipande* in Swahili means an identification registration document that all male Africans above the age of 15 need to carry outside their native reserves (Andvig and Barasa, 2014).

rebellion in Kenyan history against the British colonial authorities, and it lasted until the end of the 1950s (ibid). Because the ethnicity of the gangs involved was mainly Kikuyu and given that Mathare had such a high-density Kikuyu population near the city centre, the British colonial government believed Mathare residents were largely involved in the Mau Mau building and rebel activities (ibid). Therefore, Mathare faced the risk of being demolished by the colonial government from 1953. Mau Mau leadership in the movement was wiped out, and thousands of Mathare residents were evicted or detained in a prison camp (Andvig and Barasa, 2014).

After Kenya gained independence in 1963 and the Kenyatta government came to power, the plan to demolish Mathare was abandoned (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). Although Mathare retained a reputation for being poor and violent, it became more integrated into the country's polity compared to the earlier years (ibid). The concentration of power and wealth within Mathare had been formed by its historical coalitions between gangs and rebels (ibid). Also, due to the lack of control of migration and the lack of regulated redistribution of land to the poor people, the population in Mathare kept increasing (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). In the 1970s, lots of landowning companies were established, a large proportion of which were from the Kikuyu tribe and gangsters. They bought a proportion of lands in Mathare from western and Indian settlers or the city council (ibid).

Around 65% of those lands were in squatter housing areas and a large number of the poor squatters were evicted during that period (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). Some owners of lands did not live inside Mathare. They left their properties in the hands of wealthy investment agencies (ibid). Due to the large population and the high demand, the houses were rented out at high rates and the value of land increased quickly (ibid). In the long run, this caused a potential conflict between internal tenants and external housing companies. From the internal residents' side, seeing the big economic success, they also wanted to take over control of their living spaces. Thus, a certain number of internal dwellers organised collective actions and bought some lands jointly (ibid). However, it was unclear if all transactions were legitimate. Allied with these stocks of possible illegal housing, conflicting relationships between

landowners and tenants with the complex interest played a significant role in contested representations of 'outer' and 'inner' spaces of governance in Mathare (Andvig and Barasa, 2014: 53).

At present, informal settlements in Nairobi like Mathare have gained a ruling equilibrium of their own (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). Mathare now consists of 13 villages. Although there are no physical boundaries between villages, local dwellers can easily distinguish different villages. Mathare, as a whole, has one chief and three assistant chiefs appointed by the state, who are the state representatives to handle community issues. For each village in Mathare, there is a group of well-known elders with a head appointed by the chief to tackle their own village issues (ibid). Chiefs, together with village elders are responsible for decision-making, administrative work and policing tasks. While the police find it difficult to control from the outside and they make contact very seldom with the inner community, chiefs usually consult village elders when dealing with any daily conflicts in the community (ibid). As Andvig and Barasa (2014) point out, to a certain extent, key leaders of Mathare villages are not state-appointed chiefs, but village headmen. Although they are appointed by the chief nominally, village headmen are actually elected by local inner meetings. They are more influential among community members and more recognised by community members since they have much local knowledge for governing 'inner' space (ibid). However, they are not officially paid by the government, even though they are doing lots of community tasks and play a key role in linking the formal and informal policing and justice systems of Mathare (ibid).

5.3. Poverty and life challenges in Mathare

Perceiving poverty

Poverty has been one of the most significant community issues in Mathare, as perceived by both insiders and outsiders. When asked about the impression of informal settlements in Kenya, a picture of a land with crowded iron-sheet houses, muddy roads and wandering people came into almost every volunteer tourist's mind. Poverty is the most common image

sensed by local people as well. As described by a local resident in an interview, “Mathare is just a place being poor, very poor” (DD, male, local school director, Mathare). Mathare faces almost all social and economic issues that one can imagine: unemployment, unstable and low incomes, food shortages, poor living conditions, lack of infrastructure and services, crimes and so on.

This perception of poverty is largely influenced by history, as outlined in the previous section. Since a certain number of house owners in Mathare were absentees, house companies made little investment in infrastructure, while tenants and squatters are too poor to contribute to do so (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). Many houses were built to low standards and are mostly shacks made of iron sheets or wood. If an accidental fire occurred in one house, which commonly happens in Mathare, shacks around would suffer. Because most shacks are located alongside rivers in Mathare, those informal constructions are exposed to great risk when floods come during rainy seasons. Basic infrastructure or services, including sewerage, water, electricity, and garbage collection, do not exist there, which directly affects the health and safety of residents. People feel trapped in poverty, but it is even harder to tell where the loop starts or ends.

Figure 5.3.1. A snapshot of the main road of Mathare

Unemployment and hunger

> The biggest challenge that we are facing here, one, poverty. Due to the lack of job that most of the parents we have around here, they are just doing this little, these light jobs. Because most of them are not educated. Therefore, they have a low income that cannot sustain them.
>
> (DL, male, local school teacher, Mathare)

As one Mathare dweller mentioned above, unemployment is one major problem causing poverty. Gulyani et al. (2012, cited in Andvig and Barasa, 2014) estimate that individual incomes in Mathare are 1.3 dollars per day or less. Most Mathare dwellers do not have certain and steady jobs. In countries like Kenya, with a high unemployment rate, people living in slums who are rarely well educated find it even harder to get formal employment. According to the report from Kasarani Youth Congress (2009, cited in Thieme, 2010), 76% of working-age youth are not in employment in Mathare, which has become both the cause and outcome of poverty. As for the rest, they are mostly living on informal jobs, among which a substantial number are illegal like prostitution, brewing and selling homemade alcohol (called Changaa), and selling drugs (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). These informal or illegal activities in "market transaction, family life and recreation, schooling and idling" are very prevalent inside the community (ibid: 9). As interviewee said:

> Some of them are just going to do some casual work. Wash cloth for the famous Somalia people in this around area, Eastleigh. They go there. They are given a whole bag of clothes. At the end of the day, they are given 400 shillings. You have a family, you have rent, you are supposed to pay somewhere. Fees also there. So that challenge was there.
>
> (RH, female, local school principal, Mathare)

The gender roles of women and men in the Mathare community are quite different. As explained in the previous quotation, for women, it is most common to see them washing clothes for the nearby neighbourhood to earn money. Some Mathare women set up informal

stalls alongside the main road, selling local vegetables or cooking food like *mandazi* (fried bread), *chapati* (roti), baked corns or *Mayae kachumbari* (cooked egg with vegetable salad). Some women in no position to undertake paid work as they have to spend much time on home-chores, caring for children or sick family members (Corburn and Karanja, 2014). Comparatively, men have relatively more opportunities to find jobs outside Mathare, often usually contributing physical labour to temporary construction projects and skilled men undertake casual work as mechanics or in maintenance. Overall, the economic status of Mathare residents can be quite variable. Those who have a physical shop or a salon, they are already the 'middle class' or 'upper class' in Mathare. Although an iron-sheet shop may only need 2,000 shillings (equivalent of 20 US dollars) start-up capital and 200 shillings (equivalent of 2 US dollars) per month for rent, very few residents in Mathare can afford a small business like that.

The social and economic interactions that are substantially reproducing poverty lead to multiple issues (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). For example, a large number of families in Mathare are facing hunger issues. According to the most recent report from the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), there are still over 60 million children suffering from hunger in the African continent and two out of five children do not eat meals regularly (ACPE, 2018). In Mathare, residents believe that "food should be one of the fundamental basic human rights" (SY, female, local school principal, Mathare). Yet a large number of families are having trouble in getting enough food. As a result of unstable income, it is hard to sustain the life of the whole family, and many are starving. According to the interview data, many people in Mathare only have one or two meals a day. Those meals are mostly mashed beans and cheap vegetables. Rice, eggs, fish and meat are luxury food in Mathare. Children usually take breakfast in the morning, having nothing more until going home in the evening when they could take another meal. Hunger results in poor health conditions. As reported by ACPE (2018), over 90% of children in Africa are below the criteria for the minimum acceptable diet outlined by the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the figure would apply to the situation in Mathare.

Poor infrastructure

Lack of infrastructure and services make the situation of Mathare residents even worse. As mentioned, shacks in Mathare are mainly made of temporary or semi-permanent materials like iron-sheet or wood. Due to the high population density, the use of space is particularly intensive, but the management of land is out of control. There are few public toilets or garbage collection centres, which further leads to serious sanitation problems. Local young people in dialogical workshops identified garbage and water as the two major issues that the community is facing. Girls in Mathare are more likely to be affected. Due to the inadequate sanitation in Mathare such as toilets in schools, Corburn and Karanja (2014) report that the attendance of girls decreases especially during menstruation. This has resulted in further gender inequity across other issues of safety, stigma, dignity and human health (Corburn and Karanja, 2014).

In addition, as identified in dialogical workshops with local young people, garbage and water are the other two major issues the community is facing. For garbage, because there is no dumping site, almost all the waste is thrown on the street or into the Mathare Valley. Day after day, year after year, the garbage alongside the Mathare Valley has been piled up into mountains until it becomes impossible to recycle and until there is no simple solution to deal with it. In terms of water, poor systems for sewerage removal and water supply means that there is a lack of clean, flowing water for daily use. Some people have to shower in the river, which is the same river where people dump waste. Local young people indicate that clean water is usually sold by private vendors in Mathare with relatively high prices, making it quite unaffordable for many people. In recent years, there has been some water taps and water pipes upgraded in the community, but water bills remain high to afford. Garbage and water issues are just two major examples of all the challenges Mathare is facing. Lack of waste collection systems and no access to water further lead to infertility of soil, which causes difficulties in agriculture. Health-related issues arise, including cholera, malaria and AIDS, but there is a lack of medical facilities or public services yet. All those factors together enhance the picture of Mathare as linked with extreme poverty.

Figure 5.3.2. Garbage mountain alongside the Mathare Valley

Figure 5.3.3. Water containers people use for daily uses in Mathare
(Source: the picture taken by local youth from Mathare in the participatory research project)

Slum upgrading

Neither economic change nor infrastructure improvement in informal settlements like Mathare is simple to resolve. Due to the illegality of the overall slum spaces and lack of alternatives, upgrading programmes face a lot of challenges. At the beginning of the 21st century, an upgrading project in Mathare was led by the Amani Housing Trust, set up and empowered by the Archdiocese of Nairobi (Reback, 2007). The project aimed at improving housing and living conditions of inhabitants by improving infrastructure (ibid). Reback (2007) did a case study with a specific look at the upgrading in one of Mathare's villages, Mathare 4a, which was also the main area in which I did my research. Due to the unorganised overall plans of the community, there were quite crowded structures in Mathare 4a village. Basic infrastructure and services were largely missing. Furthermore, Reback (2007) revealed that 92% of residents in Mathare 4a were renters, with absentee landlords, who usually were local politicians. This means internal residents would lack representation to express their real needs about the living conditions in many circumstances (ibid). To deal with those issues, the upgrading project intended to improve the "housing, roads, water, sanitation, waste disposal, and communal facilities" based on a survey of local dwellers undertaken by the Amani Housing Trust (Reback, 2007: 4). Considering the feasibility and relocation challenges, it was decided to upgrade the existing structures in Mathare with a lowered building standard and with a focus on infrastructure improvement (ibid).

By 1997, the upgrading of the main road in Mathare 4a had been completed. However, in 2000, the project was suspended with work incomplete because of protests and violence organised by landowners who were afraid of losing their rental incomes (Reback, 2007). One interviewee in my research mentioned about this upgrading as follows:

> He comes to your house, he tells you to go to the other house. I will build this one. After building, you will be taken back to your house. That would be your house. So that was what was going on. After some time, these people came together and say that those people are just pretending to help us. They are not helping us. They want to take our places. That was our place and we don't want any help. So those white men were sent

away.

(AA, female, local school principal, Mathare)

The quote indicates the considerable mistrust and lack of understanding between residents and the implementing agency. Utilising that, politicians drove Mathare 4a residents to protest against the Amani Housing Trust. A lot of riots, conflicts and violence happened, including the burning of buildings, threats and harassment (Reback, 2007). Even though the project restarted in 2003 and most infrastructure construction was finished by 2007, it ended up with only 50% of housing upgrading completed (ibid). Reback (2007: 1) called it a 'partial success'. The project predominantly revealed multiple players in Mathare with conflicting interests and how difficult it was for external bodies to implement projects inside the area where a firm power structure exists (ibid). On the one hand, as absentee owners do not benefit directly from the improved living conditions, they saw the upgrading project as shifting from the traditional landlord and tenant model (Reback, 2007). Given that they have a high economic interest in existing properties, they would support upgrading projects only if they were compensated well in terms of capital or interest gains (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). On the other hand, tenants might gain in terms of infrastructure improvement. But meanwhile, tenants had to bear the moving costs during the upgrading period and to take risks that their rent might increase after the upgrading (Rebakc, 2017). Thus, they were easily driven by politicians to initiate riots and conflict towards the Amani Housing Trust (ibid).

5.4. Education

The racial segregation in Kenya's colonial history resulted in segregation in education (Eshiwani, 1990). While more resources and facilities were devoted to non-Africans, education of local Africans were seriously neglected even after racial segregation in education was abolished in 1960 (ibid). From the perspectives of Mathare residents, poverty had resulted from and resulted in education problems. If they had been able to access better opportunities to be educated, residents believed that they would be better placed to to make

an independent living now. Poverty, by comparison, has restricted their motivation for getting an education. Compared with basic needs like getting everyday food, many parents did not value education in the same way. Rather than the lack of school education, local interviewees indicated that people's narrowing mindsets[11] and attitudes towards their lives was even more problematic, as, in the long run, they reinforced an infinite loop of poverty. As a school principal from Mathare expressed, illiteracy and poverty have become the roots of so many bad things: "because when people are illiterate, they don't value education, and you know for you to be at least somewhere, you have to have some levels of education. When you don't have education, you end up growing and becoming the idiot. When they become an idiot, they still need to eat, they start doing some bad things like what, like doing drugs, doing what all over" (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare).

Types of schools

In the Development Plan of Kenya 1979/83, the Kenyan government made elementary education a basic need in addition to nutrition, health care and housing (Eshiwani, 1990). Education and training are regarded as an important contribution to other components of community needs and towards providing appropriate services to the poor (Eshiwani, 1990). In general, there are three types of school in Kenya: public, private and APBET (Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training) schools. Public schools are operated by the government. It is officially claimed by the state that public schools in Kenya are completely free (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2015). However, the actual practice told a different story. One local interviewee implied, "when it gets to the actual thing, it becomes the opposite" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare).

In Mathare, there were only three primary public schools and one secondary public school. According to local residents, education in those public schools was not free as expected or even unaffordable for many Mathare families. As was revealed, government schools charged

[11] It should be noted that 'mindset' is the word used by local interviewees, in a neutral way, when referring to 'attitude' or 'mentality'. There is no Chinese word fully equivalent to 'mindset', so I also used the word 'mindset' throughout the thesis together with 'attitude' and 'mentality', also when volunteer tourists or Chinese staff members mentioning attitudes or the psychological side of community issues.

lots of extra money for different items like uniforms, meals and facilities. Many local people assumed the money was collected corruptly by some government officials. As a result, even if it is claimed that elementary schools are free in Kenya, the majority of children in Mathare cannot afford to go there for education. Private schools in Kenya, on the other hand, are mostly operated by individuals. More advanced teaching facilities are available in private schools and teaching quality is presumed to be better. Therefore, school fees for private school are relatively high and more privileged children tend to attend. In this case, for residents in informal settlements like Mathare, they could neither afford children's education at public schools nor private schools, regardless of the fact that there are only very limited numbers of public schools and no private school in Mathare. This, to a large extent, represents the tough situation of educational inequality in informal settlements like Mathare.

APBET schools

According to Eshiwani (1990), the Kenya government was committed to providing better quality education for Kenyan citizens as well as a wider distribution of education, especially to increasing educational opportunities in less developed areas. Considering hardship and challenges in urban informal settlements and other pockets of poverty, the Kenya Ministry of Education regulates schools that cannot meet registration criteria for public or private institutions as APBET (Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training) schools, also known as community schools or non-formal schools (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2015). APBET schools need to be registered with the Ministry of Education so as to be eligible for school candidates to enter national examination later on (ibid). They are mainly operated by community members or community churches, though some provision and support from the government are stated as available after registration (ibid).

In Mathare, there are more than 120 primary and secondary schools and almost all of them are APBET schools. Compared with public and private schools, APBET schools cannot meet all criteria for formal schools in terms of acreage, staffing, facilities and curriculum (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2015). For instance, most APBET schools do not have libraries or playgrounds, and their classrooms are usually quite small. At Mathare 4a village,

there is only one public school, which has the only playground in the area. The rest of pupils from APBET schools have to share the only field with limited time for use. Although the standards at APBET schools are not as high as public and private schools, schools should follow the curriculum, which is strictly regulated by the government, and schools should accept the assessment of teaching and learning regularly by the Ministry of Education (ibid).

Tuition fees and teaching quality

In terms of tuition fees, APBET primary schools in Mathare normally charge 300 to 800 shillings (equivalent to 3 to 8 dollars) per month per student. However, because of the prevailing poverty of Mathare residents, the illiteracy rate and drop-out rate are still very high. Doing a rough calculation that the average income is 100 shillings per day per person in Mathare (Reback, 2007), it means a family (with two working labours) might have about 6000 shillings income per month. If a family have two school-age children, it takes 10 to 20 per cent of a family's income to pay for school fees. Nevertheless, a Mathare family has typically to support the lives of 5 or 6 people in total including the elders. This does not take account of the fact that a certain number of children have only one parent. Thus, even though the school fees at APBET schools are relatively low, many families cannot afford them. As indicated by some local teachers, a large proportion of parents were unable to pay their tuition fees and they owed school money for years. From the students' point of view, even those whose parents can afford to community schools, some still felt school conditions were not worth the money. At community schools, there was usually a lack of textbooks, school desks, chairs and facilities like a library or a playing field. The teaching quality of most teachers was regarded as not as good as expected. Furthermore, going to schools meant an extra expense on school uniforms, school bags, exercise books and other stationery, which were all extra burdens for Mathare families.

From the community schools' side, many school principals claimed their schools were "low cost, low charging schools" (PL, male, local school principal and director, Mathare). This school principal explained that regular expenses of schools include the rent for school buildings, teachers' salary, teaching materials and other maintenance fees. However, since a

certain number of students' default on tuition fees, schools could only ask those parents to do some informal work in return, like cooking and construction. As an interviewee suggested, "I tell them I need desks, I have your three children, instead of paying fees, make me a desk" (DN, male, local school principal and director, Mathare). This resulted in a delay in payment to the teaching staff. Although the Ministry of Education in Kenya had regulations that all teachers in community schools need to meet the minimum entry requirement of teacher training, teachers have different levels of degrees. In the long run, it became difficult to retain qualified teachers in Mathare, since they found it hard to get a decent salary or even timely payment for doing the job. For those who remained, there was a lack of further training opportunities supported by the government. As revealed by Eshiwani (1990), it might be a common phenomenon in Kenya that trained teachers prefer to join the private sector for better remuneration, which leaves a large number of untrained teachers in community schools. All these factors then had resulted in the low teaching quality at community schools.

Valuing education

Many teachers pointed out that school attendance itself was not high in general, which directly led to the low income of schools. A lot of families were indeed too poor to afford school education, but more importantly, people in Mathare did not value education that much so they made their children drop out of school. The school drop-out rate went even higher when it came to the secondary level. Although ALPBET secondary schools could be an option for further education, most parents in Mathare would let their children, especially girls, stop at the primary level and go to find some money for life. This has led to the continuous illiteracy and poverty of the next generation.

However, it was hard to blame Mathare parents for thinking in this way. As was indicated by local interviewees, it usually took 12 years of investment to finish the secondary level education before one could get a 'Form 4' certificate, which was the most basic requirement to find a job. However, if one really wanted to increase the competitiveness in job markets, a college or university degree would be necessary. Given the even higher cost involved, this was quite unthinkable for people in Mathare. Furthermore, Kenyan people were told by the news

that the employment rate of university graduates was not high in the country. As a result, for Mathare families with such difficult financial situations, people were concerned about the risk that benefits of education would not outweigh the costs. Even at the primary education level, a certain number of parents decided to put their children in schools mainly because they needed a place for their children to be looked after when they were out for work.

Due to the low educational levels and poverty of parents themselves, it was hard for people in Mathare to see the importance of education and this under-valuing of education continued generation after generation. As a local principal pointed out, "what makes them poor is the lack of education. Some parents they lack education, the way they lack education is the same way they want their pupils also" (EH, female, local school principal and director, Matahre).

Parenting

Parenting was another serious issue. As a teacher mentioned, "the parents will leave early in the morning and come back at home very late, not knowing the kids. He or she will not be going to ask the kids, what did you do at school, what did they say. So if this continues, he or she will not follow the progress of the pupils" (ES, male, a local school teacher, Mathare). As a result, children in Mathare often have very little company and attention from their parents. Another example was given by a local interviewee as follows:

> There was one time that we got a class two boy wanted to rape a baby, a child in a baby class, a girl. So when we ask the child, why are you doing this? He said that I saw my mom and dad doing this, so I want to practice. So do you see that, because the rooms are single room, there is nothing being hidden from them. Everything is just open. They see what happen between their parents, so they want to practice it. So this has also made most of the girls drop out of school because of early pregnancy. Then some boys are also getting drug abuse. So that is what has made this place being like that.
>
> (AA, female, local school principal, Mathare)

Because of the expensive rent, it was prevalent for a Mathare family of four or five has to live

in little one-bedroom shacks (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). There would be no privacy among family members or within the neighbourhood. As indicated by the above local interviewee, children started practising friendship, relationships and sexual intercourse at a younger age. In the long run, this resulted in a certain number of children and teenagers leaving home at an early age, becoming street children and getting involved in drugs or crimes. All in all, whether in terms of infrastructure or education, development in informal settlements like Mathare was still far off. The high density of population, low standards of housing, financial crises, education issues, prevailing poverty, these aspects were all closely linked with each other. As a local interviewee suggested, "the challenge is dynamic" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare). To solve this 'dynamic', depending merely on the government at this stage seemed unrealistic.

5.5. Non-government organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs)

According to Brass (2016), Kenyan people are quite aware of the limitation of their government and thus, have exceedingly low expectations for the government. Instead, they are more familiar with, and more likely to expect provisions from non-government organisations (NGOs) (Brass, 2016). Non-governmental interventions in Kenya can be traced back to the early independence period (ibid). In 1965, President Kenyatta proposed the spirit of *harambee* [12] and called for local *harambee* groups to work together in building communities with supplementary support from of government (Brass, 2016; Prince and Brown, 2016). Those local *harambee* organisations have made a great impact on Kenya, significantly contributing to the development of rural health and education (Brass, 2016). Prince and Brown (2016: 15) further point out the significant power of the 'self-help' and 'self-reliance' value behind the *harambee* spirit and how the notion of volunteering remains central to lots of non-governmental activities.

[12] A Swahili term meaning 'let's pull together'.

After twists and turns during the Moi (1978-2002) and Kibaki (2002-2013) administration, the twenty-first century has witnessed a surge of NGOs in Kenya (Brass, 2016). In 2009, NGOs contributed around one billion US dollars to the economy in Kenya and over 300,000 people were employed in the sector, which accounted for about 2.1 per cent of the population (NGOs Co-ordination Board, 2009: 36, cited in Brass, 2016). According to Republic of Kenya NGO Co-ordination Bureau (2011), there were approximately 7500 NGOs registered in Kenya including professional organisations, community-based organisations (CBOs) and less formal *harambee* groups (Brass, 2016). These organisations received 71% of their funding from oversea countries on average (ibid). Activities that NGOs were involved with included agriculture (4%), education (8%), environment (6%), general development (40%), health (14%), marginalised populations (17%), peace and governance (4%), relief (2%) and others (5%) (Brass, 2016: 81).

NGOs and CBOs in Mathare

In addition to the great number of NGOs in Mathare, there are also many community-based organisations (CBOs) and youth groups that are less formal and smaller sized. For instance, the Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) is one of the most well-known youth organisations in Mathare that engages local young people in sports and other community service activities (Wamucii, 2011). While youth groups are mostly locally based, backgrounds of NGOs and CBOs are more varied, ranging from international to religious. Religious organisations, for instance, are quite common in Mathare and a certain number of community schools are funded or run by churches. Projects like the Mission of Hope International (MOHI) have addressed issues such as HIV, health issues, and the need for employment, involving tens of thousands of children from impoverished backgrounds.

According to local residents, some key international organisations in Mathare included those funded or operated by Britain, German, Italy, the Netherlands and USA communities. Most of their projects were related to social service provisions such as health care, construction improvement, informal training and scholarships. The organisation in my research, the Dream Building Service Association (DBSA), was the only Chinese organisation in Mathare, that was

mainly based on the village Mathare 4a. Apart from international communities and religious groups, some NGOs and CBOs are also operated by local people. Under the *harambee* tradition, young people in Mathare gather together as youth groups and tackle community issues in different ways (Brass, 2016). There are estimated to be over 100 youth groups in Mathare focusing on different community issues including garbage collection, sport, art and business training.

As Andvig and Barasa (2014) point out, village elders in Mathare have rights to permit or deny the access of NGOs and CBOs into the community. While the role of state government is absent, local CBOs and NGOs are playing an important part in cooperating with the chief and elders on community development (Andvig and Barasa, 2014). In recent years, apart from their fundamental charity or relief work, NGOs and CBOs have been more involved in development and service provision, which was traditionally associated more with the state (Brass, 2016). This brought some worries that the increasing provision of NGO or CBO services, with their informal arrangements, might replace government structures (Brass, 2016).

Local people's counting on NGOs

> In the first place, it should be the government... Even if international organisations are coming in, they are supposed to supplement what the government is supposed to do.
>
> (DD, male, local school director, Mathare)

As the above quotation showed, many Mathare residents suggested the state and governments should take responsibility to build up at least the fundamental basis of the community. However, because of the absence of the government, international communities came in and tried to support the community. For this reason, local people seemed to have accepted the absence and limitations of government in social and economic infrastructure. As a resident said, "in fact, if the government can do, I think it is better. But if they cannot. They just give hands to those who can be able to support" (SY, male, local school principal and director, Mathare). Many Mathare residents expressed the view that they were counting more

on international organisations to provide assistance. Some people said they had no idea what the government were doing at their own levels. Others believed the government cared less about needy people in slum areas.

Generally speaking, Brass (2017) points out that Kenyans have exceedingly low expectations of their government. More precisely, I perceived that local people have no choice but to accept the fact that their government has neither the capabilities nor resources to tackle complex issues in Mathare. Under this circumstance, they thought it was acceptable if NGOs and international communities could fit in and make up the role, and they seemed to take international communities as a substitute for government. As a local interviewee mentioned, "in the situation where the governments fail, we would wish and would call upon the support from international communities, like many international organisations, to come to rescue those people. Because the government has failed completely" (SY, male, local school principal and director, Mathare).

Brass (2016) argues that local people do not link the increasingly significant role of NGOs with the government's failure in the social contract, neither do they think NGOs have decreased the legitimacy of the state. Since the government still holds the key to allow NGOs into Mathare, local people were aware that NGO's provision of services is, in essence, indirect to facilitate development outcomes; and international organisations can never replace direct government interventions (ibid). As was shown in the following statement, local residents were expecting to see more collaborations and communications between the government and NGOs in the future, as well as more cooperation and resource sharing among different NGOs.

> What they are doing, they are complementing the government…And that's why I believe that even when NGOs come, they have to work through the government, the working permit of the NGOs has to be given by the government. They have to go through their proposal and understand what they are going to do…Now that is the government and that is the foundation of the things. When NGOs come, they also help achieve what the government has founded. Because they come with resources ... So I believe that NGOs are

doing good jobs. But we cannot rule out it is that government that set up the foundation. It is also the government that gives us a way into the community.

(EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare)

Challenges of NGOs

Resolving the problems of Mathare involves different players with underlying political games. There is no simple division between government responsibilities and international organisations because most factors and interests are deeply embedded. Taking the water issue, for example, some community members pointed out in dialogical workshops that the government's mismanagement of water resources was the main reason for the water problem. Because of corruption, they thought the government was more or less in collusion with water agencies and water cartels. Some water companies even managed to escape from the law or regulations, providing "counterfeit good (low-quality materials of water facilities like water taps and water pipes) for water supply", which in the end results in an informal water market. This involves complex power dynamics and it becomes hard for external agencies either to understand or respond appropriately to the situation. As mentioned previously, the slum upgrading programme was introduced to develop water taps in the community with the support of external agencies at the beginning of the 21st century, but it failed (Reback, 2007). People did not value the new water facilitates as expected partly because of the difficulties in changing habits of water usage, but also due to manipulation from interest groups who tried to maintain the existing informal water markets (ibid). As a result, even today, water supply remains a major problem for Mathare residents.

Additionally, international organisations face limitations in their community development practice. Some local interviewees believed that basic, but mostly superficial, needs might be met with efforts from international communities, but those were mainly superficial needs. More deelply rooted problems of people's mindset and the structural inequality of education remained as 'cancer' in society. As an interviewee who worked for a local organisation revealed, "they usually have that mindset that we need to be helped… it is more likely the laziness also from their side" (DS, male, a local community worker, Mathare). It was not very

common to hear local people reflecting on themselves like this, but some interviewees did speak about ignorance and laziness from the community members themselves. Given government intervention was absent, they believed it was up to the community itself to increase awareness of problems and seek alternative ways to survive, with support from international organisations. They particularly addressed the importance of self-help and self-recognition within the community. In dealing with the water issue, for instance, it was pointed out that a simple complaint about the high prices was not enough. Awareness should be raised among community members to recognise how important clean water could be so that further campaigns of resistance and mutual-help activities could be organised within the community.

> They have to be empowered in a way that they should know that they are not poor. Because if you are poor, that will stop their mind. There should be a way that they know as much as, yes, we live in Mathare, there is always that they can turn things around and achieve whatever they need. (DS, male, a local community worker, Mathare)

5.6. The Dream Building Service Association (DBSA)

This thesis chose the development practices of the Dream Building Service Association (DBSA) in Mathare as a case study. According to statements on their official websites and documents, DBSA is a non-profit organisation. The founder of DBSA was a Chinese who used to study economics in Canada. He initiated DBSA when he was doing a volunteer tourism project in Mathare in 2014. The organisation was first registered in Canada in 2015 and later officially registered in Kenya in 2017 as a community-based organisation under the scheme of Kenyan NGO regulations. DBSA is the only Chinese organisation that is doing projects in Mathare, so far as I know.

Mission, vision and structure of DBSA

DBSA focuses primarily on urban poverty in vulnerable areas and it takes youth as the key actors in incubating and implementing multi-dimensional actions. As stated by DBSA, their

vision is to "create value, make a difference", and the mission is to "promote empowerment of young generation in vulnerable areas", among which Mathare is their field of action (Dbsa-dream.com, 2018). Specifically, DBSA intends to realise their mission in the following three ways: 1) facilitating exchanges and creating networks among youths, professionals and the public through education and training; 2) mobilising resources and knowledge at local-international, individual-institutional levels; 3) assembling these resources for sustainable and innovative social actions (Dbsa-dream.com, 2018). The claims sound quite abstract, but in summary, DBSA's projects are trying to address both physical sides and psychological sides of the local needs - they provide construction assistance, food provisions and scholarships in cooperation with local schools. Also, volunteer tourists of DBSA go to Mathare every year for educational projects, including the talent show, art exhibition and football training. At the end of the project period, which is usually in mid-August, a carnival is organised in Mathare when a big football tournament and talent show happen with art-exhibition in the field simultaneously.

The beneficiaries and actors of DBSA are mainly two types of youth: underprivileged youths from local communities and young international volunteers (ibid). However, the former is not necessarily the only beneficiaries, nor are the latter the only actors. The two groups collaborate for development and actions. Local young people are provided with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills, in the long run, they are expected to become contributors and leaders to give back their communities. International volunteers are supposed to gain new experience and act with social responsibility during their practices. It should be noted that DBSA calls the latter 'international volunteers'. However, because they usually stay for a short period (around one month), combine this with tourism activities depending on individual plans, and undertake work that usually requires less professional skills and formal patterns, I see them more as a type of volunteer tourist with 'volunteer minds'[13] in this study.

[13] As was explained in Chapter 2, there are two types of volunteer tourism based on participants' motivations and mindsets: 'vacation-minded' and 'volunteer-minded' (Brown, 2005: 480). While the 'vacation-minded' type of volunteer tourism is essentially an alternative to traditional tourism and the travelling is the most important element, the 'volunteer-minded' type of volunteer tourism is more like a new form of volunteering work, developed from traditional volunteering, with local people and communities are at the centre of projects.

The organisational structure of DBSA consists of four full-time staff, of which three are Chinese and one is Kenyan [14]. Full-time members of staff are responsible for the implementation of most regular projects in Mathare. However, I found a significant distinction between the Chinese and local staff in that decisions were mostly dominated by the former while the local staff members mainly implemented allocated tasks. In this thesis, mentions of DBSA staff members mainly refers to the Chinese staff unless indicated otherwise.

In addition, DBSA has two other important groups that contribute to their work. The first is their volunteer tourists who usually come to Mathare every year in July and August, doing annual events as well as projects evaluations. Volunteer tourists have relatively privileged social and educational backgrounds back in China. Most of them are university students at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level, and others are recent graduates who wish to develop their career in the development sector. There are always more female volunteer tourists than males in DBSA, with 12 female and 4 male volunteer tourists in 2017, and 12 female and 3 male volunteer tourists in 2018. They join the organisation for short-term volunteer tourism projects because they are interested in charity work and they see the experience as a good opportunity to learn about a new culture in depth. During the stay of volunteer tourists, DBSA arranges accommodation for them in a big house, not far away from the work area (Mathare). Volunteer tourists do not pay DBSA for the experience, but they are responsible for all their own expenses during the project time, including flight tickets, food, accommodation and transportation.

DBSA's second group is an online team, involving over ten volunteer workers based all over the world. These remote volunteer workers are mostly former volunteer tourists with DBSA, who have been doing projects in Mathare. They keep contributing to the organisation's work online informally and provide support such as fundraising, graphic design, communication and supervision. Unlike staff members, neither volunteer tourists nor remote volunteer workers have formal contracts with DBSA.

[14] When I conducted my second field trip in 2019, DBSA hired another Kenyan worker so there were two local staff members by 2019.

***Physical projects*[15]**

To deal with the physical issues, DBSA had helped to construct or rebuild four community schools in Mathare by 2018. Two of them were upgraded from iron-sheet structures to cement buildings. One was almost newly constructed, and the other was rebuilt because it was completely damaged in a big fire accident. As the director of DBSA recalled, he was struck by the poor condition of community schools the first time he went to Mathare. The structures of school buildings were very fragile and dangerous, and learning spaces for students were very limited. That was the time he realised the urgent physical need of the local people, though he did not think that much at that time. Being very touched and wanting to do something, he eventually decided to help with the school constructions and learning conditions. Since 2014, DBSA constructed one school each year until 2018. There are approximately 100 community schools in Mathare, but less than 20 per cent of them are made of permanent materials. This means the four schools supported by DBSA might be schools with the best physical conditions in Mathare so far. "The work is worthwhile. That's the foundation for everything", DBSA's director said.

[15] 'Physical projects' is direct translated from the word used by Chinese interviewees ("物理项目"in Chinese). Similarly, the word 'physical need' ("物理需求" in Chinese) is used throughout the thesis, through it is recognised that the term 'material need' may be usually used in English.

Figure 5.6.1. A school newly constructed by DBSA in 2015
(Source: Pictures taken by the director of DBSA)

Figure 5.6.2. A school constructed by DBSA from 2017-18 after a fire
(Source: Pictures taken by the director of DBSA)

Another fundamental project of DBSA is the Lunch For Children (LFC) project, under which two meals a day (breakfast and lunch) are provided for both students and teachers at partner schools during term times. LFC is the biggest, the most long-term and the most important project for DBSA in terms of its scale and the money involved. By 2019, DBSA's LFC project had been implemented in six countries in African including Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi, Tanzania and Nigeria, providing free lunch for 4682 hungry children (Lunch For Children, 2019). Kenya and Mathare were where they started and where they have the most partner schools. By the end of 2019, DBSA's LFC project had covered ten schools with over 2000 students in Mathare.

As officially stated, LFC aims at creating a hunger-free childhood for children in less developed regions. This project was initiated by DBSA on the basis of cooperation with the well-known charity organisation in China, Free Lunch For Children. DBSA is the equivalent of an overseas executive organisation for the project, benefiting from resources in China, but it has absolute independence in its own fundraising and implementation. In particular, the Chinese Red Cross Foundation (CRCF) and China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) have been the main donors to LFC since 2017, involving over two million Renminbi[16] input every year. Although the Chinese Red Cross Foundation (CRCF) is officially a national public fundraising organisation and an independent corporation and China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) is a non-governmental charitable organisation, both are registered under the Ministry of Civil Affairs and both are professionally supervised by the State Council Leading Group Office. This means their funding and projects are closely linked to, and supported by, the Chinese central government. As the director of DBSA explained, over 70 per cent of LFC funding came from big foundations, including CRCF and CFPA, and the rest were from the general public and companies through different fundraising approaches.

Apart from tackling hunger issue in Mathare, which addresses the physical side of local needs, LFC has the further aim of promoting education by attracting more students to go to schools

[16] Equivalent to around 300,000 USD dollars.

and supporting education by providing better learning conditions. As a long-term project, the staff members explained that it was not simply about giving out food to local people. Moreover, it involved connections with the local agricultural industry and food suppliers. Throughout the project, training was offered to schools in terms of cooking and project management. Related to this purpose of sustainable development of education, DBSA additionally launched the Scholarship project that pays school fees for students who perform well at school but are from underprivileged backgrounds. School facilities, including new desks and chairs, are provided for partner schools as well. All these projects are trying to address the physical needs, but with an underlying intention to work with the psychological improvement of the local community.

Informal education

As for the psychological dimension, DBSA is doing a lot of informal education projects under the umbrella concept 'learning centre'. As is shown in Figures 5.6.3 and 5.6.4, DBSA aims to gather networks and resources from both outside the community (international volunteer tourists, enterprises, institutions and other organisations) and inside the community (local youth, local artists and local organisations). The organisation wishes to build up a platform, providing local people with training and opportunities to showcase their talents. Specifically, there have been three projects implemented under the scheme.

The first project is the football training. DBSA has organised the annual football tournament in Mathare since 2015, and over 20 community schools have participated. After the tournament, the winning schools get trophies and rewards. Talented children who perform well in football competitions are selected into a DBSA football team, where they get further training and opportunities to represent the community at football matches. The second project is the art exhibition that provides training opportunities for school children to express their thoughts through drawings or other creative art approaches. The art exhibition is organised annually to present children's artworks. The third project is the 'Talent Show'. Similar to the art exhibition project, it selects talented children and young people in Mathare who are good at singing, rapping, dancing, modelling or acting. Every year, a big talent show

event is organised to showcase these performances in the community. The funding of those projects is mainly from agencies and individuals in Kenya or Chinese commercial companies that have operations in Kenya, such as Xiaomi and Tecno.

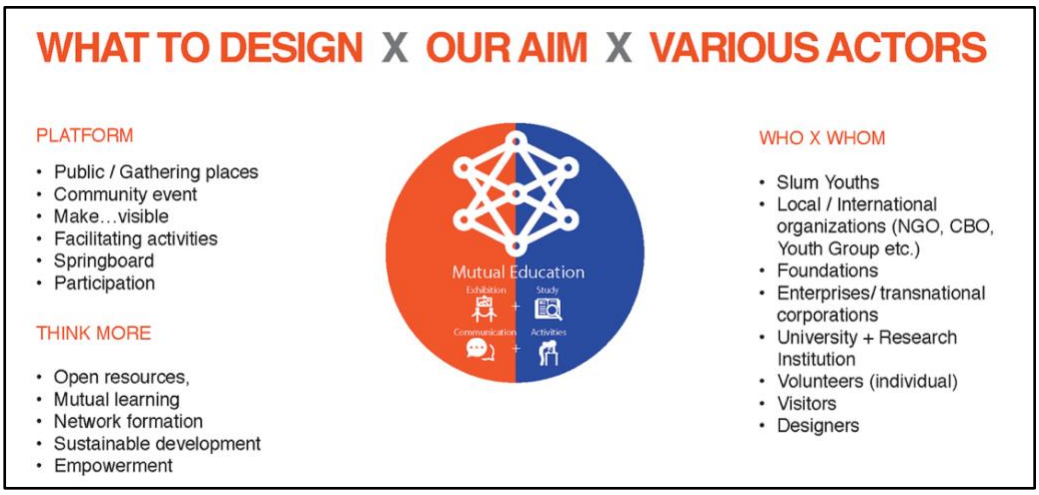


Figure 5.6.3. Designs of DBSA's informal education project -1
(Source: Dbsa-dream.com, 2018)

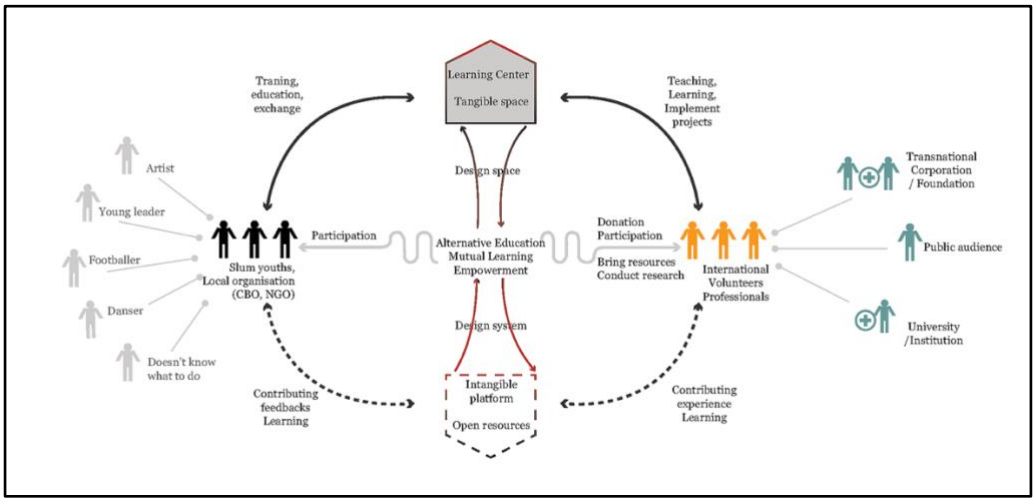


Figure 5.6.4. Designs of DBSA's informal education project -2
(Source: Dbsa-dream.com, 2018)

Informal education and training are involved in all three projects, trying to address the psychological aspect of community issues in Mathare. DBSA staff members explained that they wished to provide a platform, an opportunity or an alternative route of survival for local people. However, both the Chinese organisation and the local community were aware that the chance for someone to become a professional football player or an artist was not high. Hence,

more importantly, changes in mindset among a larger scale of children and young people in Mathare were sought through those informal education interventions. For instance, when talking about the football training, the staff member pointed out: "it was the importance of sportsmanship such as equality and respect, as well as the understanding of competition rules, that the project really wanted to address" (MH, male, Chinese staff member, DBSA). By getting training in different kinds of skills, children and young people got the chance to know what they liked and what they wanted to realise. DBSA encouraged them to work hard by themselves to fulfil their dreams, but also trained them how to concentrate and how to cooperate. These are those that young people may be unable to learn in school. As shown in the quotation below from a volunteer tourist, most of them understood the intentions of DBSA's interventions and they could see the blueprint of DBSA on different types of projects.

> From my understanding, the starting point of DBSA is still the physical assistances like the construction project. But their ultimate aim is to provide skills training. From the starting point to the ultimate aim, it needs something to fill in, or say, to connect the two. This connection now turned out to be projects like the football tournament, art exhibition and talent show. Those projects have made an impact in the community. And with these fillers, they could build the 'learning centre' for the next step. For example, they can select some talented children and young people for further training, which is a way to expand their impacts, so I think these projects are intermediate links from a foundation to the aim and they are necessary links."
>
> (DQ, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

Summary

All in all, DBSA is trying to address both physical and psychological dimensions of local needs and to find a balance between the two. As explained by the director of DBSA, physical projects aim to enhance the breadth of the organisation, while informal education projects focus more on the depth. This means that physical projects are more likely to be duplicated and easier to expand. Informal education projects, on the other hand, seek long-term empowerment, so they require the careful building of a reliable model for project implementation. DBSA's

director admitted that he was not in favour of doing physical projects. He assumed physical projects were more difficult because they required much more funding and a longer period to complete. Comparatively, he thought informal education projects were easier and quicker ways to expand the influence in the community and to let more community members know the name of DBSA.

Most of DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists believed the psychological side was more essential than the physical side. They saw the mindset change, "to fulfil the empowerment" in official words, as the major goal of all their practices from physical provisions to different kinds of informal education projects. Yet on the way to realising DBSA's goals, there are many obstacles and challenges in practice. For example, some volunteer tourists indicated that DBSA was trying to do too many things at the same time. This sometimes made them feel confused about logical connections across different projects, and they were concerned about the lack of a clear focus for the whole plan. Additionally, some volunteer tourists said that they were struggling to see longer-term impacts of what they were doing after their short stay with the community. The contradictions between the physical and psychological dimensions of community issues kept showing up during the practical process and constantly interacted with each other, which is further discussed in the following findings chapters.

5.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has painted a picture of the deplorable living conditions in Mathare, its abandonment by government and the challenges faced by any organisations trying to bring about change in social and economic conditions, aspirations and mindsets. The situation of Mathare today is largely formed by the county-wide history of Kenya, especially by the racial segregation during the British colonial time. Historical policies in housing, labour controls and migrations have resulted in the high density of population in Mathare, but also its stateless status with the high proportion of illegal residents, squatter housing, informal economic activities (Andvig and Barasa, 2014).

While accepting the absence of the state, Mathare people were counting more on non-governmental organisations' provisions and international communities' help in meeting their basic living needs like the food, and in improving community facilities such as school environments and sanitation. Those local expectations for external agencies were mainly focused on physical needs, but some residents had also been aware of the importance of education for the next generation. Education for both knowledge acquisition and mindset change was believed to offer the possibility to get out of poverty in the long run. However, whether in terms of infrastructure or educational improvements, there had been a lot of practical, interrelated and dynamic challenges for development in informal settlements like Mathare.

Since the start of the 21st century, there have been an increasing number of international organisations in Mathare and Kenya, conducting development projects and trying to make up the role of the government. Among them, the Dream Building Service Association (DBSA) is an example of a Chinese organisation. Since 2014, DBSA has developed a range of programmes offering direct material support including school building, feeding and scholarship programme, alongside very important informal educational work that attempts to build confidence and work towards local empowerment. Striking a balance between the building, feeding and informal education projects is challenging, as will be shown in more details in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 The Complexity of International Volunteer Tourism: Needs, Practices, Relationships and Impacts

6.1. Introduction

As the roles of local people in practice were distinct from those played by volunteer tourists and the organisation, their views on specific issues also differed from each other. Understanding the viewpoints and thoughts of different people is an important beginning for analysing the complexity of international volunteer tourism. This chapter investigates the priority of different aid dimensions, the involvement of and interplays among different players, difficulties and challenges in practice, divided views about impacts across groups and mixed relationships among them. It highlights reasons for distinguished views, including cultural factors and whether people occupied insider or outsider positions. Findings in this part were mainly drawn from the inductive analysis with the researcher's interpretation and reflections on relevant literature and theories. An underlying logic is employed to look at international volunteer tourism from a Personal-Cultural-Structural (PCS) model (Ledwith, 2005). It listens to voices from a personal level and interprets issues from a cultural level and a structural level. Evidence used to support findings includes sources of data from participant observation, in-depth interviews and dialogical workshops during the first period of fieldwork.

The chapter first looks at the Chinese narratives in undertaking development practices in the Mathare community. The debate about whether prioritising addressing problems at the physical level or the psychological level stood at a core place in this narrative, which had influenced the design and implementation of projects on the ground. Views from local people and Chinese volunteer tourists seemed to be different from each other, and possible cultural reasons are explained. Second, the chapter analyses the relationships among the local community, Chinese volunteer tourists and the organisation. It suggests that, while local people saw volunteer tourists as guests in many ways, volunteer tourists defined themselves more as 'givers' and 'helpers'. Both groups had mixed feelings about each other, including a

sense of insecurity, mistrust, understanding and appreciation. But in essence, the study suggests that the two groups, the local community and the Chinese organisation together with their volunteer tourists, were symbiotic and they relied on each other in many aspects. Finally, perspectives on the impacts of the organisation's practice are discussed. The chapter shows that volunteer tourists were more concerned about the potential negative impacts they had made than the local people. The latter mainly expressed positive comments on the 'Chinese group' as a whole.

6.2. Understanding the Chinese narratives

6.2.1. A debate about physical and psychological dimensions of needs

Chapter 5 introduces the Mathare community in terms of its history, poverty, education and the situation of non-governmental organisations there. It demonstrates that the local community was facing major problems in survival and education. The difficulties in finding jobs and getting stable incomes caused the prevailing poverty in Mathare. In addition to the inadequate infrastructure and public services, people were struggling in their daily lives with food shortages, poor living conditions and health-related issues. The poverty further led to the devaluing of children's education, which resulted in continuous illiteracy and a vicious cycle in Mathare. The Kenyan government's failure in dealing with those issues made local people disappointed. In this situation, they had to turn to international communities for support, hoping international organisations would make up for the missing roles of the government. In particular, they were expecting physical assistances as well as potential resources and networks behind direct donations.

> I think what they lack most is their thinking of the system and their motivation to develop. Although I feel many people here want to leave Mathare, they didn't find a proper way, or motivation to do that.
>
> (DQ, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

> I feel they feel at ease with the status quota. They might not know much about the outside world. Or they might know, but they prefer their current life. That results in their lack of motivation.
>
> (AJ, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

> I feel something inside themselves to make changes, the mentality might be the biggest problem.
>
> (TM, female, Chinese staff member, DBSA)

However, due to the complicated interested parties existing within and outside the community, it had become difficult for interventions and alternative solutions from external bodies to be well-considered for development. Even within the Chinese group, as exemplified by examples presented above, volunteer tourists and staff members held different views on community issues that should be taken as priorities to resolve. For volunteer tourists based with DBSA, they usually stayed with the community for a short period of time, after which they got varying understandings of Mathare. Those differences were largely influenced by factors such as personal experiences and educational background. For DBSA, although its projects in Mathare had started since several years ago, its identity as Chinese organisation, which also meant an organisation from outside Mathare, was still significantly affecting the way the staff and volunteer tourists thought and behaved. According to interview data from volunteer tourists and staff members, I summarised community issues in Mathare that they wanted to assist with as 'physical' and 'psychological' aspects. The two dimensions were inseparable and closely interacted with each other, but there had been a lot of debates about which should be taken as a priority.

Volunteer tourists reported that they got the direct impression of the local community's physical need once they entered Mathare, especially after visiting some community schools where DBSA was working. The iron-sheet buildings, dark and crowded classrooms, hungry children with ragged uniforms, dirty and muddy streets, all these images were reported as completely beyond those young volunteer tourists' lived experience and their hearts were hit

heavily. One volunteer tourist said with great empathy, "they lack money, which makes them lack almost everything" (DX, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). Although many of them have anticipated the life in informal settlements before arrival, they were still shocked by the real situation in Mathare as the following quotation shows, and they lost their words to describe their feelings in the face of 'poverty'.

> I've been to many other places. But this time to Africa, it is the first time I am so close to poverty. Honestly, it was like a disease. A healthy person should not be exposed to this negativity for long however warm-hearted you are. It has a great impact on you.
>
> (DF, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

After spending time interacting with Mathare people, volunteer tourists started to rethink of poverty. In addition to the prevailing material poverty, volunteer tourists were impressed by the 'happiness' and 'purity' of local people, especially of children there. It was very common to hear the words 'lovely', 'happy', 'pure', 'innocent', 'sincere' after a 'but' when volunteer tourists were describing their feelings about the community. Many of them posted pictures of the smiling faces of Mathare children on social platforms and expressed their impressions on the contrast between the material poverty of their lives and the apparently innocent happiness they displayed. As a volunteer tourist said, "these kids are really pure and lovely. But I find it hard to understand, in our countries, even children are getting a very good education, they won't be so close to strangers, hug you and even kiss you. It is really good, though, on the other hand, their lives are really poor and hard" (ZD, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA).

Simpson (2004) expresses worries that volunteer tourists' perception of local people being 'poor-but-happy' may lead to the rationalisation of poverty. The idealised and beautified poverty might make them neglect the inequality and injustice in society. This was also reflected in another impression of volunteer tourists. One volunteer tourist (KW, male) pointed out that Mathare was a very self-sufficient community, which was similar to Reback's (2007:3) description of Mathare as a 'self-contained community'. For example, although there

were serious sanitation problems and lack of public services, he noticed local people always found their alternative way to survive. Even if a lot of things were out of order or out of control from the government, the volunteer tourist reported "the community function normally on its own way in its own system" (KW, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA), and he was surprised by the vibrant commerce and thriving lives within the slum.

However, some volunteer tourists reflected more on the situation and expressed their disagreements. "I don't think they are really happy", one of them said, "on the contrary, I can feel their pain and depression" (DX, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). She explained that in her sense, the grief of local people came from the recognition of their poverty situation. She worried when local people were exposed to another culture from the outside, it might have a negative impact on them. For example, a volunteer tourist noticed it was common for Mathare residents to buy and wear second-hand clothing, which was mostly quite worn-out. Comparatively, most volunteer tourists' clothing was new and branded. He was concerned this kind of culture shock might cause a jealous emotion on the part of the local community. It might even bring a loss of motivation, because they might be unable to get what volunteer tourists had no matter how hard-working they were.

These thoughts and considerations about local poverty further led to the consideration of the psychological issues of the local community. Compared with the physical needs, most volunteer tourists thought the psychological dimension was more significant for local people. During their stay in Mathare, volunteer tourists had reported cultural shocks in two major cases. First, volunteer tourists complained that local people lacked a sense of punctuality. A volunteer tourist explained: "if setting a time for a meeting, you never expected the locals to arrive on time as promised" (XH, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). This had made the work less efficient, which volunteer tourists were quite unsatisfied about. Another complaint was about being asked for money or things from local people. At schools or when walking on the road, volunteer tourists reported they often came across local children or adults requesting things or money. If asked about the reason for that, they were usually told: "I just want it". Volunteer tourists felt surprised at the behaviour. As an interviewee said: "there are also

extremely poor areas in China, but we rarely see people asking for money. How to say, it is like begging" (ZD, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). In Chinese culture, getting something for nothing is regarded as shameful and *"*begging is something (for which) one will be looked down upon*"*, he explained. This comment shows how the volunteer tourist was interpreting this behaviour as begging, although it could also be viewed as asking for things assertively.

Some volunteer tourists questioned if the behaviour was a manifestation of cultural differences, but most of them saw the phenomenon as a result of 'mindset problems' and a deficiency in education. From the volunteer tourists' viewpoint, local people lacked the motivation and ambition to change, nor the will and desire to advance. As an interviewee said, "they are just too lazy to work. They are depending on the others to give (to) them and to save them. But they themselves don't have a kind of motivation to get rid of the poverty and to get out of the slum" (GT, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). She believed this ignorance was the essential reason for local poverty.

To resolve the mindset problem, volunteer tourists indicated the importance of education which was in line with DBSA's informal education projects. When they mentioned 'education', it was not only about acquiring knowledge but more about education on morals, manners and awareness. They thought a good-quality education must include moral education[17], which could be realised by both formal and informal education approaches. On the other hand, as suggested by an example in the following quotation, volunteer tourists believed the lack of information to understand the outside world also contributed to 'narrow' mindedness. Thus, they assumed it was necessary for the local community to get more information about what was happening out of Mathare and to interact more often with people from the outside.

> I think it is important for them to see this world, to see beyond Mathare. When they have the vision, and they might like it and build interest in it. It is unlike the kinds of hard skills, not driven by social pressure. The interest is the start of one's development. It is

[17] '德育' in Chinese.

spontaneous, it could be transferred into economic benefits. One might have a voted, be noticed, and recognised. It is for a long-term purpose, which might even be able to transform the economic inequality structure.

(LQ, male, volunteer tourists, DBSA)

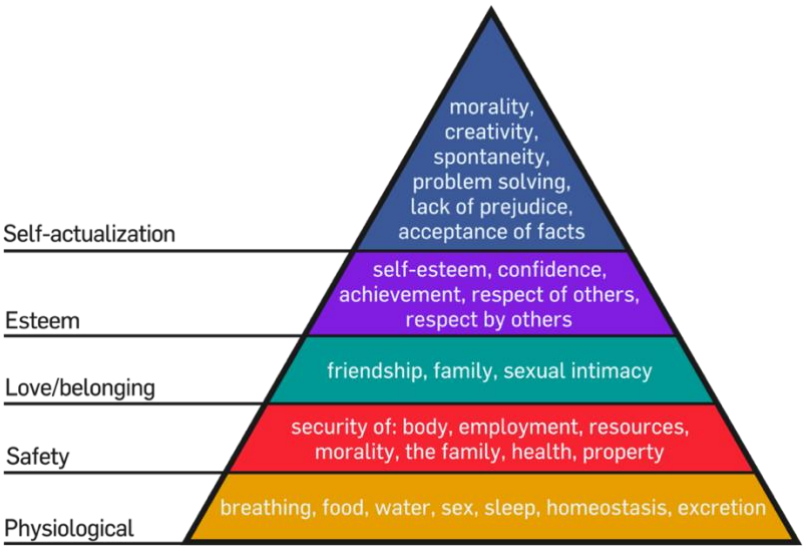


Figure 6.2.1. Hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970)

In addition, some volunteer tourists mentioned Maslow's hierarchy of needs when referring to the debates about whether to focus on the physical or psychological dimensions of local needs. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, he utilises a pyramid to present human needs with the more basic needs at the bottom (as shown in Figure 6.2.1). Physiological needs are the most fundamental needs for human beings, including shelter, food, water, health (Maslow, 1970). Self-esteem and self-respect are psychological needs at a higher level and self-actualisation is the top layer of the pyramid, referring to the realisation of one's full potential (ibid). Applying it in the case of DBSA and Mathare, formal and informal education aimed to fulfil the needs in the top two layers of the hierarchy, while contributing to basic life needs remaining at the bottom. Some volunteer tourists insisted physical needs should be taken as a priority, arguing that the lower levels might take precedence over the other levels according to Maslow's theory. They believed it might be pointless to talk about education to a starving or homeless person.

However, the stronger arguments among volunteer tourists emphasised that this did not

mean local needs at a higher level could be ignored. A volunteer tourist argued:

> It is hard to say. Even when their basic living needs have not been met, yet like many of them are still starving, they still have more desires in other dimensions. You cannot eliminate their needs in other dimensions just because they don't have enough food, or they have a poor health condition, or they cannot afford schools.
>
> (MR, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

In this view, volunteer tourists suggested changes might not follow the linear hierarchy of the model, as they revealed mindset changes could bring positive effects, or even be key to improve poor living conditions and to meet the 'lower-level' needs. As a volunteer tourist suggested, only if local people could realise the importance of making efforts by themselves, would they get initiatives to change their lives. These arguments resonate with critiques of Maslow's hierarchy in literature. For example, Maslow's theory has been criticised as ethnocentric because it assumes different individuals and cultures share the same order of needs (Bouzenita and Boulanouar, 2016). Some collectivist societies, like China, may prioritise social needs before psychological needs, and the need hierarchy of different cultures should be clarified based on the dimension of individualism-collectivism (Loh, et al., 2000, cited in Bouzenita and Boulanouar, 2016).

Regarding volunteer tourists' debates, the founder and director of DBSA responded: "I have been through all the similar thoughts and understandings about Mathare as those volunteer tourists have. And those understandings will get into more depth if they could spend a longer time in the community". In the past four or five years, when the organisation had been growing with new volunteer tourists year after year, the transformation of the organisation's focus had been in line with these views expressed by the individual volunteer tourists. As explained in Chapter 5, DBSA had tried to address both physical and psychological needs of the local community by conducting various kinds of projects, from school construction and food provision to informal education and training. To this extent, DBSA's story represented a more collective narrative of all volunteer tourists, as illustrated in projects they were doing and the

way it they were working. Within this narrative, the debate between the physical needs and the psychological needs of the locals was continually centre-stage, and finding the balance was an ongoing issue.

More important than deciding which side was right and which was wrong, the debate represented a difference between the local community and the Chinese group in focusing on internal or external factors contributing to community issues. From the perspective of local people, life challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure and poor living conditions, unmet physical and physiological needs and lack of public services, were more likely to be caused by external factors. Because of structural inequality persisting from the past and the absence of government intervention at the present time, local people were passively trapped in poverty. This version of the situation was what local people complained about most. For them, as suggested by Taylor (2003), when drawing on Maslow's hierarchy, basic human needs, such as shelter, jobs and income, are a prerequisite to self-actualisation and empowerment. Individuals might be able to play a positive part in dealing with issues like water and garbage, but, in essence, local people revealed it required higher-level management and higher-level policies to tackle the issue completely (ibid).

On the contrary, volunteer tourists and DBSA focused more on local people's subjective attitudes and motivation to change, and they particularly emphasised the importance of mindset to work hard oneself. This basically involved attributing social and economic problems to narrow community-level mindsets. Hence, volunteer tourists and DBSA tended to seek solutions from inside the community. Taking the issue of education for example, while local people were hoping for support from both government and international organisations to assist with the school facilities and qualified teachers, Chinese volunteer tourists and DBSA were focusing more on the education to encourage increased self-awareness and inner strength. They wished local people could take the initiative to be active for change by themselves and work hard to make their own lives, instead of being lazy or dependent on external assistance.

Culture difference might partially explain the reason for these differences in perspectives. In both traditional and contemporary school education, Chinese people are told of working hard and striving for a better life. There have been many Chinese old sayings, such as 'no pains, no gains'[18] and 'labour is the most glorious'[19], which keep showing the importance of making efforts by oneself as well as the consequence one should undertake if not doing so. Therefore, Chinese volunteer tourists always thought of the internal reason for a problem first, before attributing external causes. They believed Mathare people should take some responsibility for their poor living conditions. As a volunteer tourist reported, "I feel very disappointed that we are helping them, but they do not make any efforts themselves. This makes my work kind of meaningless" (GS, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). There might be other reasons for the difference in perceptions of community issues. For example, as volunteer tourists only spent limited time in Mathare and they did not interact with local people very much, their understandings of community situations might remain superficial. However, the views of volunteer tourists significantly influenced the pathways of DBSA's project designs and practices.

6.2.2. The Chinese approach: opportunities and challenges

Volunteer tourists and DBSA staff members emphasised the importance of long-term impacts during the interviews and they believed this to be a process leading to 'empowerment'. In particular, 'localisation' and 'sustainability' were the most frequent words mentioned by them.

The emphasis on 'localisation' meant a better involvement of local people in DBSA's projects and affairs. When more community members and community schools participated, it helped to expand the influence of the organisation within the community. As the DBSA's director reported, compared to many local organisations and youth groups, DBSA had strengths in funding, resources and access to networks. He mentioned that "as our volunteer tourists are mostly from the well-educated background, we have better insights of projects", so they were

[18] "吃得苦中苦，方为人上人" in Chinese.
[19] "劳动最光荣" in Chinese.

confident to not only bring benefit but also 'empowerment' (more in the sense of educating) the locals. Meanwhile, the director had recognised the importance of employing more local staff. In their words, they wished to make DBSA a more 'localised' organisation. Although volunteer tourists were believed to play irreplaceable roles, "local staff understand the local situation and local culture better" (BB, male, DBSA's director). Hence, he believed it would be easier for them to get along with other local people and deal with local affairs. DBSA had only one local staff member in 2018 and two by 2019. The majority of DBSA staff members and almost all their volunteer tourists were Chinese. This situation was expected to improve, with more local people involved in doing the organisation's work both formally and informally. As was claimed by a Chinese staff member, a higher level of localisation of DBSA could also contribute to their aim of empowerment. - Employing local people and giving them daily working experience could be seen as a way of skill training and generation of career opportunities for local people.

When it came to 'sustainability', DBSA staff and volunteer tourists were mainly talking about doing long-term projects and creating long-term benefit for the local community. Looking at DBSA's current projects, construction work and donations of physical items were mostly one-off projects. The feeding programme, Lunch For Children, was usually under three-year contracts but could be renewed. It required longer-term management, operation and maintenance, but its sustainability heavily depended on external funding. Comparatively, training and informal education projects were designed more for longer-term good essentially. However, currently, DBSA's informal education projects remained at the level of organising the annual events. The football tournament, art exhibition and talent show were their main outputs. According to the director of DBSA, they were going to work on more intensive projects, bringing resources and seeking a model to operate projects on a regular basis, so local participants could achieve improvements in skills and get further opportunities. This required more funding, more human resources and more professional trainers. Additionally, when using the term 'sustainability', it also included a legacy of knowledge and resources generated among different generations of volunteer tourists. As a staff member explained, volunteer tourists came to Mathare year after year and they left with varying

understandings of the local community. “All the knowledge and experiences should be well recorded and passed through, so DBSA and followers could learn from the past and avoid mistakes” (TM, female, Chinese staff member, DBSA).

The emphasis on ‘localisation’ and ‘sustainability’ from DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists raised certain challenging questions about their current work, which were endorsed by some locals. On top of that, DBSA’s lack of formality was regarded as a key issue. Several volunteer tourists pointed out that the structure of DBSA was not very clear in terms of both human resource structures and project settings. For example, one interviewee remarked that she was unsure about the role each staff member was playing until the end of the project. In addition, because there were so many projects going on at the same time, especially during the summer vacation when volunteer tourists were all in Mathare, some volunteer tourists felt lost in trying to understand DBSA’s focus and thought their energies were dispersed. Some interviewees used the words like ‘disordered’ or ‘chaotic’ to describe the management and arrangements of DBSA. This view had been shared by some local community members. As criticised by the director of a community school, he thought DBSA’s unclear structure had led to further issues like transparency:

> Why do you do what you do? How do we do it? What is the result? They should be very clear for everybody. So that the DBSA team is aware, and the beneficiaries are also aware. And they move together to achieve a result.
>
> (DD, male, local school director, Mathare).

These limitations were acknowledged by DBSA’s director, which he guaranteed to work on as the priority for the next-stage work. Meanwhile, he also indicated that there was still great difficulty in balancing physical and psychological aspects and putting in place a clear structure above all. With limited funding and human resources, he said DBSA had to make choices at a certain point.

On the other side, compared with other organisations in Mathare, the speciality of DBSA’s

work, as a representative of the Chinese approach, had been recognised by local people. As explained by local interviewees, the most provisions from external organisations to Mathare was in the form of one-off projects. For example, community schools were often given donations of school bags, textbooks and stationery by various international organisations. But since those organisations were not based in Mathare, local people had little understanding about them and rarely heard back from them afterwards. In this sense, they acknowledged DBSA was closer to the community. In the words of a local school principal, he noticed that DBSA and the Chinese volunteer tourists seemed to be more 'hands-on'. During volunteer tourists' stay in Mathare, he thought local people got more opportunities to communicate with them and said Chinese volunteer tourists were usually very detailed in telling local people what needed to be done or improved. As another local teacher explained, the Chinese were more willing to share. This was probably the uniqueness of the 'Chinese approach'. But overall, local people believed there was no significant difference, in essence, between DBSA and organisations from other countries, and they were appreciated for both.

6.3. Complex relationships among the local community, volunteer tourists and DBSA

Different perspectives and understandings of the community situation had affected the relationships among local people, volunteer tourists and DBSA. This section further investigates this complexity, trying to understand the mixed feelings of different groups and the reasons behind that.

6.3.1. A relation of host-guest or giver-receiver?

A large amount of the literature on volunteer tourism describes the relationship between volunteer tourists and the local community as a 'host-guest' relation (e.g. Lough, 2011; Barbieri et al., 2011; Otoo, 2014; Lough and Black, 2015). The locals are usually referred to as 'host community' or 'host country' and the volunteer tourism organisation as 'host organisation', while volunteer tourists are more like 'guests'. This might mainly see volunteer

tourism as one type of tourism product, assuming local communities or organisations provide practice fields and accommodation as hosts to volunteer tourists (McGehee,2002). From the lens of traditional volunteering, however, it is more like a 'giver-receiver' relation that volunteers provide services and assistance to local people. Under such contexts, this section looks at perceptions from both volunteer tourists and local community members to see how they identified their relationships with each other.

For volunteer tourists, almost all of them emphasised their roles more as volunteers than tourists. Even though they spent some time travelling around the country during weekends and other free time, doing development projects in Mathare was claimed as their main task and the main motivation for the journey. In this case, they referred to themselves more as 'givers' to the local community. However, since they were implementers of DBSA's projects rather than direct donors, the 'givers' they mentioned were more like 'helpers'. An interviewee explained: "We have brought opportunities and the potential of development to the locals" (ZD, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA). He believed they were delivering help, services or even hopes, rather than money or resources directly. Nevertheless, a DBSA staff member was not in favour of using this 'giver-receiver' relation. Instead, both volunteer tourists and local people were referred by her as 'learners'. She emphasised it should be a two-way relationship where local people and volunteer tourists exchanged ideas and learned from each other, and she insisted both volunteer tourists and the local community were 'receiving communities' for DBSA.

None of the volunteer tourists or staff members thought their relationship with the local community was a 'host-guest' relation, neither was their relationship with each other. Compared with other volunteer tourism products that involved payments to organisations or local communities, volunteer tourists in DBSA were more like short-term voluntary workers. Before being accepted by DBSA, they had undertaken three rounds of interviews and started preparing for the fieldwork one month before their arrival. They were responsible for all of their transportation costs. Their accommodation was organised by DBSA but paid for by themselves. Volunteer tourists did not pay any other service fees to either DBSA or the local

community. The fact that there were so few financial transactions between the different parties might explain the perception of the relationship between volunteer tourists and the local community or between volunteer tourists and the organisation as not one of host-guest.

Nevertheless, views from local people were more complex. The first time I went to Mathare, I visited a school supported by DBSA. Once I entered the classroom, the school principal asked the whole class to sing a song to me, and students showed a great familiarity to sing this song. The lyrics of the song were like this: "Welcome, welcome, our visitors. Happy to see you. Happy to see you. Thank you, our visitors". Another thing I noticed was that when walking on the street in Mathare, I found it common that young children always followed me, repeatedly saying "how are you?" and trying to touch my hands or hair. When I mentioned these scenes to local people during interviews, many of them told me that was a showing of the African culture as the following statement showed:

> We are African. African culture is that we respect our guests. Whether they are on top (higher than) us, even now if I meet new people in school, I meet them at the office, I give them hug, take them to the class. I will introduce them to the class. Those pupils will sing for that person, welcome her and make her feel at home, so make them feel wanted. It is not as… It is the culture of Africans to welcome our guests. That's how we treat our visitors."
>
> (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare)

Several local interviewees openly admitted they saw their relationship with volunteer tourists as a 'host-guest' relationship. As was indicated above, warmly welcoming visitors with hospitality presented the culture of Africa. Some local people even invited volunteer tourists to visit their home after class. Because of poverty, as this interviewee EH explained, Mathare people might not have much to provide for the guests. Instead, they sang a song or gave a cup of tea to show their welcome.

As another interviewee explained, "there is a saying in Africa that when visitors come, all good

things that were hidden will come up. So if we get one of you, or (if) one from the team DBSA approached them, they (schools) have their class where they present these things (welcome songs)" (BH, female, local school principal, Mathare). However, from my observation, local people's treating volunteer tourists as 'respectful guests' was about more than just an expression of African culture. Some school principals felt happy to see Chinese visitors because this brought them the hope that their schools would be chosen by DBSA for the next round of support. Many volunteer tourists shared the feeling of local people's desires towards them. When going to schools discussing issues about DBSA's projects, they reported teachers sometimes asked about things like textbooks. To get potential support, volunteer tourists suspected that local people were even trying to cater to them on their arrival. This made their relationship with local people resemble a 'giver-receiver' relation in essence and but in a more hidden form.

Behind the hospitality, it additionally revealed local perceptions of foreigners in general. In Mathare, local people called outside visitors who had different skin colours from them 'Mzungus'. Though strictly speaking, 'Mzungu' only referred to people of European descent, local people usually saw visitors from Asia or South America 'Mzungu' as well. As explained by a local teacher, when people called someone 'Mzungu', it showed their curiosity.

> You should understand that maybe there is a perception that Mzungus are wealthy people. Mzungus are people from very good places and you see most of them on TV. When they see them on the road… when they see the television, they see big houses in big places. So when they see a Mzungu, of course, they get excited. They think this is the kind of people, not equal to us. Because they are wealthy, that is the perception.
>
> (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare)

As indicated in the above quotation, local people saw Mzungus as more advanced people. Some of them felt proud when they took the role of being a guide showing outside visitors around. Under this perception, "local people will view foreigners as donors. They don't know these are students, they don't know these are just volunteers. They think they have money to

come and do something but that is the perception, not the reality" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare). The interviewee further pointed out that the perception was caused by lack of information and misunderstanding. For the majority of people in Mathare, there was little chance for them to interact with those volunteer tourists, so they asked for things directly from volunteer tourists, which made their relationship more like a 'giver-receiver' relationship. As suggested in the following quotation, doing advocacy might help to change the stereotypes, and more communication and interaction could promote mutual understanding.

> You see the time they interact with the children so much, they interact with them for a very long time. They (children) realise you eat their good, you eat their ugali, you drink their porridge, you stay with them all day. They realise that they are people like us. It's just colour.
>
> (AA, female, local school principal, Mathare)

6.3.2. A combination of appreciation and mistrust

A binary division between 'host-guest' and 'giver-receiver' might have simplified the complex relationship between the local community and volunteer tourists. To further explore the complexity, this section particularly looks at the combined feelings of appreciation and mistrust from local people as well as responses from the Chinese group.

Nearly all the local interviewees expressed their appreciation towards the volunteer tourists, DBSA, and international communities in general. As a community member claimed, "whatever they do, I appreciate" (BR, female, local school principal, Mathare). Since a lot of interviewees were teachers or principals at community schools, they said they also represented students and parents in feeling gratitude. Even those who had not received direct assistance from DBSA showed their appreciation and understanding. For example, while DBSA's informal education projects were able to involve as many schools as possible, their feeding project and

construction work could not benefit everyone due to the limited funding and resources. For those who had not obtained physical assistances, they understood that DBSA had to deal with its own budget and undertook fundraising in China. As one of them said, "all things cannot come at once" (RH, female, local school principal, Mathare). Overall, they showed generosity and calmness, feeling grateful that the community was being helped, even if some benefits had not come to them. This was believed by both volunteer tourists and the organisation as the giving an essential meaning to their projects. As they pointed out, appreciation meant local people cared about and cherished the efforts they made. "Only if the helped showed their appreciations, could our projects be more meaningful", DBSA's director said, and this motivated them to sustain projects in the long run. Otherwise, if local people took everything for granted, he thought the so-called development aid might increase local dependence and make the situation worse.

Local people's appreciation, in another sense, might also be explained by the traditional religion in Mathare and Kenya. The majority of Mathare residents were Christians and the Christian religion played a significant role in the local culture. When asked about aid and assistance during interviews, the most frequent comment local people made was about 'God': "I will pray for the God to come to help us", "I thank God for bringing them to (us)…" Although they did appreciate international organisations, it seemed that, in essence, they thought the help was from God. Therefore, if they had not been approached by the organisation or had not received benefits, they also believed it was out of the will of God rather than complaining about DBSA. However, from volunteer tourists' viewpoint, it was quite hard for those who came from a non-religious cultural background to understand local people's belief in God for everything. Some volunteer tourists thought that showed a lack of activeness among Mathare people. They assumed the showing of 'appreciation', especially from those have-nots, might be a way of trying to cater them so as to get future benefits. Regarding this 'all about God' attitude, as a volunteer tourist reported, 'I understand but disagree' (NQ, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). Another interviewee even suggested people in Mathare were "spoiled by poverty" and she explained as follows:

> They might take advantage of people's kindness. This place is indeed poor, but people seem to be slippery. When you talk with them, they talk about God, they tell you how hard their life is, and what they need. Basically, I think that is a way of asking or begging."
>
> (GS, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

Under this feeling and assumption, many volunteer tourists did not trust local people in practice. I noticed they were very cautious when relating with the locals, especially when it involved money. If they needed to buy some materials or rent a venue for DBSA's projects, they usually turned to local guidance for help. But they did not trust local people completely, suspecting the quotation might be excessive or assuming local people might take advantage of them.

> There are some interns when they come to Africa, (they think) what we will do is ask (for) things from them. But that is not always like that. We don't always ask for help.
>
> (AA, female, local school principal, Mathare)

That might happen in some cases, but not all. As indicated in the above statement, local people had sensed that lack of trust and thought it might be a stereotype on the part of the volunteer tourists. In return, this led to a carefulness when local people related to DBSA. A local interviewee described the feeling as a combination of 'respect and fear'. On the one hand, many community members accepted the differences between them and those Chinese volunteer tourists, in terms of the way of thinking and behaving. From their perspectives, Chinese people were very 'strict' in doing everything, so they pushed hard in bargaining for prices and or in other project implementations. As was indicated in the interviews, local people thought it meant the Chinese group was caring, so they were willing to spend time in detailed and fundamental things. Adding their appreciation about DBSA's contributions to the community, they expressed their respect to both DBSA and the volunteer tourists.

On the other hand, local people were fearful because they were afraid DBSA would suspend their projects in Mathare someday. Unlike random people walking on the street who might

ask for money from volunteer tourists directly, those school principals and teachers were very careful to request things from DBSA, as they did not want to make volunteer tourists unhappy. When asked about suggestions they wanted to make to DBSA, some of them mentioned that they wished DBSA could have a continuous system and an exit strategy before they decided to leave Mathare. An interviewee questioned, "What if they stop tomorrow? Will these children go back to the street to look for food in the garbage? Will these children stop coming to school because there is no food?" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare). He explained Mathare people had experienced several times that international organisations came to help with the community. But after a year or two, they left due to the lack of funding or some other reasons, which could make the situation even worse for the local community. Therefore, they were very concerned about whether DBSA would do the same one day. If that day came, they suggested DBSA could at least inform them of the exit-plan in advance, so that they could be well prepared. To a certain extent, this sense of insecurity was another form of distrust, implying local people did not believe DBSA's provisions and projects would be long-lasting.

Additionally, some local interviewees also expressed a lack of trust towards other locals. They revealed that some local coordinators who worked closely with DBSA were taking advantage of their roles, which had led to some negative impacts on DBSA's projects. Taking the football tournament as an example, more than one teacher reported the football matches were not fair enough in terms of the game settings as well as the football referee's judgements, because volunteer tourists were persuaded and influenced by local coordinators. One local interviewee said openly, "in the community, not everybody can be trusted. You cannot trust everybody but only a few" (AA, female, local school principal, Mathare). Reasons for the feelings of distrust and insecurity among local people are investigated in more detail under the lens of the powercube framework in Chapter 7.

6.3.3. A symbiotic relationship

According to the local needs and the narratives from the Chinese group's side, I characterised the relationship between the local people and DBSA together with their volunteer tourists as

'symbiotic'. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary, 'symbiotic' is a biological term used to describe a relationship between two different living creatures that live close together and depend on each other in particular ways. In this case, a symbiotic relationship meant the local community and the Chinese group were relying on each other for various reasons. It was a two-way relationship in which both sides got particular benefits from each other.

As was explained previously in terms of the local needs, although local people recognised education as important for community development, the majority of them tended to prioritise physical assistances from external organisations like DBSA, especially food provisions and construction improvements. Because of the poor living condition in Mathare, a large number of people were struggling to survive. Basic living conditions such as food and shelter were still the most fundamental and most urgent needs for them. Benefitting from DBSA's projects that addressed the physical side, more instant results could be seen, even though local people had a sense of insecurity and worrired that DBSA might leave someday, they believed physical provisions like the buildings or other school facilities, at least, could remain if DBSA withdrew. Also, due to this distrust, local community members hoped to be more involved in DBSA's projects, in terms of not only participation but also the ownership of those projects, including informal education initiatives. All in all, the local community obviously had needs from DBSA both from the physical side and the non-physical side.

On the other hand, local people also had things that DBSA wanted. The structure of DBSA had demonstrated that dependence on volunteer tourists to maintain the sustainability of projects was unrealistic. In DBSA's current model, volunteer tourists came to the field (Mathare) every summer vacation from July to August. For physical projects like the feeding, scholarship and construction work, volunteer tourists' tasks were doing evaluation and collecting materials for reports, dissemination and further fundraising. This suggested that volunteer tourists were essentially playing assistant roles in maintaining these physical projects, while more regular project implementation heavily depended on local partner schools as well as long-term staff members. For informal education projects, including art, talent and football, volunteer tourists took responsibilities for talent searching and training. They held the aim to

organise a carnival activity at the end of their stay, which consisted of a football tournament, an art exhibition and a talent show. However, it also meant those projects ended after volunteer tourists left. As they acknowledged, it was very necessary to involve more local trainers so that longer-term training could keep going.

More specifically, I found DBSA was counting on the local strengths in three dimensions. First, local people's need was the basis of DBSA's work and they were the keys to sustain projects after volunteer tourists left. Information from local people was important for DBSA to better identify problems and find solutions effectively and efficiently. As DBSA wanted to realise mutual learning between the local community and volunteer tourists, it meant without the participation and involvement of the local community, volunteer tourists would also lose opportunities for benefits.

Second, local people had social resources that DBSA could not access to. As explained by DBSA's director, local people had networks linked to various local youth groups, local organisations, churches and the local government, which were essential for DBSA's practice. More importantly, as introduced in Chapter 5, Mathare villages are usually in charge of chiefs and village elders. If an external organisation wants to enter the community, it has to get permission from chiefs or village elders. Thus, without local people's assistance to introduce DBSA, it could be challenging for DBSA to enter Mathare, and volunteer tourists' security could be hardly guaranteed when they were doing activities in the community. According to Kenyan laws, if a community-based organisation wants to be registered locally, at least one local citizen must be on the management board. That was one of the main reasons why DBSA involved local people in the first place.

Finally, Mathare people had indigenous knowledge about their own community system that volunteer tourists could not easily understand. For instance, if volunteer tourists needed to buy some materials, local people knew where they could find shops with the most reasonable prices. If volunteer tourists wanted to rent a venue for their events, local people knew who the owner of the venue was and who they should turn to. In 2018, volunteer tourists were

seeking to advertise their carnival event and attract a bigger audience within the community. Under advice from the local people, they managed to print posters and put them on the community's noticeboards. Some residents also helped them to rent a truck with speakers and they did a community 'cruise' together with mobile advertising, which resulted in a quite positive impact eventually.

Overall, whether for the local good or out of practical concerns, it was clear that DBSA needed the local community in various aspects and vice versa. That was how the symbiotic relationship came into being. As Dominelli (2007) suggests, the binary division of 'winner and loser', 'player and non-player' or 'insider and outsider' is problematic in community development practices which might cause tensions and conflicts. The complex relationship could no longer be simply defined as 'host-guest' or 'giver-receiver', but it was a two-way relation. Different groups of people, including the local community, volunteer tourists and the organisation, got to know each other and they learnt from each other through interactions. Sometimes there might be arguments and disagreements, and some people became good friends in the end. As one local interviewee said:

> You know what I can tell you, we have different hats, you can be China. Just as I was saying, the way we do things is different. Your hat is not my hat, the way you think is not the way I think.
>
> (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare)

But in essence, that was just a hat defined by different contexts and a hat could be taken on and off, rather than a hat that defined who somebody was. As is discussed in the literature on development studies and post-colonialism, there is not, nor should there be, a simple division between *Self* and *Other*, or a decision about who is inferior or superior. After the relationship between different individuals and different groups was built up, it was the bond of the relationship that mattered. The bond might contain a mix of positive or negative feelings, understandings and misunderstandings, needs and desires, dependences and utilisations, conflicts and disagreements. Every individual's choice and behaviour, including that of both

volunteer tourists and local people, then formed the narratives of DBSA as an organisation and Mathare as a community, as well as the relationship between the two.

6.4. Complex impacts: a big success?

After understanding the needs of the local community, the vision of DBSA, thoughts of volunteer tourists, and their relationship with each other, this section looks at the impacts of international volunteer tourism from different perspectives. As positive impacts overwhelm negative impacts in volunteer tourism literature, I analyse the DBSA's practice in Mathare critically to further explore the complexity of its impacts.

6.4.1. Voices from Chinese volunteer tourists

Personal level empowerment

As was explained, DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists addressed the importance of tackling mentality issues and promoting initiatives of local people to change their own lives. Corresponding to their understandings in this way, they believed the positive impacts of their work were mainly about the transformation of local mindsets. More precisely, they pointed out mind changes were happening in three ways: skill improvements, development opportunities and future possibilities. Fundamentally, volunteer tourists suggested that necessary skills of local participants had been improved through training from various informal education projects. Either sports or arts, they thought local participants might turn those skills into professions someday and generate financial income from it. Many volunteer tourists mentioned the old saying during the interview: "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime"[20]. Compared with direct financial support, they believed skill training was a more sustainable way of empowerment.

In addition, volunteer tourists claimed training activities had created opportunities for

[20] "授人以鱼，不如授人以渔" in Chinese.

children and young people to identify their potentials and had provided platforms for them to showcase their talents. An interviewee pointed out that informal education gave new experiences to local people, which, otherwise, many students might not be able to get in their ordinary lives. Although the time and the scale of activities were quite limited, "it was the awareness and interest in sports and arts that were important for students' growth" (MR, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). Some other volunteer tourists believed they had enriched the lives of Mathare, and if students' spare time could be occupied by meaningful activities, it helped to prevent them from involvement in bad activities like crimes and drugs. Furthermore, by assembling resources that many local people might not have access to, volunteer tourists indicated they offered a platform to connect local talent to a broader world. For example, the annual carnival event of DBSA had attracted audiences of tens of thousands. Several local media and online platforms had broadcasted performances or reported stories. As a result, the local people involved in the talent shows had become more well-known not only within the community, but also among broader audience groups. This was believed by volunteer tourists to be a good start for local artists to get more opportunities in the future.

Finally, volunteer tourists and DBSA's staff members mentioned hopes and possibilities for the local community, which were seen as essential in influencing local people's minds. As a staff member explained, by introducing cultures and possibilities of ways of life from a different world, local people's horizons were broadened, and "they started to understand there were different choices of lives other than living the whole life in the slum" (LQ, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA). Volunteer tourists believed that not everyone in Mathare was content with the status quo. For those who were not, they should be properly guided to fulfil their dreams and potentials. "They should be motivated to get rid of slums by transferring their curiosities into ambitions and actions", one interviewee (AJ, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA) suggested.

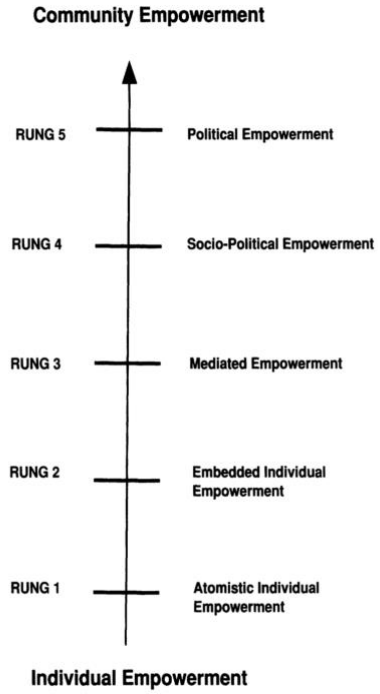


Figure 6.4.1. Ladder of empowerment (Rocha, 1997)

The informal education projects, therefore, served as an important approach for 'enlightenment' [21] (DQ, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA). In the Chinese language, 'enlightenment' is the word used more frequently than 'empowerment', referring to awareness-raising through educational approaches. But in this research, enlightenment mentioned by volunteer tourists was still focusing on the personal level empowerment. If referring to Rocha's ladder of empowerment (Figure 6.4.1.), it remained at the very bottom rung of 'atomistic individual empowerment' that focuses on individuals' capability building (Rocha, 1997). As a volunteer tourist (NQ, female) explained, "if there could be one or two successful examples, that's enough". She expected that the one or two good 'examples' could hopefully become role models in the community and motivate more people for change. This personal development might be the foundation for transformative change, but DBSA itself seemed not involved very much in higher-level community empowerment, nor was it interested.

[21] "启蒙" in Chinese.

A sense of incapacity

For volunteer tourists, they were also aware their visions remained very abstract, especially when long-term impacts had not yet been visible. Because of this, concerns among volunteer tourists about potential negative impacts actually overwhelmed positive hopes. On top of this, volunteer tourists felt a sense of incapacity. After learning about the local situation, they said they were upset because they were unable to tackle complex community issues. As was explained in Chapter 5, the lack of infrastructure in Mathare, such as sewerage, water supply, electricity, and garbage collection, was difficult resolve, even by governments or through multilateral development aid like United Nations agencies, let alone small organisations like DBSA. "Measurements we undertook only give temporary solutions rather than a permanent cure", one volunteer tourist (DF, female, DBSA) indicated. Like the feeding project, the director of DBSA admitted that they could only offer assistant jobs, given hunger was an essential problem for the whole country.

Due to this negative attitude, some volunteer tourists started to question the meaning of their work. They were disappointed to realise that some development projects were just well embellished in the name of 'humanitarianism'. Although their hearts were full of passion for changing the world, this seemed to be a meaningless aspiration in the end.

> I have a strong feeling of incapacity. Many times, I see some problems and I want to make some influences. But I don't know what to do. I can do nothing to change or solve it.
>
> (XH, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

The above quotation was representative of the views of many volunteer tourists. As was acknowledged, they had idealised charity work, and their views on local development had been largely restricted by their 'outsider' identity. However hard they tried, their short-term stay in the community did not allow them to fully understand local circumstances in Mathare, which might have led to the failure to meet local needs truly. One volunteer tourist gave an example that when doing the art training, the schools related to them passively rather than participating actively. "We wish them to see drawing as a way of expression, but it seems that

we are just consuming our relationship with partner schools" (WQ, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). She felt the training was like providing tasks for schools to finish and for volunteer tourists to get a certain number of paintings. She doubted if local people really understood their intention or if the projects were substantially helpful.

As for physical assistance, although volunteer tourists believed they had brought better living and health conditions to the local community to a certain extent, they were concerned about fairness and balance in the selection process. As revealed by some volunteer tourists, LFC (the feeding project), in particular, had broken the former community balance, which might not be a good outcome. While the number of students enrolled in the schools that were part of the LFC project increased, student numbers in schools without food fell dramatically. One interviewee was concerned, "it makes me feel that our project has turned schools into canteens. Children come to schools because of food rather than education" (DX, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). She argued DBSA should not play such an influential role in "disordering the 'market' of community schools" and it might be negative to promote overall education in Mathare.

> Because of short-term volunteer tourists like us, it makes local people believe in 'contingency'. They have taken 'contingency' as 'normalcy', so they are used to asking for things from others. They wait for gains without pains, just like someone stands by a tree stump waiting for a hare to dash itself against it[22]. This is not good."
>
> (DF, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

Moreover, as was shown in the above quotation, volunteer tourists were worried that their provision might have resulted in an even more serious degree of local dependency, which accorded with one major point in Guttentag's (2008) framework in analysing the negative impacts of volunteer tourism. As volunteer tourists saw internal mindsets as very important, some of them argued charity organisations like DBSA, to a certain extent, had spoiled the

[22] "守株待兔" in Chinese. It is a traditional Chinese fable.

habits of local people. “We may have resulted in the loss of local people’s motivations as well as capacities to create their own lives” (DF, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA).

Reflections on dependency

During my fieldwork, I went to a community school with a volunteer tourist one day. I observed a local child came by and asked the volunteer tourist for something. The volunteer tourist took out a cake from his bag and gave it to the child. He told me the child had asked for it several weeks ago and he promised to buy him a cake before he left. The child looked very excited. Even though the volunteer tourist suggested to him that he might eat the cake after getting back home, he jumped out of the classroom and started eating the cake in front of many other children as if he was showing off what he had got. Not surprisingly, when the volunteer tourist stepped out of the classroom, he was soon surrounded by a lot of children asking for cakes as well. He expressed his confusion to me about how to balance his personal connection with his local friends, while not causing potential side effects by his behaviour. “There are definitely both good and bad sides, and that’s something you can never control”, he said.

Many volunteer tourists reflected on this same point. They thought their short-term role was one main cause of their lack of capability and the poor management of DBSA was another. After the one-month practice in Mathare, most volunteer tourists honestly admitted what they had gained was far more than what they had done for the community. But they were not very satisfied with the planned goals to bring sustainable development and empowerment to Mathare. As some of them complained, what they had done was rather superficial and temporary or even had increased the local burden in one way or another. They did not want to be guests or to be served by the locals, but they were ambitious to make changes. However, they implied DBSA’s lack of formality in operation and management had resulted in incomplete work and imperfect implementation. In the end, their enthusiasm cooled down, and when thinking of their social responsibility, they felt rather disappointed and self-blaming.

In response to concerns from volunteer tourists, the director of DBSA explained it was normal

to have doubts and questions. “Don’t come to conclusions too fast though”, he said. On the one hand, he thought long term effects took time to be seen. As it was the first time the DBSA team have undertaken projects in Mathare, and he wished to have more time to learn from experience, to test out what might work and what might not. On the other hand, regarding DBSA’s inevitable role in community issues, he suggested it more important to consider how to direct change onto the right track rather than to avoid change completely. As he said, “the balance should be broken. It doesn’t necessarily mean a bad thing. Otherwise, how can change happen?”

6.4.2. Views from the local community

On the contrary, the local community seemed to acknowledge more positive impacts than DBSA and volunteer tourists. During interviews, local people expressed a prevailing appreciation when asked about how they thought of DBSA. One local interviewee said, “DBSA only brings positive impacts, no negative impacts” (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare). Those positive impacts were represented in both the physical dimension and the psychological dimension.

Overwhelming positive comments

As local people valued the physical dimension more than informal education, they particularly addressed the benefits they got from DBSA’s physical development projects, especially schools that had received construction assistance or food provision. For one thing, teachers said schools had been reinforced and learning environments had been improved. This allowed students to study under better and safer conditions. When the schools were made of iron sheets, students were often cut by the sheets, but such incidents had been significantly reduced after the school structures were upgraded to concrete. For another, teachers indicated that the fitness status of students had been obviously improved. Before the feeding project, students usually came to school without eating breakfast. During the lunchtime, they used to spend two hours travelling back home for food. After DBSA provided the feeding,

teachers reported students became much healthier and "the concentration level increases" during school time. Because lunches were provided at schools, a principal explained they were able to cut down the lunch break to forty minutes and thus, could have more classes, and students' school performance has improved. According to schools' records, the attendance rates at those schools with feeding programmes had increased, as more parents sent dropout children back to schools given free food was provided. This also meant the schools gained more income for operation and improvement of teaching conditions.

In terms of the psychological side, local interviewees thought informal education projects brought positive impacts as well, though the reasons they mentioned might be more realistic compared to volunteer tourists' talk of 'hope' and 'opportunities'. Mostly, local people reported that the joy and confidence students got during the process of the project was more important and more universal than the products. As a teacher explained, children enjoyed doing various kinds of activities other than academic subjects, and they got especially excited when volunteer tourists brought novel cultural things or when big gatherings happened. For instance, in one art training class, volunteer tourists gave empty Chinese opera masks to students and encouraged them to draw their own. A local interviewee told me that she would never have known how talented her students were without this opportunity and she gave an example as follows:

> I can remember an incidence. I have a boy in class 6, when we finish presenting his work (drawing), one lady (a volunteer tourist) who was assessing this, spotted the boy. And the boy felt as if he was above everybody. Because before then, he is a time taker (someone who is slow at learning), so that boy was never identified anywhere. But during this time, he worked as one of the perfect, and was spotted by the guest. In fact, he is even doing better now because he had somebody who could give him a bag (as the prize). After the drawings, he turned around to meet the classmates and tell them, you know what, I can also do this… He knows that I am not good at that, but I can do this. It has boosted his general imagination. We did not spot that, but due to this good initiative of drawing, now we realise that. (RH, female, local school principal, Mathare)

This interviewee told me children entertained themselves when creating things through innovative approaches, and they felt proud when their works were exhibited in front of the whole community. Learning by playing might be the opportunity when different possibilities of life occurred, which had been recognised by both children and teachers now. Likewise, another local school principal reported that he realised what his school could do next - he would pay more attention to nurture students' talent. He planned to include more creative art subjects in the curriculum so as to 'liberate' his students. For the football project, a school principal said happily indicated that some female students had gained opportunities to continue high school education with scholarships because of their excellent performance in the football tournament. While many people in Mathare did not encourage girls to engage in football, he insisted girls could also have improved futures through sports. He appreciated DBSA for organising the football tournament for both boys and girls.

Apart from the above benefits, local people expressed positive comments on DBSA and volunteer tourists because of the way they interacted with the community. An interviewee gave me an example, saying she was pleased that Chinese volunteer tourists ate food with children at schools when they were in Mathare. "Instead of going to hotel eating, they are eating here with the children. You know when you do that, they also see, feel the way when children eat. It's not like other people – 'I don't like this food because food made me vomit'" (AA, female, local school principal, Mathare). This made her feel respected, and she believed sharing food with students also meant volunteer tourists were responsible for their work, trying to understand the project and to test out by themselves whether the food was good or bad.

Figure 6.4.2. Opera masks created by local students in the exhibition.

Figure 6.4.3. Excited children running around the field after their school's football team win the match.

In addition, regarding Guttentag's (2008) concerns that volunteer tourists may deprive local residents of employment opportunities, it came out as the opposite in this research. As was indicated in the following quotation, local residents were happy DBSA had generated some job opportunities when they started a school-construction project. Although many jobs were temporary ones, they appreciated it, given the difficult situation to find incomes in Mathare. "At least the money is good," a worker said.

> They are coming to offer some jobs. Those people who are building schools, DBSA schools. DBSA did not come with their teams to build up schools, so DBSA is providing jobs for schools they have been built. So DBSA benefits the community. Because they are giving the money to those who are building the schools, so they just take DBSA positively.
>
> (SA, female, local school principal, Mathare)

Figure 6.4.4. Free food offered by DBSA at partner community schools

In fact, those very detailed and practical benefits mentioned by local people were not well recognised by volunteer tourists who mostly had a vague ambition to 'change the world'. While volunteer tourists were worried their work might be useless, local people thought what

they have done were 'noble', believing "they go up to grassroots level and find problems on the ground". They appreciated that DBSA had brought peace and harmony to the community. Because of the existence of DBSA, students were brought together, and schools were able to develop a good relationship with community members around. As summarised by a local interviewee, "DBSA has raised the community" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare).

Behind the compliments

One reason why the views from volunteer tourists and local people were so different might be because from local people's perspective, they saw the Chinese group as a whole body, including volunteer tourists, DBSA and donors behind them. Unlike volunteer tourists who looked at the situation from their individual points of view, questioning themselves about the limitations of doing short-term projects, local people valued the work of 'the Chinese body' as a whole. Thus, they believed the Chinese group had achieved things from the 'small' to the 'big', and they expected potentially 'bigger' projects in the future.

Nevertheless, behind the overall positive picture, local people also suggested some unsatisfactory work and gave their advice accordingly. First, local interviewees indicated that volunteer tourists might be too dominant and too strict in project implementation. For instance, to coordinate with volunteer tourists' plan of art training, principals reported they had to postpone school exams. They did not complain or think volunteer tourists had got in the way of their regular teaching plans, but they suggested volunteer tourists should not push their own agenda so much and should allow more time for advance notifications.

Second, some local participants pointed out details of DBSA's project designs could be improved. Particularly for training, they advised volunteer tourists to think more about participants' preferences. Some of them complained they were not provided with food or water during the training. Others were not content with the prizes they were given. The football coach whose team won the second prize in the tournament gave an example: their team was rewarded with a new football and 1500 shillings (equivalent to 15 dollars), which he thought was definitely not enough to share with all 20 players in the team. Local people

emphasised the prize was not the main reason they decided to participate, but it brought them honour, so volunteer tourists should give it greater consideration.

Third, the lack of follow-up and feedback was mentioned by local interviewees as another limitation of DBSA's work. As local people hardly heard back from volunteer tourists after they left, teachers thought this could bring psychological disappointment to their students. Additionally, local interviewees found their links with DBSA were mainly based on their relationships with specific volunteer tourists whom they worked with. This meant their linkage with DBSA was hard to maintain after volunteer tourists left. Promises made by one volunteer tourist could not be kept by another, and everything seemed to start over the next year. One school principal said she was given forms by volunteer tourists about applying for sponsorships one year. She asked students and parents to fill them in, but she never heard back from DBSA. She told me, "the parents have been coming asking, was my child sponsored? The money is given to you and you used it? Some parents are complaining and asking." She was quite bothered and suggested DBSA should keep communicating with them and provide feedback for whatever they did with the community. In other words, DBSA should be clearer about the procedures of their projects and make information more transparent to local people, which was related to the 'formality' issue mentioned previously.

The final negative thing mentioned by local people was the unfairness that DBSA has brought, although indirectly. This was different from the previous three points about the details of project designs. It was about DBSA's role in Mathare, which was similar to volunteer tourists' concerns that their entering the community might have changed the previous balance. The problem manifested very obviously in DBSA's LFC project as the situation of participating schools and non-participating was completely different. As an interviewee said sadly, "they just told us to keep on waiting. But we are suffering… It's getting worse. It is true" (BR, female, local school principal, Mathare). Her school had been losing students significantly and struggling to maintain school operations ever since DBSA's feeding began.

6.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the complexity of volunteer tourism is evident in the case of DBSA's practice in Mathare, Kenya. The complexity was represented from varying perspectives across different groups of people, showing differences mainly between the Chinese group and the local group, on community issues and priorities for change. Cultural differences contributed to the complexity, which had led to mixed relationships among different groups as well as mixed understandings of impacts from different angles.

From the perspective of the local community, basic life challenges and poor education conditions were mentioned as the most urgent issues they wished international organisations to help with. However, when it came to the debate about prioritising physical or psychological dimensions of the local needs, DBSA and Chinese volunteer tourists seemed to value mindset change more than physical assistance, assuming it as a major goal to fulfil the local empowerment. This showed that the Chinese organisation and volunteer tourists tended to neglect structural reasons for community issues but focused more on internal attributes like individuals' motivation for change and individual initiatives to act. Under this belief, DBSA had made a lot of effort to undertake informal education projects, including training in football, art and talent apart from construction and feeding. In the long run, they wished to make projects more localised by involving more local participation and developing more sustainable partnerships with local people.

Views of the Chinese group were essentially different from local people's expectations. While local people were expecting international organisations to replace the absent role of the government, the Chinese group tended to seek solutions from the inside and help community members to work hard by themselves. Cultural differences might partially explain the different opinions, but it might also be because Chinese volunteer tourists lack an in-depth understanding of local situations. In essence, the 'empowerment' DBSA and volunteer tourists aimed at was mainly personal level empowerment rather than community empowerment for structural transformations. Local people's focus was not on structural change either, as they

were more concerned about one-way aid from the Chinese organisation.

The differences in thinking had somehow shaped in the relationship between the Chinese group and the local community. Local people, especially those who worked closely with DBSA, referred to their relationship with the Chinese group as 'host-guest'. This view reflected the importance of hospitality in African culture, which the research revealed it might also imply the mix of expectations for benefits. However, while they appreciated volunteer tourists' work to bring positive changes to the community, they felt a sense of insecurity at the same time, worrying DBSA might stop provision and leave Mathare someday. As a result, they valued substantial physical provision more and they wished to gain further ownership of the projects. Volunteer tourists and DBSA, on the other hand, did not trust local people very well as they assumed the mindset issue was a big community problem. They held control over many decisions in both project designs and project implementation. Nevertheless, due to their limitation in understanding local situations and assembling local resources, they also relied on the local community heavily to sustain their operations. All in all, it came out both groups had strengths that the other needed. This essentially made their relationships a symbiotic one in that they depended on each other in different respects.

Finally, unlike overwhelmingly positive impacts documented in international volunteer tourism literature, this research found a mix of positive and negative impacts, as well as divided opinions between volunteer tourists and local community members. Different from the positive comments from the local community on DBSA's work, volunteer tourists seemed to have more concerns about potential negative impacts they had brought. They felt a sense of incapacity in solving many deep-rooted community issues and they found it disappointing when unable to see longer-term impacts. More importantly, they were worried that DBSA's intervention had increased local dependency, and that they, as outsiders, had played too big a role in refiguring the community balance.

Local people, on the other hand, addressed many practical benefits they had got from DBSA. In particular, schools that were part of the programmes were happy to see the physical

improvement of the learning environments and the increase in students' health conditions. As for informal education projects, although long-term impacts had not yet to be seen, teachers reported their students' confidence had been raised and they had enjoyed themselves through various innovative activities. Viewing volunteer tourists, DBSA and donors behind them as a whole 'Chinese body', local people appreciated them for raising standards in the community and bringing harmony to the community. Even though there were still unsatisfactory aspects of DBSA's work such as the unfairness and biases in distributing resources and selecting beneficiaries, local people seemed not to blame the Chinese group essentially for that.

Chapter 7 Power Dynamics in Volunteer Tourism: Empowerment and Participation with Hidden Power in Closed Spaces

7.1. Introduction

Chapter 6 illustrated the complexity of international volunteer tourism on the ground. It provided a robust underpinning to understand the context of volunteer tourism and to further analyse the power dynamics across different stakeholder groups in more depth. As was explained in Chapter 6, primarily inductive analysis was combined with the underlying understanding informed by the logic of the PCS model. Personal-level voices and culturally informed interpretations were both represented. This chapter continues the logic of the PCS model, seeking to understand structural power-related issues more specifically. Theories of power and the powercube framework are applied for a theory-driven analysis. Evidence used in this chapter includes data from participant observation, in-depth interviews and dialogical workshops during the first fieldwork research, as well as my field notes of interpretations.

The chapter first looks at the mechanisms of 'power to', 'power with' and 'power within' from DBSA staff members' claims, volunteer tourists' intentions and local people's expectations. It suggests a difference in understandings of 'empowerment' between the Chinese group and the local participants. DBSA and volunteer tourists were likely to prioritise a non-relational 'power to' associated with an orientation to 'get things done'. However, local people were expecting more substantial and direct power from DBSA, including power to identify local needs, power to design and conduct projects, and power to own the projects. Second, the chapter investigates 'power over' mechanisms that were identifiable in practice. It describes the visible and hidden forms of power in closed spaces and it analyses the reasons for this. By applying Arnstein's ladder of participation, the chapter finds local people's participation remained at the non-participation and tokenism levels. To achieve a higher level of citizen power requires collaborations across different groups to build up, what are conceived of as, 'floating spaces' and development of more formal organisational structures. Additionally, the research finds that neither the Chinese group nor local people fully recognised invisible forms

of power in the local society. For the local community, the research particularly suggests local people's lack of awareness due to cultural reasons as well as the constraining actions taken by the Chinese group. Finally, the chapter looks at the claimed spaces created by local people and the conflicts of power at the sub-organisational level. It reveals the domination and oppression of certain local coordinators raised by DBSA, and it describes resistance actions undertaken by other community members in response. Suggestions on keeping a community balance properly are made accordingly.

7.2. 'Power to', 'power with' or 'power within'?

7.2.1. 'Empowerment' claims from the Chinese organisation and volunteer tourists

Power to get out of the slum

DBSA staff members claimed that the ultimate mission of their projects was to realise youth empowerment and capacity building. Since 'empowerment' was one of the most frequent words mentioned by both DBSA staff and volunteer tourists, I further analysed what they meant by 'empowerment' exactly. In Chinese, 'empowerment' is written as '赋权(fu quan)', which consists of two characters - one is a verb (赋 fu), showing the action of 'giving', and the other is a noun, meaning 'power' (权 quan). In this sense, the word 'empowerment' in Chinese is relational as it involves the directional giving of power from one to another. This is similar to one definition of 'power to' that refers to a transmission of the power from A to B (Partzsch, 2017).

However, by listening carefully about DBSA staff members' and volunteer tourists' claims, I found that respresentations of 'empowerment' that they mentioned more resembled a positive-sum approach of empowerment, where a non-relational 'power to' was addressed and the ability to get things done was expected. This linked back to the self-assessments from the Chinese volunteer tourists. As mentioned in Chapter 6, volunteer tourists were very concerned about the limitations of their work. Many of them acknowledged they were incapable of resolving deeply rooted community issues that local people were faced with.

Even though they regarded themselves as helpers who delivered some positive changes to Mathare, they assumed their assistance was very limited. They thought their short-time involvement as outsiders had restricted their understanding of local situations in more depth. As a volunteer tourist pointed out: "Doing the one-month project and talking with the local for several times is not enough. We can never blend into local society as outsiders" (KW, male). Being aware of these limitations, they did not think they were more powerful than local people, or they had more power to give away.

This might also partially explain the perceptions of both volunteer tourists and DBSA staff members that placed emphasis on inspiration to change mindsets. They believed that, under the current unprivileged living conditions, only if local people could increase their motivation and resilience, would they realise the improvement of their own lives. Built upon their connection with the local community, DBSA's empowerment approach was to help local people to increase capacities and work hard by themselves, so as to become more powerful in getting rights for their personal development such as enough food, proper shelters and school education. In addition to the cultural reason assessed in Chapter 6 that Chinese people tended to address individual internal attributes, it was also because neither the organisation nor volunteer tourists had the capability to solve structural problems of the local society in this case. In other words, they had no power to share in tackling those higher-level issues. Under this overall sense of incapability, DBSA's empowerment approach was somehow an indirect way of problem-solving. As a volunteer tourist suggested, "they (local people) don't have ambitions to get out of poverty, to get out of slums. They don't have such desires. I think that's what they lack, to go out of slums so as to change their lives and fates" (ZD, male). Volunteer tourists tended to believe striving by oneself to get out of the slum was the only possible solution for individuals, rather than seeking improvements to people's lives in the slum.

A catalyst for change through empowerment

For DBSA, a staff member emphasised a two-way relationship between Chinese volunteer tourists and local people. As the following quotation shows, both volunteer tourists and local people were seen as the receiving communities of DBSA and the organisation played a role to

bridge the two groups.

> I think when we were doing things, we don't just see the local community as a receiving part. The volunteer tourists we brought, they are also a receiving community. So I think there is a mutual relationship... We are focusing on youth empowerment because we ourselves are a team made of young people. So when youth meet youth, primarily you need to put them on an equal position, rather than you are giving the other in charity.
>
> (MN, female, Chinese staff member, DBSA)

In the two-way relationship that this interviewee explained, mutual learning and culture exchange was supposed to happen, and both sides were irreplaceable. Volunteer tourists were supposed to learn about the local culture, reflect on their own situation and improve their practical skills through experiences in the field. DBSA hoped that local people would gain a better understanding of Chinese culture, learn skills, identify talents and get opportunities. The two groups linked with each other because of DBSA. However, DBSA's director did not see the organisation as a powerful actor in the relationship, neither did he see either of the two groups as being more or less powerful. Their 'empowerment' approach was to exchange power and assets between the two groups so as to generate more power through the mutual learning process. In this sense, it is more like 'power with' mechanism that different stakeholders achieve synergy through collaborations or through the process of collective actions and alliance building (Gaventa, 2006). The fulfilment of personal development for both groups, especially local people, was essentially achieved by themselves. The role of DBSA was more likely to be the catalyst for the change.

As both observed in my fieldwork and suggested by interviewees, there were mainly four pillars involved in Mathare's problems: the local government, community members, local organisations and youth groups, and external agencies and international communities like DBSA. The missing efforts from any single pillar would cause dilemmas in practice. According to a staff member, DBSA's main connection was with local schools. Still, they found it hard to approach the local government or other local organisations due to their limitations as

outsiders. Additionally, a staff member pointed out that they did not want to 'touch the inherent interests of them (the local government and local organisations)' (MN, female). This implied that DBSA tried to keep themselves away from local politics and avoided being competitors for power with other groups in Mathare. As an alternative, they focused on the group of community members, addressing internalised attributes of the problems and trying to raise awareness for individuals. In other words, again, the organisation positioned themselves as an assistant or a booster to promote changes, rather than a direct actor to act for change. This demonstrated the underlying ideology of DBSA's whole empowerment approach.

A process-driven approach

> Meeting the local needs is one dimension, but what is more important is participation. Meeting the needs only shows the result. Learning and participation are the processes.
>
> (QN, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

Under this ideology, DBSA staff and volunteer tourists overall saw their direct provision projects as unsustainable and incomplete approaches for change, and they wanted to make up with more efforts in developing informal education. The above quotation from a volunteer tourist indicated his belief that projects that dealt with local material needs were using a result-driven approach, when what they preferred was a process-driven approach. Specifically, the result-driven approach meant providing support directly to local people. For instance, DBSA's projects that addressed physical provisions, including feeding, scholarships and school construction, were all associated with a 'results-driven' approach. When doing this type of project, DBSA was the direct giver, direct actor and thus, the power holder, manifested in the direction of the power transferring from DBSA to the local. Nevertheless, DBSA representatives and volunteer tourists were not in favour of the 'results-driven' approach because it was not consistent with their understanding of 'empowerment'. Instead, they wanted to turn their physical assistance projects towards a form of 'power with' and a 'process-driven' approach - local people would learn things and generate power through

projects rather than get benefits without any committed efforts.

As planned by DBSA, one way to realise this transformation was to increase local people's investment into physical provision projects. For instance, a member of DBSA staff explained that they were planning to set up an '8+2' model for the Lunch For Children project, meaning that DBSA provided eighty per cent of funding for the feeding and with the responsibility for the remaining twenty per cent resting with the local community themselves. In the long run, their idea was to keep reducing financial support, gradually making the model '7+3' or '6+4' year by year. In this way, they thought the ownership of the project could be shared. Eventually, local people might be able to sustain the project by themselves entirely without any assistance from external bodies. As various volunteer tourists viewed this issue, local people should no longer be simply passive receivers or totally dependents, but they should undertake the responsibility to maintain the projects by themselves sooner or later.

However, this model cannot be realised without the efforts and agreement of local people. If local people were unable to generate income or find money to invest the 'twenty per cent' share, then the project could not sustain either. Informal education projects, hence, were designed to increase local capabilities, and the training itself was seen as the process-driven process. Instead of waiting for instant benefits through direct provisions, informal education projects focused on participation and involvement from the beginning. As explained by a staff member, DBSA had built an umbrella concept of 'learning centre'. Under the scheme, different types of training were planned to be provided, including vocational skills, entrepreneurship skills and talent-related skills that they had already started doing. Local people were supposed to generate incomes and make a living on their own after training. In other words, DBSA and volunteer tourists aimed to assist local people to generate power for themselves by sharing technical methods and necessary knowledge. From a power view, their expectation of activating local people's motivation for change was similar to the increasing of 'power within' through raising self-consciousness, confidence, and desires for change amongst the local community (Gaventa, 2006).

However, again, this self-consciousness raising aim remained at the personal level rather than further political empowerment. From the views of volunteer tourists and DBSA staff, the reason for awareness-raising and capacity building was not to sustain individual lives within Mathare but to enable individuals to get out of the slum. As reinforced in the following quotations, a more collective objective for structural transformation of the whole community remained lacking and was rarely mentioned in the volunteer tourists' interview data.

> What they lack most are motivations. They get used to being helped. They want you to give them a job, rather than searching for jobs and making applications by themselves. They seem never think in that way.
>
> (GT, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

> I think at least we need to let a part of local people understand how to make a living by one's own efforts. Their work should be valued and acknowledged, which can be shown in an increased income. After that, they might be able to live a better life.
>
> (DQ, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

In summary, volunteer tourists' and DBSA staff members' claims of 'power with' and 'power within', or a non-relational 'power to' mechanism were closer to what they meant by realising 'empowerment' for local people. They did not see themselves and the local community as separate with one being more powerful and the other being less. Especially when dealing with community issues with rooted structural reasons in the local society, they felt a sense of incapability. Thus, DBSA expected power to be generated through mutual learning and asset exchanging. Instead of delivering provisions directly, they tended to place emphasise on 'process-driven' approaches for development, though it should be noted that at the current stage, direct delivery was still a significant proportion of what was actually done. By providing training and toolkits, they tried to raise local people's awareness, so as to increase their capabilities and skills to generate power and resolve problems on their own. This essentially showed an emphasis on personal level empowerment, and the role of DBSA was more like a catalyst for change. Local people were encouraged to get out of the slum rather than seeking

solutions to improve life in the slum directly. This understanding was the crucial basis of the designs and operation of DBSA's projects.

7.2.2. Expectations of 'power to' from the local community

> International organisations should involve locals. One, the local will help them identify the needs in the area. Two, the international organisations, together with the local will identify what resources do they have to meet the needs. Three, the local [people] will get involved in the solution. And if they get involved in the solution, it means they will have the ownership of the projects and the solution. And that means when the international bodies are getting out, the locals have been trained to have skills to carry on, not let it pull out. They will be able to carry it on. All these teams have been involved. You must involve them if they want us.
>
> (DD, male, local school director, Mathare)

As the above quotation from a local interviewee suggested, local people's expectation of power, however, might be somewhat different from DBSA and the Chinese volunteer tourists' claims. They did agree that the participation and involvement of the community members in DBSA's projects were important so that they could gain the ownership of projects. It has been explained that DBSA and volunteer tourists thought they had little power to share, so they focused on assisting local people in generating power through their own efforts. Differently, however, members of the local community saw the Chinese group very powerful because of the resources and funding they had. They thought the power behind DBSA's projects might bring great impacts on their lives. Therefore, when referring to 'participation' and 'involvement', what local people wanted from DBSA was direct, instant and substantial power. This way local people saw 'power' in practice more resembled the 'power to' mechanism in a relational form, meaning that power transferred from DBSA to the locals so that local capacity to act increased as well as local people's access to resources and control (Gaventa, 2006; Luttrell et al., 2009).

Substantial power in four areas

The power that local people wanted to share manifested in four particular areas. First, as the above quotation indicated, community members wished to get power to identify local needs. Currently, DBSA's projects, including food and other physical provisions as well as informal educations, were mostly identified by DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists from their own understandings. They got information through their observations in the field and their interactions with local people. As they did not do any formal research or surveys to collect widespread data about local needs, this identification might be biased or limited. Although DBSA's projects had addressed local desires in some respects, asking local people about their thoughts in an organised way might have enabled more specific needs to be included in project plans. As local interviewees indicated, understanding urgent needs from the local community could be essential, especially when DBSA wanted to better improve or expand their current projects. For example, from dialogical workshops with young people in Mathare, apart from formal and informal education issues that DBSA had touched on, they also reported the water provision and garbage collection as fundamental and top community issues that they were concerned about. Since flowing water was one of the key factors linked with DBSA's feeding project, local interviewees suggested that careful considerations to these issues could be helpful for, and be improved by, DBSA. Additionally, a school principal pointed out the significance of getting insights of children and young people who were DBSA's main target groups. He suggested that DBSA should communicate with children and young people about "what they want" and "how they view it".

Second, local interviewees advised DBSA and volunteer tourists to have appropriate discussions and negotiations of project approaches with them. This showed an expectation of getting more power in project designs. Instead, a local interviewee critiqued volunteer tourists' domination in pushing their own agenda: "indirectly, you can push your own agenda. If we are not careful, they may come in and overdraw what is supposed to be ours, putting their agenda and overdrawing their agenda of people. So I believe there are shortcoming (VA, female, local school principal, Mathare)." I got similar findings through my observation that many volunteer tourists rushed for their own plans as they only had one-month time to

conduct their work. Volunteer tourists who were responsible for the art project, for instance, collected over one thousand paintings from school students in Mathare in two days. Even volunteer tourists themselves admitted that there approach was "doing the project for finishing the task" in that they were concerned with whether the number of paintings met the planned indicator rather than the process of students' learning. In this circumstance, volunteer tourists allowed little room for partner schools to negotiate about the agenda and left local participants little time to adjust. It was more like giving instructions to schools and forcing things to happen. As a result, many schools had to make decisions with short notice and cancel scheduled classes or examinations to coordinate with volunteer tourists plans. Many local interviewees complained about this and they advised DBSA to share project plans in advance with more information and discussion.

Third, a more substantial partnership during the process was expected by many local interviewees, which involved the power in project operation. As explained in Chapter 6 about the symbiotic relationship, both the local community and the Chinese group had strengths and resources that the other depended on. Hence, in an ideally balanced situation, power was supposed to be shared between the two groups to make sure each side could play a role in project implementation. At present, local people thought DBSA still dominated power in the process and they should give more power 'to' locals. Taking the talent show project, for example, DBSA organised the carnival events every year, but actually, Mathare already had similar talent events before DBSA entered. One schoolteacher suggested that instead of repeating similar things, it might be better to assemble resources from the existing groups and to cooperate with them so that resources can be utilised at the maximum. He asked that "next time let them come early. Let them call us. We will make that event a very good one. Call us, we know how to operate and make it very competitive" (WN, male, local school teacher, Mathare). Likewise, many local interviewees expressed their wishes to be more engaged in project organising rather than merely participants.

Following this third point, interviewees indicated that community members longed for the power to own the projects, but there were complexities behind their desires for greater

ownership. On the one hand, most local interviewees expressed a desire for exclusive ownership, meaning that there was competitions among community members, and people wished to own the projects by themselves or with their allies rather than sharing with other local members. Schools, for example, did not want to involve local youths other than their school students in informal education projects. Teachers complained that DBSA's talent event was unfair for their students to compete with other young people in the community, given their age differences as well as the limited time they could spend on training. They wanted DBSA's projects to be exclusive amongst community schools and they thought the access to participation should not be shared with other community groups. On the other hand, apart from competitions within the community, local people expected to create their own projects with DBSA's support. A local school principal indicated that the model of DBSA's football project was a good example that they could duplicate from in other areas. According to him, community schools or local groups with capabilities in a specific area such as singing, dancing and drawing, could form community clubs in these areas like DBSA's sports club. In this way, he believed more local people could take on the roles of organisers or executors, while DBSA was supposed to provide support in terms of training venues, materials and equipment.

However, to realise local expectations on more substantial power from DBSA, there were some practical issues to be considered. Although several volunteer tourists agreed it might be a good idea if the Chinese group played an assistant role and made the projects the way what local people want, DBSA's staff worried that they might lose controls of many things in practice if the organisation merely became a donor and supporter. For example, in the talent show event that DBSA organised for the purpose of expanding their influence in the community, there was concern that giving up the power and sharing the ownership with other groups could lead to the input of DBSA being more or less neglected. In addition, a DBSA staff member was worried that stepping back as a mere funder would leave little room for their other receiving community, volunteer tourists, to learn throughout the process, as was DBSA's intention.

Possibilities for 'power with'

In terms of the 'empowerment' mentioned by DBSA and volunteer tourists for individuals' capability building, most local interviewees agreed on the importance of 'power with' collaboration. As a local interviewee summarised, "they must involve each and every member of the Mathare community in these issues. This is when it is going to succeed" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare). However, unlike volunteer tourists' recognition from Chinese culture, local people's views were more driven by disappointment about the government's failure than an internal motivation for change. As revealed by an interviewee, "the government organisations, we don't know the procedure to reach them" (BR, female, local school principal, Mathare). As an alternative to the Kenyan government fulfilling these responsibilities, local people, instead, recognised the significance of cooperation with international organisations and within the community.

> To me, I think people who are staying around this place, we should make an awareness. They need to understand that this place belongs to them. And they are the ones to make it a better place. If they don't make it a better place, nobody will come from far to make it a better place. Because they are the ones who stay here.
>
> (AA, female, local school principal, Mathare)

As presented in the above quotation, some local people had been aware of their self-strengths, self-resilience, and self-help, which was considered an important underpinning of 'power with'. Some of them believed that they were powerful in a way when compared to the DBSA and volunteer tourists. In particular, a school principal emphasised the significant role that community schools were playing, especially in mobilising children and organising events. As she explained, "if I don't say something, it may not help me" (VA, female, local school principal, Mathare). Likewise, other local interviewees felt it reasonable to ask DBSA for what they wanted, and they held power to say 'no' if they thought DBSA's projects did not bring expected benefits. Within the community, teachers and principals reported that they were well-prepared to engage parents and other community members in further actions when necessary. To coordinate with DBSA's feeding projects, for instance, some parents had contributed to

buying cooking equipment, and some were invited to work in the schools as cooks. All those had demonstrated an existing 'power within' in Mathare.

Furthermore, several young people in Mathare who had potential in arts and sports expressed their wishes to give back to the community if they succeeded in their lives. As one of them said, "if I become one of the greatest artists, I have to have my apartment in Mathare. I want to have an organisation in Mathare. I want to check these people somehow. I want to give back to my community" (JH, male, local young participant in DBSA's Talent Show, Mathare). Although he addressed the significance of personal-level empowerment for a better life, it showed his ultimate aim was to pass on power in the community. This was quite different from what volunteer tourists assumed in their empowerment approach to help local people get out of the slum completely. Behind local awareness of 'power with' and 'power within', community members' bond with the Mathare remained an influential factor in motivations of change.

7.3. The inevitability of 'power over' in practice?

Since DBSA and Chinese volunteer tourists aimed at getting things done, some of them believed it was inevitable that the Chinese side took some control during the process. Before addressing the question if 'power over' mechanisms are inevitable or if it can be partially overcome, it is firstly important to understand such power mechanims and to find out the reasons behind them. This section specifically looks at power in particular practices rather than in claims or expectations, investigating what measures DBSA and volunteer tourists undertook to make sure of exerting their influence. The section thus seeks to interpret 'power over' mechanisms in different forms using the powercube framework.

7.3.1. 'Power over' in forms of visible and hidden power

> You see that power thing. I am not saying that you give them (locals) power. But you try to engage them in a nice way, you see. Sometimes, do not dictate. You know sometimes

what I see is we've been dominant, dictating everything. We are acting like dictators now.

(KY, male, local staff member, DBSA)

Power over with superiority

The above quotation was from a local DBSA staff member, who suggested the Chinese group was too dictating and dominating in practice. He pointed out that when organising activities at schools, volunteer tourists called the school one day ahead or went there directly, asking teachers for classrooms and students to participate. "They have all the power. They don't give others power," he said. This was proven by interviews of some volunteer tourists, who thought cooperation meant local people followed their instructions and made things happen as required. From my observations and when communicating with local people and schools, I found that volunteer tourists were more likely to give orders and commands and the two groups were not equally placed in interactions and discussions. This accords with the definition of 'power over' that refers to the power to influence or coerce (Rowland, 1997). DBSA and volunteer tourists seemed to hold a superior position and they took control of the majority of their projects. As understood by a volunteer tourist who was responsible for a construction project: "Because we are giving money, local people have to follow our order. Otherwise, they should not get paid" (LQ, male, volunteer tourist, DBSA).

While some volunteer tourists had reflected on their unequal relationship with local poeple, many of them still thought they did not do anything wrong and they showed superiority when talking about the local community. As one volunteer tourist indicated, "I disdain for local people at some points. I felt they were slippery, lazy and dependent" (GS, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). She thought local people should be the most responsible for their poverty, given that they did not work hard but always waited for help passively. Similarly, some volunteer tourists thought they had to push things forward. As another interviewee said, "I kept telling them what I want and what you should do to make it happen" (XQ, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). Otherwise, she believed she could not get projects done as planned. A DBSA staff member took it for granted that schools should coordinate with what was asked.

As volunteer tourists' stay in Mathare overlapped with the summer vacation of some community schools, he thought it was alright to call back students and teachers for their projects even during the holiday time.

This taken-for-granted superiority from volunteer tourists and Chinese staff might be seen to reflect an underlying neo-colonialism crisis among the group that they assumed the local community was poor, problematic and inferior (McEwan, 2009). Comparatively, they believed themselves representing 'modernity' and 'progress', and forcing things in their ways was for the good of the locals. As one volunteer tourist admitted, "we come here with the so-called modern logic brought from our world, wanting the local people to follow the same" (MR, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). All these perceptions had resulted in the conscious or unconscious enactment of power over the local community.

Different forms of hidden power

DBSA's power manifested in different forms, and I observed that power especially showed different faces when differentiating groups of people who were getting benefits and others who were not. Many local interviewees believed that getting support and particularly physical assistance from DBSA were equivalent to getting power. A good physical building or provision of food, for example, directly led to more registered students and more incomes for the schools. Since people were able to see who was involved in DBSA's projects and who was not, those decisions about who were given the benefits seemed to be the most obvious and visible power for the whole community. Gaventa (2006) suggests more attention be paid to the excluded voices in this form of power and the reasons for that. As illustrated in Chapter 6, the situation for those who did not receive direct support from DBSA was getting worse as they were losing students and incomes. A key reason for that was because they did not know how to approach DBSA and how to seek help from them. In other words, although the result of power was visible to those who did not benefit, access to that power was also hidden for them. As defined by IDS (2009), hidden power means people maintain power by excluding key issues from public arenas and setting barriers for others to participate. In this case, DBSA might not deliberately set biased rules against the unprivileged, but it remained the case that

'the rules of the game' were hidden from such groups.

Even for the advantaged groups, information was not clear either. Specifically, four specific dimensions of power were hidden. First, local people were not clear who had the power to decide who was included and who was not. As they got confused about the exact decision-makers of DBSA, they did not know who they should turn to and communicate with. Some local interviewees assumed volunteer tourists had this power. However, volunteer tourists reported they were mainly following instructions to conduct projects or collect data based on the DBSA's previous experience. Some volunteer tourists might have had the power in deciding who was chosen for further training or who won the prize in terms of informal education projects, but they had no power in decision making when it involved a large amount of money for physical provisions in schools. Other community members thought certain local coordinators[23] who worked closely with DBSA had power in decision making and thus, blamed them for perceived biases in selection of those projects to receive support. However, one local coordinator indicated he did not have the power either: "I was not part of the decision. I will say that is not my program, it is their program". In fact, as introduced by DBSA's director, the power of key decision-making areas was mainly held by DBSA's Chinese staff members, who formed a core team of DBSA. Local coordinators and volunteer tourists only made necessary suggestions. However, DBSA's core team never thought about clarifying this decision-making structure to either of their 'receiving community'.

Second, specific plans for DBSA's work were hidden, including what kinds of projects were available and what these projects entailed and provided. A local school principal told how he heard about DBSA's annual event from others by accident. He was very interested in participating. He did not want to be left out, so he kept an eye on it and asked to be included. For him and his schools, this opportunity became available by chance and through his activeness. However, while DBSA claimed that they were targeting the whole community and

[23] Local coordinators of DBSA are certain community members who helped with project implementations in Mathare. But unlike local staff members, they are not formally employed nor paid by DBSA. More explanation of the role and input of local coordinators is provided later in this chapter.

aiming at involving as many participants as possible, why some were still excluded? From my observations, DBSA overestimated the communication channels that local people could access to. For instance, DBSA posted information about LFC project on their official website, but they did not consider how many people in Mathare were able to access computers and the Internet. Even if physical conditions allowed, local people might have had difficulties in knowing the website address of the projects. This has shown that DBSA lacked the awareness to break down the information barriers, especially for the marginalised groups in the community. As a local interviewee pointed out, "information is power", and information affected access. The information was currently spread by word of mouth. This could cause inequality of information among local people, which might lead to an inequality of power. While those who had most social connections with DBSA were most likely to get first-hand information, those at the periphery were likely to be excluded due to information poverty.

Third, information about the procedures and criteria of DBSA's selection was missing. In other words, the rules of games were hidden. Following the discussion of the preceding point, even those who knew DBSA came to Mathare every summer vacation to conduct informal educational projects and identify eligible schools for the feeding did not know what the criteria were to get involved. For those who had access to digital equipment and managed to submit an online application, they did not know what to expect next. Because the procedure was unclear, I observed the most common action local people undertook was to keep waiting for volunteer tourists or DBSA staff members to come. Also, because the criteria for the selection process were hidden, local people were unclear how to get qualified, for instance, for DBSA's feeding program. In order to be eligible, one of the local principals even rented a spare room to be used as the kitchen to prepare for DBSA's feeding project. She had assumed that was a DBSA requirement, and she had paid for an unused room for nearly half a year, but DBSA never came.

Finally, people rarely heard of outcomes of decisions and feedback from DBSA. As a school principal indicated, "there is a gap between me and DBSA" (RH, female, local school principal, Mathare). Her school had applied for DBSA's feeding program for two years, but she never

heard back from them whether the application was successful or not and why. She thought her application might be 'blocked' for some reasons, but she did not know who she could turn to. Likewise, for those with sporting talent, local people were told by volunteer tourists there would be plans for further training after the annual event. But after a few weeks, local participants were unable to approach volunteer tourists because they had to finish their projects and left Kenya. As a teacher complained, "there are no follow-ups. You don't know what they are planning. You don't know anything" (ES, male, local school teacher, Mathare). The fleeting moment of hopes had to enter another long-time wait, at least until the next summer when new Chinese faces returned to the community.

Closed and 'floating' spaces

These different manifestations of hidden power represent the closed spaces of DBSA's power. The decision-making process was controlled and dominated by DBSA Chinese staff members with little involvement of the local community or even the majority of volunteer tourists. Relevant information about plans, procedures and criteria of DBSA's projects was largely hidden from local people, even though the information could have a great influence on them. Nevertheless, some of those spaces were not closed by the Chinese group deliberately. From both interview and participant observation data, I found that specific information, like the criteria for selection, was missing because it did not exist at all. It was the lack of formal structure in the DBSA organisation that had resulted in a kind of 'floating space'.

In Xiang's research on Chinese migrant workers, he described Chinese migrants as 'floating population' in China as they are not integrated into the existing established social system or social category of China (Xiang, 2007: 4). This further leads to a 'floating society', referring to a situation that everyone is busy working hard and fitting in with urban society. People's pursuits of lives seem to have no further meanings except as tools for unknown futures (ibid). The 'present' becomes floated, and this floating status is very unstable, full of uncertainties and possibilities (ibid). The situation of DBSA's informal working was quite similar to Xiang's description of 'the floated', as those spaces were unsettled, undefined and underdeveloped. Given the difficulty to identify those spaces of DBSA's power into existing catalogues in the

powercube, I described them as 'floating spaces', standing parallel with the existing spaces and waiting to be constructed into forms of 'invited', 'closed' or 'self-created'. Because of the existence of 'floating spaces', volunteer tourists were unsure about the meanings of their efforts and local people were unclear about their potentials in further participation. It had caused the instability in practice, in terms of relationships between different groups and overall integration of community development agendas.

To a certain extent, the occurrence of 'floating spaces' posed threats for hidden power to be enacted. As rules of the game were missing, the space holders could do whatever they want both intentionally and unintentionally. Local people, volunteer tourists and DBSA staff members had all been aware of the necessity to construct and formalise those spaces, and local interviewees especially thought it was essential for them to be more involved. There was an opportunity for them to be more included in these power spaces in the future. A school director summarised that DBSA needed "formality, transparency and professionalism", and he called for greater transparency of information and accountability on plans and decisions. In another sense, however, as DBSA was supposed to undertake key tasks to set their own formality and structure, as they were still the key holders of 'floating spaces' and they might still hold more power in building up 'floating spaces'. Taking a positive view, however, these spaces where under-developed and rules of games remained to be set, and so there existed possibilities to invite more local participation during the development process, especially if DBSA wanted the 'floating spaces' to be reasonable and acceptable for the local community to ensure progress. To this extent, the occurrence of the 'floating spaces' was an opportunity for opening up collaboration and promoting mobilities among different groups.

7.3.2. 'Power over' in participation and invited spaces

Apart from hidden power in closed spaces, 'power over' also showed different faces in local people's participation in invited spaces, an issue which is given specific consideration in this section.

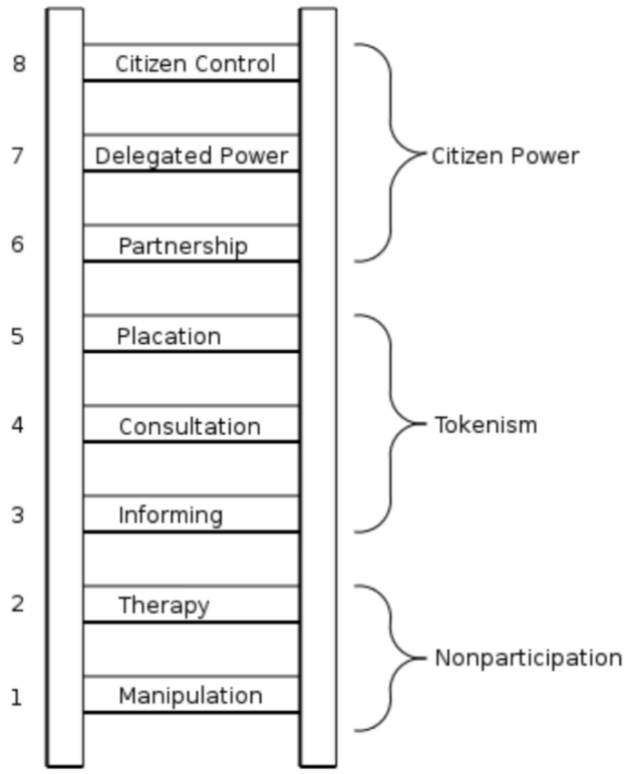


Figure 7.3.1.The ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969: 2)

When considering Arnstein's ladder of participation, some of the previous descriptions of 'power over' have shown many local people remained at the bottom rungs of the ladder that refers to a 'non-participation' level. While DBSA and volunteer tourists strived to get things done, they did not really involve local people in project planning and conducting, but seemed to 'discipline', 'educate' or 'cure' the local people in Arnstein's (1969) explanation. In the name of empowerment, participation was a vehicle of powerholders (ibid), the Chinese group in this case. Additionally, some Chinese staff members and volunteer tourists expressed superiority and arrogance toward the local community. They pointed out the importance of solving, what was perceived as, local people's mindset issues. To a certain extent, this accorded with the 'therapy' rung in Arnstein's ladder that volunteer tourists assumed the local participants were mentally problematic.

A result of 'non-participation' was that it brought negative effects like the low efficiency of project implementations. Because of the lack of information and guidance, when some schools were provided with the feeding, they did not know how to manage it well:

> Food brought in a month, but some of them don't know how to rightly estimate the quantity of the food and give the children. So sometimes you may find we are at the mid-month or somewhere late mid-month, but the food is finished. I know they cannot come back to DBSA because for the budget they have already got, the budget for that particular month. If they can get a little bit of coaching or training, or just guidance on how to do it for the first few months, I think it will be a good thing.
>
> (DS, male, local community worker, Mathare)

This was, unfortunately, conflicted with DBSA's expectations. Being aware of some limitations, DBSA was trying to invite more local participation in their previously closed spaces and some attempts were made to give substantial power to the local community. For instance, the excellent performance of a school's football team during the tournament led to the football coach (who was also the principal) of the school being chosen as the head coach of the DBSA's football team. He was granted the power to select talented children from the community, to design weekly training for players and to build connections with other football teams inside and outside Mathare. During the interview, the coach showed great happiness about the position. He believed it was because of his expertise that he was invited to be the head coach. Nevertheless, according to a DBSA staff member, there was another hidden reason to select him, which was because his school was close to the warehouse of DBSA's feeding project. By building a further connection with the school principal utilising the football project, DBSA could benefit in terms of food storage. Additionally, although the head coach was given a degree of freedom in management of the football team, the essential power in decision making was yet controlled by DBSA. As explained by the staff member, the coach was required to submit detailed proposals termly about the training plans and the proposal had to be approved by DBSA before being implemented.

This case was a good example to show that, although community members seemed to be granted some power and their voices seemed to get opportunities to be heard, there might be invisible reasons for DBSA to invite them into the spaces. Such participation was proffered by DBSA, in essence, and, thus, could be restricted and taken back by DBSA. This was, more or

less, indicative of tokenism-level participation in Arnstein's ladder of participation. Specifically, there were three rungs at the tokenism level, including informing, consultation and placation (Arnstein, 1969), each of which was evidenced in this research and noticed the hidden power in 'invited spaces'.

First and foremost, informing was the most common measurement undertaken by DBSA and volunteer tourists. For example, as mentioned previously in this chapter, local interviewees reported they had to adjust their timetable to coordinate with volunteer tourists' work with very short notices. As a local interviewee requested, "next time if they are coming in, let them plan it in a better way, that it doesn't interfere with our regular timetable. We were able to squeeze, but it interfered a bit" (VA, female, local school principal, Mathare). Likewise, for the feeding project, a principal from a benefited school said she did not get information about the food provision until one day before the food was delivered. As she indicated, "it is good news, but I am not prepared. I don't have any information" (GE, female, local school principal, Mathre). Strictly speaking, DBSA's informing was even not at the tokenism but rather represented non-participation. Arnstein (1969) explained that informing means telling people of their rights, responsibilities, and options. But in this case, the information from DBSA was more like instructions and commands about what local people should do. When volunteer tourists informed the local participants with fixed dates, times and contents, there was little room for discussion or negotiation. Even if volunteer tourists sought to provide information with greater notice as local people suggested, it was in essence still "a one-way flow of information" without channels to provide feedback or options to choose (Arnstein, 1969: 5).

Second, local people were consulted by DBSA and volunteer tourists about doing projects, but the consultation remained at the tokenism level. The football tournament project was a good example when DBSA set up a football 'committee'. Through advice from committee members, volunteer tourists and DBSA staff members tried to share the power of event organisation with the locals. As one local committee member explained, the football committee was made of representatives from all participating schools, who were mostly teachers or principals, as

well as the Chinese volunteer tourists. One local member was selected as the president of the tournament, being in charge of all arrangements of the football competitions. The football committee was supposed to organise the tournament collaboratively with support of all members. However, in 2018, a serious controversy arose between the Chinese group and local people because of the disagreement on the budget. While local committee members wished to cover a better venue and more food and water for players, the volunteer tourists wanted to control the budget and spend as little as possible. In the end, the local members had to comprise and followed volunteer tourists' instructions. As a volunteer tourist reported in my interview, although the committee was made of many local participants and even the president was from Mathare, the power of decision making remained essentially dominated by the Chinese group. He explained that the main purpose of designing a committee was to help to provide information more conveniently and to utilise local resources at the maximum. There was no guarantee that the local members' views and suggestions would be heeded and accepted. This proved to be consultation without other modes of participation which, for DBSA, might remain problematic (Arnstein, 1969).

To another extent, the attempt of instigating the football 'committee' showed the third strategy of tokenistic-level participation, placation. Local people were allowed to input and advise, and I found that this was an approach to comforting the local community in order to make them feel they were involved. Apart from that, placation was also evident in forms of 'promise' and 'postponing', and DBSA seemed to use placation as an approach to keep local people motivated in participation. For instance, volunteer tourists did surveys on students and parents for the scholarship program, and some football players were told they would have the chance to get training in China if they performed well. From volunteer tourists' perspectives, they thought they were using those promises as hopes to motivate local people to work hard. Nevertheless, local people took the promises seriously. Teachers and local participants kept asking when they would get the scholarship or when they would be sent to China. As volunteer tourists and staff actually had no certain answers about that, they could only respond "later", "soon" or "in the near future" to postpone local people's hopes. As Arnstein (1969) suggested, the effect of the placation relies on the degree to which the

community's priorities and needs are addressed. In this case, if local people never heard feedback from volunteer tourists, as revealed in the following quotation, the hope might eventually be destroyed and turn into even worse desperation.

> But as time pass by, in the future, I see that most Chinese they like saying the future, of which you don't know the future. Ok, future, we don't know whether it is today, tomorrow or twenty or thirty years later. You don't know when the future is.
>
> (KY, male, local staff member, DBSA)

Beyond the tokenism level, local people's reactions, complains and suggestions during the interviews clearly demonstrated their expectations for a higher level of participation. Arnstein (1969) suggests that citizen power stands at the higher ladder of participation, including partnership, delegated power and citizen control. In local people's words, they expected an increasing degree of 'involvement', 'autonomy' and 'ownership". Chapter 6 has discussed the symbiotic relationship between the Chinese group and people. Because of the local strengths, in principle, there existed possibilities to build up an equal partnership for a higher level of local participation. However, from the observation on the ground, this had not yet happened. As Taylor (2003) reveals, the power holders usually fail to involve active, dynamic and innovative members as they care more about the extent of cooperative behaviour and realistic operations than true local engagement. Whichever strategy DBSA undertook at the non-participation level or the tokenism level, they were aiming at maintaining controls. Also, because the empowerment approach undertaken by DBSA focused more on individual's capability building to get out of the slum rather than getting citizen control within the community, DBSA might not want to involve local participation at the top rungs like citizen controls, or they had not recognised the importance of higher levels of empowerment. This leads to a discussion about the invisible form of power in the next section.

7.3.3. 'Power over' in the invisible form

Invisible power in local society

As found in this research, the Chinese group and the local community had achieved some agreement that they should work together to fight for more rights in response to the failure of the local government. The local government's policies on Mathare's development were somehow a hidden form of power in closed spaces for both of them. However, when referring to development, DBSA tended to avoid this political empowerment to challenge structural inequality caused by the local governance. The approaches they undertook seemed to be quite soft, like food provision and improvement of physical conditions as a substitution for the absence of government provision. Even for their informal education projects, DBSA was focusing on skill training and awareness-raising for local people's personal development or to get out of the slums eventually. As defined by Gaventa (2007), invisible power means the lack of awareness of their rights and interests among powerless people. Invisible power is usually caused by the adoption of dominating ideologies, values and forms of behaviour (ibid). During DBSA's practice, they rarely thought about allying with the local community to influence local policies or advocate the government to take their responsibilities for life improvement within the slum, a finding which demonstrated that inequalities of power in the local society were invisible to DBSA and volunteer tourists.

Likewise, for most local people, their ease with the status quo might also reflect the lack of thinking about what rights they should have had. Chapter 6 reveals many Chinese volunteer tourists held the assumption, which has been critiqued, that Mathare people were too lazy and too dependent to make changes by themselves. On the other hand, however, volunteer tourists' emphasis on concerns about the local community's mindset might indirectly imply the unconsciousness of Mathare people about the invisible form of power in their society. This had been acknowledged by some local interviewees, as shown in the following two examples.

> In Mathare, ignorance. Most of the guys have not gone to schools. You know if you go to schools, your mind expands, you know what to think. Now if these children they go to

schools and when they grow up, they become expand-minded people, they will help the community.

(PL, male, local school principal, Mathare)

It's narrows-down of an individual's mindset of thinking, of what he or she believes in. So I think generally, in Mathare, I can say there is that issue of…I just narrow it down to the attitude. And in the attitude, probably I can summarize it to several ones like skills, they lack skills. This time you want to build something for the skill training centre, which I think will go a long way to help this community. If they get the right skill set, then they will be able to upgrade themselves. And then also the attitude come in, they have to be empowered in a way that they should know that they are not poor. Because if you are poor, that will stop their mind. There should be a way that they know as much as… Yes, we live in Mathare, there is always that they can turn things around and achieve whatever they need. Then probably the last thing, I would say is the challenge from the community Mathare…I think their mindset, you know Mathare and Kibera, they have been brought up as one and two biggest slums in Kenya. They usually have that mindset that we need to be helped and every time, they should come to this… so it is more likely the laziness also from their side.

(DS, male, local community worker, Mathare)

Although the above two interviewees did not mention the structural inequality of their society, they had more or less pointed out the importance of people's awareness and attitude in the change process. This local mindset issue and the local dependency associated with it were nurtured by the longstanding absence of the government. To a certain extent, the continuous direct support from international communities in recent decades had also contributed to the challenge. Like a local interviewee said, "In Mathare, they beg it, but they beg it with force. They want it and they think it is their rights to be assisted" (DN, male, local school principal, Mathare). Yet it was hard to identify the underlying ideological purposes of governments or international communities, but the long-lasting oppression, poor living condition and the lack of education opportunities had indeed led to entrenched beliefs amongst local people that it

was hard or impossible to change their lives. In this aspect, although DBSA and volunteer tourists tried to focus on internal attributes and to raise local people's awareness of self-resilience and hardworking, their work might require more insights into the invisible form of power rooted in the local society and need to address the underlying reasons for that when thinking of more efficient solutions.

Invisible use of power from DBSA

On the other hand, there were still a number of local community members who did not realise a need for higher-level participation in DBSA's practice, which implied the invisible use of power from DBSA. Even for those who were self-conscious about further rights they should have in DBSA's practice, their degree of understanding varied from person to person. Some local people had pointed out the shortcomings of DBSA and volunteer tourists' work, but they seemed to show a generous understanding and tolerance about those shortcomings. There was an example as follows:

> We know that could be a problem there, but we said there is nothing we can do. Because when you come with the issue of the tournament, we accepted. We postpone our exam. We said, ok, we did that in the following week. The following week now is the week you want the pupils to come for the drawings... It is ok you set a time. You can allow them to do that. But we were doing exams, we never want to put on the children so much. Ok now, what they are going to do with the art exhibition, we said ok, we are always participating... We did so many things. We said, ok if we have time, we go. If we don't have… but it was not good. We really wanted to do but the time was very limited.
>
> (VA, female, local school principal, Mathare)

This was a quite common attitude shared by many local participants. As the narrative represented, the schools had to adjust themselves to coordinate with DBSA's plan in several instances. The school principal admitted that DBSA's projects had interfered with the school's agenda and it was not good to have so many projects without negotiation with local stakeholders. Still, she made a lot of compromises and he emphasised her interest in

continued participation. Likewise, another local participant suggested, "one thing I notice with them, is that they (volunteer tourists) always put their programs ahead first. They put their programs first than the school programs" (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare). However, this interviewee eventually suggested "but we agreed on it. So that wasn't really a problem." This perspective raises questions of whether the local people were conscious that DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists' behaviours were a presentation of the 'power over', which they were supposed to fight against in principle. Two reasons may explain this.

First, local people's good relationships and emotional connections with Chinese volunteer tourists and staff members partially explained their generosity. This may also have been particularly prevalent amongst female community members, given that most comments of this type were made by female interviewees. Further, as an interviewee pointed out, "there is a difference between respect and fear" (VA, female, local school principal, Mathare). She thought Chinese volunteer tourists had shown great respect toward the local community during their practice, so they should act nicely in return. Another female interviewee appreciated not only what the Chinese organisation had brought but also the way they behaved. As she said:

> DBSA they do not work as a bully. They work in understanding. Psychologically, I was not oppressed. There is no hierarchy. We have a collaborative working relation. They are free to tell me when I am wrong. I'm also free to say you didn't do this part well.
>
> (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare)

In a more general sense, I observed that the African culture had some similarities with the Chinese culture in that Africans were likely to be affected by social relationships before making associations with underlying social structural and institutional considerations. This meant that personal relationships or favour could influence local people's rational judgements in many cases. As they did not want to destroy social relations with certain people, community members tended not to raise arguments or disagreements on some issues. To a certain extent,

this can be seen as a form of invisible power as local people may have mixed the person-to-person bond with the rights they should have had within the relationship. However, it is important to identify such interpretations carefully, given my status as an external researcher, drawing my understanding and observations on African culture from the fieldwork undertaken. As such, it might be more reasonable to propose a threat of invisible power in this case than to define it absolutely, and future studies by African researchers might be well-placed to consider this issue and make links to cultural factors including gender perspectives.

Another reason for local people's compromises and cooperation was related to their desire for some specific benefits. In fact, local people's fear was not towards DBSA or Chinese volunteer tourists as most local people claimed they had a good co-working relationship with them. Rather, the fear was about losing benefits, which had been utilised by DBSA as an approach to constrain the local behaviours. Local people felt volunteer tourists did not behave as they were above the local community, and they emphasised they always had the power to refuse if they were not satisfied with DBSA's plan. However, it was rare to see that happen and local people tended not to use the power of refusal in most cases. As a local principal explained, "we don't want to say no. We can't say no. Because if you are expecting something, even if that thing is not good, we just try to be there so that at least you also get whatever you want" (BR, female, local school principal, Mathre). Such a quote was indicative of the situation for a lot of local participating schools, in that it was not pressure from DBSA, but the possibilities of being excluded and losing benefits that had brought fears. Also, even though many of DBSA's projects interfered with local agendas, community members were comfortable to comprise and adjust to being cooperative, as the following quotation indicates:

> Because when such an opportunity comes, you only see how to organise our timetable. We ensure that we are not left out in those activities. So we go back to our timetable and we fix our timetable well. So you see, if we have time to go for playing, which time do we take in class. So what we do is to simply arrange timetable so that we balance both sides."
>
> (DL, male, local school principal, Mathare)

In particular, because local people greatly valued DBSA's physical assistance projects such as the construction work and the food provision, they wanted to please the organisation by showing activeness in participating in other projects like informal education activities that required a lower commitment threshold. Those who had received the physical benefits remained anxious about losing these benefits in the future, so they also had to behave well. As a local interviewee acknowledged, "because they are the people who are feeding. And we cannot say don't do these (what) they want to do" (SY, male, local school principal, Mathare).

A staff member of DBSA admitted that they were using different projects as a strategy to constrain the local community. For example, after DBSA handed over the schools that they helped to construct, in principle and according to the Kenyan law, DBSA was unable to interfere with the management of the school even they had made oral agreements on some issues. To make sure the principals did not increase the tuition fees for students, DBSA utilised their feeding program as a constraint - if the school disobeyed the agreements and increased tuition fees, DBSA might stop the provision of food. In this type of case, the intentions of DBSA might not be bad, but their actions, in essence, showed an indirect manifestation of 'power over'. Again, it was hard to define if it can be seen as an invisible form of power, or to what degree local people were aware of it. But if some local people were conscious, it might be worthwhile to further analyse what actions local people could take in response. This is the focus of the next part of the chapter regarding self-created spaces and the sub-organisational level of power.

7.4. Power at the sub-organisational level

In Mathare, there was a famous school called UC (pseudonym). As the director of UC explained, the school was well-known in the community because it used to be the 'mother school' of many other community schools. "All the schools you are seeing around in Mathare, they started from here. All the directors you have seen around, they have been once our teachers here," he said. Because of UC's reputation in Mathare, its director used to be seen as a

community leader in Mathare, who had a great influence on dealing with a lot of community issues. The director indicated that they used to have a very close relationship with other community schools. They shared the same wish to have Mathare schools expanded, given there were such a large population of children and young people. However, after DBSA entered the community, things started to change. This demonstrated a typical example of the change of power at the sub-organisational level, which will be considered further in the remainder of the chapter.

7.4.1. Access to DBSA and power in claimed spaces

Direct and indirect linkages

Since DBSA entered Mathare in 2014, they had developed connections with an increasing number of community schools. By 2018, DBSA had built up partnerships with approximately twenty schools in various kinds of projects. Four schools had been helped with the physical constructions, eight schools had received the provision of food and twenty schools had participated in DBSA's informal education projects, including the football tournament, art exhibition and talent show. To better investigate the accesses of local people to DBSA and their projects, the following Figure 7.4.1 utilised interview data from the local participants to map the specific linkages among different community schools and DBSA.

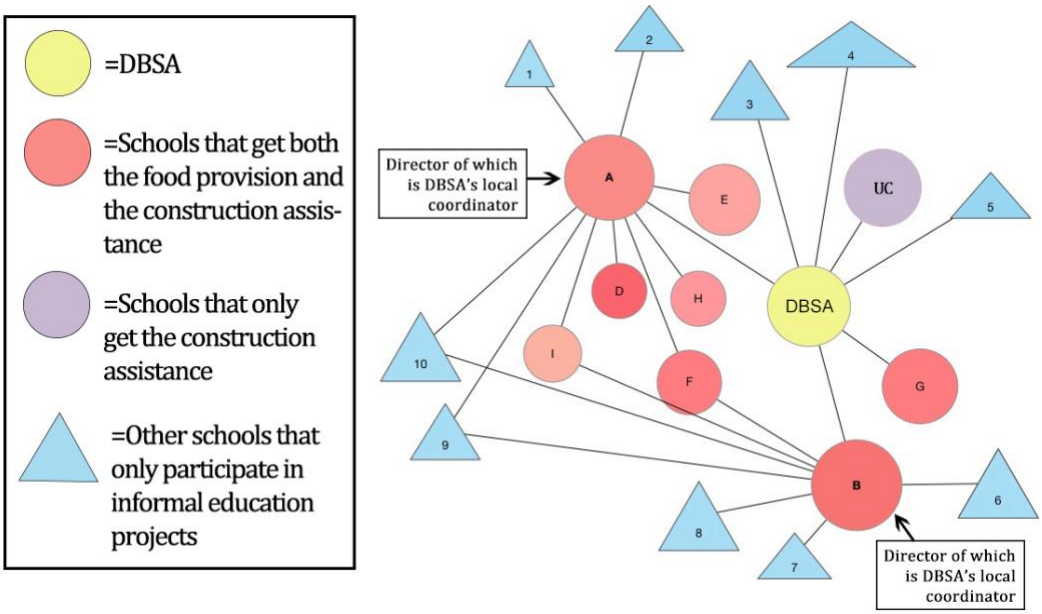


Figure 7.4.1. Access of community schools to DBSA

The figure clearly demonstrates that only a limited number of schools were connected with DBSA directly. As reported by local interviewees, all seven schools that had the direct linkages with DBSA except one (school 'G' in the picture), got to know DBSA in 2015, when the organisation initiated the football tournament for the first time, and they engaged as participants. School G was known by DBSA because DBSA wanted to buy a plot in Mathare. DBSA's director was introduced to the owner of the plot, who happened to be the principal of School G. To a certain extent, these direct connections came about by accident. As a school director recounted, "because I was the first person to meet BB (the director of DBSA) when he came to Kenya. So, our schools have been seen and our school has been changed" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare). Another local interviewee suggested geographical bias may have affected relationships that developed. Since his school located a bit far away from the village where most of DBSA's projects happened, he thought he got less chance to develop connections with DBSA.

Apart from direct linkages with DBSA, the figure shows the rest of schools were connected to DBSA mostly through two intermediate schools (school A and school B). The directors of these two schools were commonly seen by other community members as the local coordinators of DBSA. As a local interviewee explained in the following quotation, the two local coordinators

dominated not only the recommendation opportunities to DBSA, but also the access of communication and information sharing between most community members and DBSA:

> I told you we know DBSA through the help of [DD] from [School A], and [FD] from [School B]. You see, when the team come on the ground, they are the ones to tell you to go to this school but not this school, which is something we don't know if they are affecting their perspectives. Things like that, you see.
>
> (TS, male, local school principal, Mathare)

Principals from those schools with indirect linkages with DBSA, especially women, seemed to assume they had to approach DBSA through an intermediate actor instead of communicating with DBSA directly. This might link back to the previous discussion that the local culture valued social relationships significantly. As many of the principals did not know DBSA staff members in person, they tended to think it improper to access them. As an interviewee explained, "You know you cannot just link in. Maybe need someone who can link you… I feel I cannot just go to the [sport] tournament and ask. Unless they come to our school and see the situation we are" (RH, female, local school principal, Mathare). Thus, she chose to wait for DBSA to approach them, which might be influenced by chance. Or she thought she could seek to link through an intermediary. As she articulated, "I have nobody to link me, so if someone can link me with them, that is ok". This carefulness was illustrated amongst a number of local people, mainly women, who felt powerless or self-defined as powerless when dealing with DBSA. Compared with men, they seemed unaware of the rights they could have to communicate with DBSA directly, especially in relation to information about the projects in which they were involved. In addition, the absence of an approachable and transparent communication system represented a limitation of DBSA, which contributed to information inequality across community members merely because of their differences in getting accesses. As a local interviewee remarked, "you only love those schools, because you don't go to other schools" (SH, female, local young participant, Mathare). Indeed, while those schools that worked closely with DBSA were getting increasing benefits in various dimensions, the rest who were not were less likely to be assisted and their situations were getting worse.

'Claimed spaces' from local coordinators

Both male local coordinators had created their 'claimed space' on the basis of their networking and social resources brought by DBSA. As was noted before, the local coordinators were community members who worked closely with DBSA and helped with coordination of DBSA's projects in Mathare. But they were not officially employed by DBSA. Gaventa (2007) suggests that the claimed/self-created space is where less powerful people may develop their own power, which may even constrain those currently holding greater power. In this case, the claimed space of the local coordinators was constructed between DBSA and the rest of the community members. They were playing a role as the gatekeeper to both sides and their power was thus evident in both directions.

On the one hand, their power came from their strong networking with other community schools. As the local coordinators played the role of the intermediary, other community schools had to build a good relationship with them to avoid being left out. As a school principal reported, they self-defined as an 'ally' with two local coordinators' schools, and information was shared by their ally. The local coordinators usually informed all their ally schools when DBSA and volunteer tourists arrived and what kinds of projects they planned to do in each year. They even organised community meetings to discuss DBSA's projects within their group, which was without the knowledge of DBSA staff members. Schools outside the network of allies had to seek for information by themselves and actively request the local coordinators for information or, otherwise, potentially face exclusion. As time passed, it could be incredibly difficult for new schools to fit in the current network of allies. As the principal of a newly added school for DBSA's informal education project suggested, "it was not very easy with us. Because not so many DBSA members knew us. Because the school was like a bit new. So, most of the programmes, we were not even suiting in" (DN, male, local school principal, Mathare).

On the other hand, the local coordinators created power because they happened to be the first people who knew DBSA. As the following two quotations showed, many local interviewees believed it was the two local coordinators who had brought DBSA and Chinese volunteer tourists to Mathare at the first place, for which they were very appreciated. They thought

without the two local coordinators, there would not be the opportunities and benefits brought to the community from DBSA:

> The Chinese nation and DBSA as a whole could not enter Mathare, without going through some people to bring them in, which is, of course, true everywhere. And we accepted it and we appreciated the gentlemen, for the good work they did."
>
> (BN, male, local school principal, Mathare)

> They (the local coordinators) are the ones who bring them to us.
>
> (TS, male, local school principal, Mathare)

From DBSA's side, recognition was given to the important role the two local coordinators played in their work. The Chinese staff members had been aware of the constrained power that the local coordinators had created in their claimed spaces. As DBSA's director illustrated, they indeed needed to promote new community leaders to make it easier for them to enter the community. DBSA's registration in Kenya involved assistance from the two local coordinators at the very beginning. Apart from that, he admitted that they had to rely on local leaders to coordinate the projects. However, another staff member recalled that DBSA did not give careful consideration before picking the current local coordinators as their appointment was largely a matter of chance. Taylor (2003) suggests it is common for power holders to select those whom they find the easiest to work with or approach, but this approach had brought practical issues. The director of DBSA called their current relationship with the two local coordinators as 'mutual constraints'[24]. Being afraid of losing substantial power to the local coordinators, he revealed that DBSA had to take actions to re-establish control. For instance, he insisted that the DBSA's core team held power in decision-makings tightly. To check the implementation of the local coordinators, staff members had to do irregular checks on the projects, trying to monitor their work on the ground. This anxiety of losing power might have partially resulted in an overall 'power over' strategy of DBSA toward the local

[24] "相互制约" in Chinese.

community.

Even so, the power of the two local coordinators was already substantial, and DBSA had lost their control in some respects. The following story told by a DBSA staff member can be seen as a good example representing the powerful claimed spaces of the local coordinators:

> The supplier of our feeding project was first found by DD and FD (the two local coordinators). Now the same. At some point, we actually wanted to change the supplier and found by ourselves, so we can realise the food delivery from our side directly. But we asked for DD and FD's help at the beginning because we didn't have enough time. Then there were some problems with the prices they offered. So we wanted to change their suppliers to a new one. I found a new supplier who offered a better price. However, when the new supplier came here for delivery, they came across some local gangsters, who I thought were hired by them (the local coordinators). Because of that, we had to stop the supply and that period happened to be the chaos of the election, the schools were also closed in the end. After that, DD and FD found another supplier with a bit more reasonable price. So we changed back to the suppliers found by them again.
>
> (MH, male, Chinese staff member, DBSA)

Although not all community members were aware of the underlying power struggle between DBSA and the local coordinators, some had sensed the contradiction in one way or another, and this was especially the case for those who were unsatisfied with the power of the two coordinators. As an interviewee suggested, "this is political now. When they involved these things in politics, you see, it is not something easy" (SA, male, local school director, Mathare). Other local interviewees suggested DBSA should pay more attention to the issue and stop granting more power to the local coordinators: "The two gentlemen have sorrowed relationships with the rest of schools" (BN, male, local school principal, Mathare). In response to that, he believed it would be a wise strategy to bring in more people from different groups in coordination and to develop more balanced participation. Many local intevriewees were not happy with the creation of claimed spaces by the local coordinators which competed with

the power of DBSA. All of the unsatisfied local interviewees expressed they had no problem with DBSA and Chinese volunteer tourists, but with the local coordinators. This showed that within the community, new questions arose such as 'who held power in the claimed space' and 'whose knowledge will count in the claimed space', which further leads to the following analysis of power at the sub-organisational level.

7.4.2. Conflicts across multiple claimed spaces at the sub-organisational level

The local coordinators had built up their reputation and influences in the community, which, to a certain extent, was enabled by DBSA. However, not every community member acknowledged their roles as potential community leaders. Many were unsatisfied with the change of power, and this had caused some conflicts within the community.

Unsatisfaction and resistance

In 2017, School UC was burned in a fire accident and DBSA decided to help with the reconstruction of the school. DBSA finished the reconstruction work in 2018 and UC became one of the best schools in Mathare in terms of its physical condition. The director of UC reported that the school soon caught everyone's attention in the community. Even the local government decided to put the school as a centre of the Kenyan National Examination in Mathare. "Because this now is the best school in Mathare that has been built by DBSA. No other school is like this one. Now that jealousy can come in. They can use all means to block the food for the feeding now," UC's director said. According to him, he had applied for DBSA's feeding project several times. While he said DBSA had promised food provision for the school, he had not heard back from them for a long time. This made the director think that it must be because the two local coordinators had deliberately stopped the school from getting the feeding as a result of their jealousy. As a former community leader, he complained that the two coordinators had been granted too much power which they used to oppress other community members. From his description, it appeared that in addition to DBSA's 'power over' the local community as discussed above, there was also 'power over' within the community.

This view was shared by a number of other local interviewees. Some of them did not express their dissatisfaction directly, but they raised questions and doubts. For example, one school principal used to get information about DBSA through the local coordinators, but she subsequently found it hard to approach the local coordinators. As she said, "because I have not seen DD (a local coordinator) so successful, maybe if I could have got another link… if I can have such a direct link, maybe things can be better... if I could have been with BB (director of DBSA), I tell him the same way I am telling you" (RH, female, local school principal, Mathare). This implied she had realised limitations of the current communication mode and the urgent importance of building up a direct linkage with DBSA. Although there had not occurred many overt confrontations or arguments, those types of doubts and questions demonstrated an atmosphere of distrust and level of misunderstanding among many community members. Adding to the lack of direct access to DBSA and the lack of transparency of the organisation, local people started to suspect if the information was blocked by the local coordinators or if their failure in getting benefits were caused by the local coordinators.

The conflicts among the adult community members sometimes also affected students, who were supposed to be the primary beneficiaries of DBSA's projects. For instance, after the football tournament and the setup of DBSA's football team, one teacher expressed his discontent about the head coach appointed by DBSA. According to him, his students who had been selected into DBSA's football team got fewer opportunities to play during the training because the head coach favoured children from his own school more than others. "By the time pupils are leaving the field, going home without playing, what do you think they were thinking? Who am I? If I cannot even participate in football, then who am I?" (ES, male, local school teacher, Mathare) He reported the story of his students very disappointedly and worried that this might bring negative psychological impacts on his students. Although he did not complain about the perceived unfairness of DBSA' selection process, he suggested that DBSA should improve monitoring of their projects so as to ensure the needs of children in a more equal and rigorous way.

For other local people, actions to resist the 'power over' of the local coordinators were more

radical. The most common reaction they took was to withdraw from DBSA's informal education projects or to refuse to participate at the beginning. For example, during the football tournament in 2018, one school was not satisfied with the judgement of competition and left the pitch during the match. According to the teacher of the withdrawn team, the competition was manipulated by the local coordinators. As he explained:

> They brought some gang. They hire some gangs. At first, they hire them as security. They give the security to the Chinese team, DBSA. Then you realised that there is something behind there, it is not just security. So they are there, when their team failed to win, then you are forced to do as part what they want, not as part what we understand.
>
> (RD, male, local school teacher, Mathare)

Due to similar reasons, there had been several schools who participated in DBSA's projects in the first year but decided not to continue for the following years. As an interviewee reported, "if it is something that cannot be sorted out, then I decided to say, let me pull out. So that's why I pull out" (BN, male, local school principal, Mathare). This interviewee had used to be the president of the football committee for the first year's tournament but subsequently stopped participating. More seriously, he reported that community members who did not ally with the two local coordinators had chosen to team up themselves, becoming competitors to the current power holders. The community was then divided into two or more groups, with a local interviewee relating that "this group, the other group, now they are starting to fight with one another. This is going to form them, bad people, they will also be spotted by bad people" (SA, male, local school director, Mathare). This struggle for power at the sub-organisational level sometimes involved political game playing. More concerningly, it could bring violence in other cases. Similar to the previous example when DBSA tried to change the food supply, this interviewee recounted that a local staff member of DBSA was bitten by the gangsters hired by the two local coordinators, which prompted a worry that more violence and conflicts might happen across different groups.

A new order

In this regard, DBSA had the ultimate responsibility for the breakdown of previous community balance and the forming of a new order. Some of DBSA staff members might have been aware of that, but most volunteer tourists were unconscious about this important change happening in the community. The director of DBSA indicated his view that the balance should be broken which he felt was not necessarily a negative thing. Nevertheless, DBSA had no idea as yet as to what kinds of measurements they should undertake to assure the change would lead to a positive direction, rather than the disruption of the community.

Local people's perspective was apparently not to blame the organisation at all. Many local interviewees, and even those who had withdrawn, emphasised they had no problem with DBSA itself. One of them indicated: "once you sort out and we discuss about it, I don't have any problem. I'm very ready to participate with DBSA members and work with them hand in hand" (BN, male, local school principal, Mathare). For one thing, local people did not accuse DBSA or volunteer tourists because they were afraid to lose benefits of engagement and they were concerned that DBSA may leave Mathare if they got tired of the political games. As was indicated by a local interviewee, there had been other cases (before DBSA) of some international organisations that decided to pull out after getting involved in the local politics: "they are going to fight with you, with other people. Then you become tired, why I am doing these now? Maybe you are doing some things here, and you think, well, it is not a good place" (SA, male, local school director, Mathare). For another, when thinking of DBSA and the local coordinators, many local people believed the organisation, as outsiders, were less powerful than the local group in many ways. As SA (male, local school director, Mathare) pointed out, "they need to be strong enough to know why they are coming to Mathare." Assuming the local coordinators had taken a lot of power from DBSA by force, interviewees thought DBSA should resist this as well:

> DBSA members should be able to understand. The power should not send out to the two gentlemen... So now DBSA can pick up people from neutral areas where the member themselves who decide. And then they work with those people freely without any

> interference with others. If they select, they should let the members sit down to let the people choose the people who will be able to coordinate these things within Mathare, minus those two gentlemen. If the two gentlemen must be there, they just be there as community members.
>
> (BN, male, local school principal, Mathare)

As was illustrated in the above quotation, local interviewees suggested DBSA be conscious about the 'power' that had come to the local coordinators. It seemed to be a little ironic that while DBSA and the Chinese volunteer tourists always addressed the significance of awareness-raising and local empowerment as their mission and vision, the local people were, in return, warning them to be careful about and to better understand the power dynamics on the ground. In addition, an interviewee added it was essential to involve the village chiefs and village elders to ensure DBSA's development agenda fitting in the community's overall scheme: "They (chiefs and village elders) also want to be involved. You involve them, you invite them for meetings where you sit with them. And you tell them, this is what we are doing. So that they know you" (DS, male, local community worker, Mathare). In this way, it might help to make the practice of DBSA, as an external organisation, more legitimised in terms of forming a new community order and being a part of a new community balance.

Moreover, local people were expecting a re-selection and re-organisation of DBSA's local coordinating team. They demanded an accountable community leader group selected through a democratic process, showing a wish for 'citizen power' (Arnstein, 1969). Additionally, they were requesting fairer governance of projects and power to negotiate the conditions among all involved participants. Pawar (2017) reveals participation is supposed to lead to structural change and redistribution of power. In this sense, instead of involving local participation at a tokenistic level and using 'power over' to take control, DBSA's empowerment goal would be realised more efficiently and effectively by having a clear communication system and developing a functional and cooperative relationship with different groups of people in the community. It should also be noted that particular comments and suggestions related to the redistribution of DBSA's power and involvement in local politics were mostly made by male

community members. In contrast, women's reactions were much softer. This gender difference might imply another facet of the dynamics of community politics in Mathare.

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter analyses structural power-related issues in volunteer tourism practice. As an overarching conclusion, there was a difference between the Chinese group and the local community in interpretations of 'empowerment'. While DBSA staff and volunteer tourists were addressing a non-relational 'power to' with the purpose to get things done, power expected by local people was instant, specific and directional from DBSA to the local community. They wanted substantial power to identify local needs, to be involved in project design and implementation and to own the projects. Local people's identification of their self-strengths, self-resilience, and self-help within the community was closely connected to 'power within'. This had become an underpinning of the agreement between the Chinese and the local community that both groups recognised the importance of collaboration. To generate power for a better life for Mathare people, DBSA particularly highlighted their plans to raise locals' awareness towards working hard on their own. DBSA made attempts to provide toolkits to increase locals' capabilities and skills through 'process-driven' approaches for development. However, these approaches were essentially about personal level empowerment which encouraged local people to get out of the slum rather than seeking for solutions and improvements in the slum. This reveals DBSA might have neglected the structural inequality in the local society and ignored empowerment possibilities at the community level.

On the other hand, practices on the ground had demonstrated the 'power over' mechanism from the DBSA staff and Chinese volunteer tourists towards local people. Information about approaching decision-makers, specific project plans and timescales, explicit selection criteria and sensible feedback was largely missing, which had demonstrated a hidden form of power of DBSA in closed spaces. When referring to Arnstein's ladder of participation, the research further illustrates that local people's participation remained at the non-participation level and

the tokenism level of the ladder. Some Chinese volunteer tourists felt superior and assumed that the mindsets of many local people were problematic, so they chose to hold power and control themselves. As volunteer tourists strived to get things done, they did not really involve local people in project planning and implementation. Instead, they undertook strategies such as manipulating, informing, consultation and placation to take control, leaving little room for local participants to negotiate or adjust. In the word of a local member of DBSA staff, the organisation was 'dictating and dominating' in their practice.

In response to that, some local people were aware of the need for higher-level participation in DBSA's practice. Others were not, and their degree of understanding varied from person to person. When local interviewees pointed out several shortcomings of DBSA and volunteer tourists' work, they seemed to show a generous understanding and tolerance, which might suggest an invisible form of power. Apart from the cultural account that local people might think more about their personal relationship to the Chinese group than the rights they were supposed to have, the research found that local's carefulness was also grounded in fear of losing benefits. Local people's cooperation was not directly forced by the power of DBSA or volunteer tourists but was out of worry about being excluded in receiving provisions and support, and this had been utilised by the organisation to constrain the local behaviours.

Furthermore, the research reports the 'power over' was not only from DBSA and volunteer tourists, but there had occurred oppressions at the sub-organisational level among community members. Intentionally or unintentionally as a result of DBSA's work in Mathare, local coordinators had a raised status as new community leaders. While DBSA indeed needed local coordinators to introduce them to the community at the first place and to expand their social networking, DBSA did not expect the local coordinators to create their own 'claimed space', where they even used power to constrain the organisation. Regarding the local coordinators' domination in communication channels and access to information sharing, other community members wished to resist. Several local interviewees expressed doubts in DBSA's distribution of power, and they had taken actions to withdraw from DBSA's projects. More seriously, local people with different allegiances teamed up and the community was

divided into groups, among which there had been conflicts happening in the form of politics or violence.

In this aspect, DBSA had resulted in a breakdown of community balance and a new order was coming into being. Most local interviewees did not blame the organisation for the change, but they did request that DBSA re-consider the power distribution and re-organise the local coordinating team. To achieve a higher level of citizen power, local interviewees demanded a more accountable community leader group, selected through a democratic process, to implement DBSA's projects. Apart from that, DBSA was also suggested to develop an effective communication system and an increased level of transparency, to ensure a more equal participation among community members.

Chapter 8 Making Changes: Actions, Choices, Reflections and Implications

8.1. Introduction

To explore the complexity of international volunteer tourism, the research has compared local people's needs, DBSA's vision and volunteer tourists' views, demonstrating the symbiotic relationships among the three groups, and illustrating impacts in practice. By applying theories of power and the powercube framework, the research analyses the interactions and interplays among three stakeholder groups, pointing out the complexity of power dynamics in volunteer tourism. When facing these complexities, choices and reflections constantly arose for me, both as a researcher and as a human being. I knew it was a lifelong journey to find answers, but after the first field visit in 2018, I did not want the exploration to end simply after data collections and analysis. Thus, I returned to the field for the second time to follow up on issues identified in this first visit.

As a researcher, I used to be quite cautious about getting deeply involved in practice as I was afraid my actions could interfere with research. I was even more concerned that I might make judgements that would negatively affect practice. For instance, I had identified several limitations and issues in DBSA's projects. If I criticised it too seriously, I was worried that DBSA could pull out and leave those starving children without support. Across the course of my research journey, more and more questions arose in my mind which were not only about the meaning of doing research but also about being a human being. I thought of what Smith (2012:3) argued, that "the word itself, 'research', is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary." Doing research itself has represented a form of power because researchers mainly control the process of designing, implementation, interpretation and dissemination (Smith, 2012). For me, I had to admit that this study served my own interest and eventually, I would likely benefit from doing it by getting a degree. But what benefit might the researched draw from it?

Life is always about choices and full of serendipity. With those concerns and questions, I

travelled back to Nairobi. Surprisingly, on my arrival, the director of DBSA asked me if I would like to join the team and lead one of their major projects, Lunch For Children (LFC), as an unpaid volunteer. He promised me great freedom to act whilst doing my research. Nevertheless, I realised that, if I accepted the new role as a practitioner, my decision might significantly affect practices in one way or another. Since my first fieldwork research, I had provided informal advice to DBSA on multiple occasions. In this respect, I had to admit that it was already impossible to avoid my involvement and influence in DBSA's projects. I had, though, largely self-defined this role, being like an informal consultant and a friend of staff and volunteer tourists personally. I found myself struggling if I wanted to change my position to a completely practitioner-researcher.

Then I reflected on my views and attitude about 'change'. As a researcher, I tried to keep a distance from my research subjects, concerned my interference could have negative consequences. Behind that, however, I had to admit my fear to make decisions and judgements, and most importantly, my fear to take responsibility for the outcomes. It was similar to how Forde (2013: 12) reflected in his auto-ethnography: "it was a form of escapism that allowed me to engage with what I thought of as authentic emotion. Underlying this escapism is the desire to both collect experiences as well as avoid responsibilities." However, doing PhD research should not only be for personal benefit to get the degree, but also to better understand the research topic and to encourage positive change, and I felt I could play a role to make this happen. Like Hart and Bond (1995:47) suggest, "research becomes just one of a range of influences upon change, and change comes about by people being active players in the process". This is similar to an old Chinese saying: "if it is viewed from the angle of change, the universe can hardly be the same for a moment. However, when seen from the angle of constancy, then everything including we ourselves is blessed with immortality"[25]. If life is about making one choice after another, I realise all I need is wisdom and knowledge to make different choices and courage to take responsibility for my decisions.

[25] "盖将自其变者而观之，则天地曾不能以一瞬；自其不变者而观之，则物与我皆无尽也。" in Chinese.

Eventually, I decided to take the role as the team leader of DBSA's LFC project. I, therefore, started action research in my second field trip, trying to address problems with DBSA that I had found in my research and to enable the local community to take back control to some extent. This chapter specifically records the actions I undertook during the second fieldwork visit and my reflections and thoughts throughout the journey. Connected with findings presented earlier in the thesis, this chapter begins with the description of organisational changes I made, including the setup of DBSA's structure for more formalised practices and the creation of a communication system between DBSA and the local community. Following that, reflections are made on the challenges of my changing positionality during the research. Next, the chapter discusses the change of power across the course of my second field research and power dynamics throughout the process of increasing local involvement. Under the framework about nine 'domains' to build community empowerment (Laverack, 2001), practices that I initiated for developing local leadership, raising capabilities in problem assessment and programme management are reflected. Finally, it looks at power and dilemmas at the supra-organisational level, which was raised and realised after the first field trip. The ongoing partnership between DBSA and the government bodies is introduced. On the basis of DBSA's changes and potentials in the future, the role of NGOs from the national level to the international level is further explored, especially narratives from Chinese organisations.

Data used in the chapter were mainly from my observations and fieldnotes during the second field trip, as well as reflections throughout the whole research journey with the support of particular interviews, documents and relevant literature in the field. It should also be noted when mentioning actions undertaken by the LFC team in this chapter, they were mostly participated and agreed by me as a project manager.

8.2. Conducting organisational change

8.2.1. Adding the structure and formality

Chapter 6 and 7 have revealed a mismatch between the local community's needs, expectations, the way they wished things to be done and the practice of DBSA and Chinese volunteer tourists. The importance of setting up the structure of the organisation was an issue that was particularly raised by both local people and volunteer tourists. As they reported, DBSA's lack of formal working procedures had resulted in interference affecting the local community's own agenda. Without clear information about DBSA's projects, plans and objectives, volunteer tourists were likely to go to schools for their own purposes without informing or communicating with schools in advance. This had disturbed and interrupted the normal teaching processes of schools. In addition, because open documents about the organisation's projects were missing, including the time schedules of projects, application processes, selection criteria and evaluation system, local people had complained about unfairness, especially those who were more marginalised from getting benefits. Trying to resolve these limitations which I had identified within the research, I made several changes to attempt improvement when leading DBSA's LFC team in 2019.

Primarily, I designed a concrete plan about project implementation in the one-month timeframe with clear objectives. The first objective was to understand how the feeding project was being undertaken at all partner schools, finding out needs and problems. For this objective, a more sustainable evaluation system was needed to make sure practices were on the right track even after volunteer tourists left. The second objective was to develop scientific and transparent criteria for school selection and to clarify a sensible application procedure for all schools in the community. On the basis of the new criteria and procedure, volunteer tourists were supposed to undertake research on newly applied schools and to select one school out of six to join the year's LFC project. Additionally, I planned a specific timetable with team members about when we were undertaking actions towards the objectives (as shown in Figure 8.2.1). Volunteer tourists obtained contact information for all relevant schools at the

very beginning so that they could communicate about the plan and arrange their visits with schools in advance.

日期 Date	组员 Team members	学校 Schools	联系方式 Contact	工作内容 Working tasks
7.22. Mon	A. [redacted]	ChangRong	[redacted]	[redacted]
	B. [redacted]	ChangQing	[redacted]	
	C. [redacted]	Recado	[redacted]	
	D. [redacted]	Hanka	[redacted]	
7.23. Tue	A. [redacted]	ChangRong-Jasil		
	B. [redacted]	ChangQing-Success		
	C. [redacted]	Recado-Destiny		
	D. [redacted]	Hanka-PagetVision		
7.24. Wed	A. [redacted]	ChangRong-Jasil		
	B. [redacted]	ChangQing-Success		
	C. [redacted]	Recado-Destiny		
	D. [redacted]	Hanka-PagetVision		
[redacted]				
7.25. Thu	A. [redacted]	Excellent	[redacted]	
	B. [redacted]	WhyNot	[redacted]	
	C. [redacted]	Cass	[redacted]	
	D. [redacted]	ValleyView	[redacted]	[redacted]
7.26. Fri	A. [redacted]	Excellent-Joycare		
	B. [redacted]	WhyNot-Macco		
	C. [redacted]	Cass		
	D. [redacted]	ValleyView-Kingsway		
[redacted]				

Figure 8.2.1. An example of project plans

Evaluating the feeding project

Eight existing partner schools in DBSA's LFC project were researched on at the first stage, with the team undertaking five specific tasks. First, to better understand the situation of partner schools in general, volunteer tourists went to schools in groups, doing observations, surveys and interviews with school principals, teachers, chefs and students. In this process, they learned as many details as possible about the schools and they listened to local people's needs and desires. Second, as a part of the LFC's evaluation, schools were asked for a monthly report to feedback on the project. This report included changes in student numbers, meal menus, recordings of received food, food usage and storage and any other problems they were facing or suggestions they wanted to make. The monthly report served as direct communication between the schools and DBSA, so the organisation could better supervise the project but also know what should be improved. When visiting schools, volunteer tourists explained to schools why DBSA needed the monthly reports, taught them how to write reports and learned if there were any practical difficulties in doing that.

Third, the team researched the existing 'parents committee system' at community schools and learned if there were any possibilities that parents could be more involved in monitoring the feeding project. It had been well recognised by volunteer tourists that parents were one of the most relevant stakeholders in DBSA's LFC project. Their involvement could have enabled more local people into project monitoring and maximised local strengths and potential for self-help. Fourth, volunteer tourists helped all partner schools to set up their own social media platforms (Facebook). Schools were requested to post contents on the social media platform about their implementation of the feeding project, including updates of school menus, pictures about cooking, everyday cleaning of food dispensing materials and records of food usage. In this way, it made the whole feeding project more transparent to the Kenyan general public and individual Chinese donors for LFC. They could see constant feedback from the project and, thus, help to ensure the proper use of funding. Considering the difficulty of internet access for some schools, this was a still underdeveloped measure and schools were encouraged to offer updates once a week at first. Finally, a health management database was built up by one volunteer tourist who had expertise in the area. Volunteer tourists had collected data on physical well-being of children at all LFC partner schools, including height, weight and other general information such as age and gender. These data were stored in the database for future longitudinal tracking of children's health status.

Setting up the selection criteria

For the second stage, the task was to set up proper criteria for school selection and to determine a newly selected school for the feeding project. I facilitated several meetings and discussions with the team of volunteer tourists, trying not to dominate the conversations but only providing necessary information and personal opinions when needed. Based on volunteer tourists' experience during their fieldwork at local schools, the team finally came up with a set of criteria, which specifically addressed the importance of school management, education quality, the financial situation and water and hygiene for food security. More details of the criteria can be found in Appendix 3.

During the discussion, the team generated some important conversations and debates about

the balance between the vulnerability of schools and the quality of schooling. On the one hand, DBSA's free food provision for Mathare children was a response to concerns about their unprivileged backgrounds. DBSA was trying to relieve the poor living situation of certain community members through the feeding. In this sense, the LFC project should give priority to the poorest children, meaning prioritising the vulnerability of schools as an essential factor when considering the selection criteria. On the other hand, the most vulnerable schools in Mathare were likely to be schools with relatively poorer facilities, conditions, management and teaching quality. This issue was implied by one local teacher, who identified that:

> Some schools are paying (charging) a bit lower to bring in more pupils. And that low payments cannot maintain a qualified teacher. That's why in some schools, you may get the teacher here today, tomorrow you come and not get the same teacher. With us here, we are trying to maintain our teachers, that's why you see our school fees a bit high. And we are after quality education.
>
> (TB, male, local school principal, Mathare)

These differing issues represented a crossroads where choices had to be made. As was indicated in Chapter 7, DBSA had played a significant role in forming a new community order. Because of the feeding project, for example, the previous balance of the community schools' market had been changed. DBSA's provision of food had influenced students' choice of schools or mobility from one school to another. The setting of criteria would further enhance this new order in one way or another. If the feeding was to be provided to relatively disadvantaged schools, children might be attracted merely by free food and transfer from a school with better conditions or better teaching quality. This might not be a good thing overall for education in Mathare. On the other hand, setting the criteria in the reverse way could result in the living and education condition of children in the disadvantaged schools, especially those who were unable to afford tuition fees required by other schools, getting worse.

As mentioned in my reflection on the meaning of doing research, changes were inevitable, but the direction of change was shaped by people's knowledge, experience, understanding and

judgement. After several rounds' research and discussion, the team finally decided to put the management and teaching quality of schools as a higher priority and condition than vulnerability. As a supplementary condition, the tuition fee of eligible schools was required to be maintained within a reasonable range. To minimise potential negative effects, as mentioned above, DBSA additionally expanded the scholarship project to support more children from the unprivileged backgrounds and enable them to attend higher-quality schools.

Those were the choices and attempts the team made to address DBSA's lack of structure and formality. Templates and documents for monitoring the LCF project were created as well as the criteria and procedure for selection, but they were flexible for improvement when needed. The whole plan of doing the project was written into guidance shared with DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists. According to all the fieldwork information, volunteer tourists built up a database of all researched schools' profiles, for DBSA members' later use in the following years.

8.2.2. Building up the communication system

Another big issue mentioned by local people in research findings was the need for local community members and stakeholders to have direct connections and communication opportunities with DBSA. This linked with Jackson's framework, which distinguishes different degrees of public involvement (see Figure 8.2.2). For those who used to be excluded from information, approaches such as informing and public education were expected to deliver messages (Jackson, 2001, cited in Taylor, 2003). Having a clearer structure for DBSA and the increased formalisation of their work had already helped significantly with this aspect. However, to further develop from one-way communication to two-way communication and shared decision-making required an improved system. More voices and ideas from the local community should be included.

Degree of involvement

SET OBJECTIVES	FOR WHOM?	CHARACTERISTICS
Informing	For those who are uninformed about an issue	One-way communication
Public education	For those who are aware of the issue but not of its technicalities or implications	
Testing reactions	For those who are progressively more informed	Two-way communication, consultation
Seeking ideas and alternative solutions		
Seeking consensus		Shared decision-making

Figure 8.2.2. Stages of public involvement (Jackson, 2001, cited in Taylor, 2003: 119)

Increased understanding among volunteer tourists

With the volunteer tourists, I strongly suggested they listened carefully to local people's expressed thoughts and perspectives during their visit. I stressed that the volunteer tourists' researching on schools was not just a task to get valid information, but also an opportunity for local people to convey their voices and desires, which should be considered in the project design. This brought some positive changes that are documented in this subsection.

The research in my first field visit had found some misunderstandings with volunteer tourists holding negative thoughts about local poverty, assuming local people were too lazy to change. Such assumptions and mistrust also existed among the group of volunteer tourists in my team. An example was that when discussing the monthly report at the early stage, some volunteer tourists mentioned that schools in Mathare might be too lazy to submit an electronic version of the reports. Some volunteer tourists questioned that even after setting social media accounts for schools, local people might not post content as required in time. These types of assumptions implied that volunteer tourists largely underestimated the local capabilities in many ways.

After further communicating and interacting with local people, the team started to show increasing respect and understanding of the community. The relationship between volunteer tourists and the local community could no longer be simply defined by 'host-guest' or 'giver-receiver'. Both groups were deeply involved in conducting the project together and they had

built up strong personal bonds with each other. More precisely, it was like a partnership on the basis of mutual respect and mutual understanding. For instance, volunteer tourists were very inspired by the story of a local principal who showed a great capacity and passion in his education career in Mathare. As was recorded in the school profile, volunteer tourists commented:

> He is excellent at school management and he knows the situation of all his students very well. He always reminds children of being grateful, never giving up, striving to be a better person and giving back to the community one day. The school has a very good atmosphere. All students love and respect teachers. Vice versa.
>
> (LC, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

Inspired by that, volunteer tourists shared their own stories with local people, and they learned from each other. At the end of the month, when the school principals met volunteer tourists, I observed they showed happy faces and hugged each other, behaving like quite close friends. With trust and understanding, communication was no-longer one-way instructions and informing, but a two-way interaction, which had brought effectiveness and efficiency in project implementation. To ensure the availability of access after volunteer tourists left, DBSA's local staff members were involved in the whole fieldwork with volunteer tourists. They were supposed to keep conducting regular monthly visits to community schools for both monitoring and information sharing. Additionally, DBSA rented an office near Mathare, where the staff members were located every weekday so that local people would be able to approach them if necessary. The implementation of DBSA's projects was regularly recorded and constantly reported to the director of DBSA. In these ways, a more convenient and approachable communication channel was created directly between local people and DBSA, while the previous local coordinator's role as an intermediate was reduced.

Communication through community meetings

Furthermore, as some local interviewees suggested previously in this research, community meetings could be a good opportunity for communication within community members. The

local coordinator had previously organised some exclusive community meetings involving certain community groups allied with him. As he explained, "they have told me the challenges they have been through the month where can we improve." To expand the gatherings to a broader audience and to include further sharing of decision making, the LFC team tried to create a model of regular community meetings within DBSA's structure. This was supposed to help with information delivery about DBSA's projects and plans as well as the rationales behind the intentions. Meanwhile, opportunities occurred for community members to communicate with each other and to explore possibilities of mutual help.

In organising one community meeting with the team during my second fieldwork, all principals of partner schools were invited in the meeting, as well as some from interested and applying schools. The team first introduced the new supervision system of DBSA's LFC project, including the setting of monthly reports, social media platforms, regular visits, recording documents and the new criteria for school selection. Next, group discussions were organised among local participants, DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists. They exchanged ideas about issues or concerns around the new regulations. By taking in thoughts and suggestions from different perspectives, the team improved the documents after the meeting. For example, some school principals complained that the food delivery time was often unfixed, which had brought great uncertainty for schools to manage cooking. According to their suggestions, the LFC team made adjustments to the record book of food delivery and communicated with the food supplier to resolve the problem. In terms of promises and the feedback to the local community, I suggested DBSA provide information briefing sessions through community meetings before they initiated new project plans. DBSA members would explain to local people what they were going to do, what objectives and time schedules of the projects were. Both volunteer tourists and local staff members should be clear about the information so they would know answers for questions from the locals at any time.

Summarising the actions initiated to resolve problems revealed in the previous research findings, the formality and structure of DBSA's projects was improved and initiated. Key principles in community development work such as respect and understanding, were

addressed amongst the Chinese group. A database of knowledge and experience was created, from which volunteer tourists could learn in the following years. The need for follow-ups in specific projects was highlighted. More importantly, the communication channels between DBSA and the local community and among the community members was improved to avoid the domination of information. The community meetings served as a good channel to make information transparent to relevant participants, enabled the realisation of two-way communication between the Chinese group and the local community and developed potential for shared decision-making. As suggested by Strongman (2004), information sharing through effective communication systems was a form of community resilience building as "communication itself is a form of aid" (p135). It might not be easy to realise a higher level of local participation such as citizen power instantly, but creating spaces for dialogue could hopefully be a starting point that "enhances receptivity, facilitates better understanding and allows for flexibility in implementing sustainable development policies and programs" (Pawar, 2017: 92).

8.3. Reflections on action research

Hart and Bond (1995:37-8) indicated four applications of action research (experimental, organisational, professionalizing and empowering) with different foci. On reflection, and as listed in Table 8.3.1, my action research in the second field trip mainly adopted the problem-focused, change-intervention-focused and improvement-and-involvement-focused approaches. Drawing findings after the first field trip, this thesis particularly reveals the mismatch between local people's needs and expectations for the ways they wished things to be done, and the practice of DBSA and Chinese volunteer tourists. To address this key problem, change interventions included the formalisation of DBSA's work and building of an efficient communication system - processes through which, local people's participation and involvement were expected to increase.

	Consensus model of society Rational social management	⟷	Conflict model of society Structural change

Action research type	Experimental	Organisational	Professionalizing	Empowerment
Problem focus	Problem emerges from the interaction of social science theory and social problem Problem relevant for social science/ management interests Success defined in terms of social science	Problem defined by the most powerful group; some negotiation with workers Problem relevant for management/ social science interests Success defined by sponsors	Problem defined by professional group; some negotiation with users Problem emerges from professional/ practice/ experience Success contested, professionally determined defections of success	Emerging and negotiated definition of problem by less powerful group(s) Problem emerges from members' practice/experience Competing definitions of success accepted and expected
Change intervention	Social science, experimental intervention to test theory and/or generate theory Problem to be solved in terms of research aims	Top-down, directed change towards predetermined aims Problem to be solved in terms of management aims	Professionally led, predefined, process-led Problem to be resolved in the interests of research-based practice and professionalization	Bottom-up, undetermined, process-led Problem to be explore as part of process of change, developing an understanding of meanings of issues in terms of problems and solutions
Improvement and involvement	Towards controlled outcome and consensual definition of improvement	Towards tangible outcome and consensual definition of improvement	Towards improvement in practice defined by professionals and on behalf of users	Towards negotiated outcomes and pluralist definitions of improvement: account taken of vested interests

Table 8.3.1. The adapted framework of action research typology (Hart and Bond, 1995:37-8)

When reflecting on Hard and Bond's (1995) action research typology, I identified the practices that I was engaged in and initiated were a mix of organisational, professionalising and empowerment action research. For example, problems were identified by drawing perspectives offered in interviews and observations with both the relatively powerless group of local people and the relatively powerful group of the Chinese volunteer tourists and DBSA staff members. In making organisational change, actions were undertaken through a top-down approach to set formalised structure of DBSA, but also allowed voices from community members to offer inputs through bottom-up channels. These had demonstrated the empowerment and organisational element in action research.

However, as the data was interpreted and framed by me as a researcher, my role was like a negotiation between the powerful groups and the less powerful. I tried to prioritise perspectives from local people in further identifying those problems. On the other hand, my professional knowledge was largely employed throughout the process. When it came to practice and improvement, change interventions had been predefined and led by me as a practitioner-researcher on the basis of professionalisation. It was done through neither completely bottom-up nor top-down approaches, as again, I sought to play a role as an intermediate on behalf of local people but also with considerations of management aims from DBSA's standing point.

This further led to reflections on my changing positionality from a researcher to a practitioner-researcher. As explained in Chapter 4, my Chinese appearance made many local people perceive me more as a part of DBSA, not recognising my researcher role very well. But after spending time interacting with them and building personal relationships with them, they became quite open to me about their thoughts and ideas about DBSA's practice. As a result, local people's views of me did not change significantly when I became a practitioner in my second field trip. Some of them expressed their appreciation that their voices were heard and the issues they were concerned with were improved.

For DBSA, I got more direct experience and understanding about power dynamics through

officially becoming a part of the organisation. While I always wanted to have more 'power to' and 'power with' the local community, I felt the inevitability of 'power over' at many times, especially for projects like LFC which involved large amounts of money and various interest from different stakeholder groups. Sometimes, I found it hard to balance different aspects without a certain degree of control. For example, the procedures of the feeding project were generally as follows:

1) DBSA gets funding from different sources;
2) DBSA's staff members make budgets for the project's coming year and decide on the number of students and teachers they are able to support;
3) DBSA collects data about the number of students in all partner schools;
4) DBSA calls for bids for food supplies;
5) Food suppliers make budgets for food ingredients;
6) The local coordinators purchase food and arrange the suppliers to deliver food to schools.

This procedure illustrated that the most relevant stakeholder groups in the feeding project included donors, the Chinese organisation, local coordinators, food suppliers and local partners schools (principals, teachers and students). As explained in Chapter 7, the food supplier was found and controlled by the local coordinators, so they acted as a group of shared interests. Both local coordinators and partner schools wanted to maximise what they could get. The schools were likely to report a higher number of students than the actual situation in order to get more food, and the local coordinators would likely to unite the food suppliers to ask for a higher budget to get more profits. As for DBSA, they wanted to expand their projects in the community and cover the feeding for as many children as possible. They needed to be accountable for the use of money to donors and to the public. According to DBSA staff members and volunteer tourists, children were, in essence, the target beneficiaries, rather than an individual school principal or food suppliers.

When being a project manager for the feeding programme, some control actions had to be undertaken to prevent the corruption of money. Regarding spaces in powercube framework,

that meant some spaces had to be closed, including decisions on budget plans and supervision of the use of money during the implementation. In controlling those essential areas, the ultimate aim was to ensure that the project provided maximum benefits for community children. As for other spaces such as the setting of regulations, criteria and evaluation, or the decisions on plans and schedules, sometimes, it was hard to draw an absolute boundary if spaces should be 'closed' or could be 'invited'. For example, the supervision system was designed to monitor the schools' implementation of the feeding. If schools were invited to co-design the supervision system, it might become a paradox to let them come up with regulations to supervise themselves. When discussing what needed to be covered through the budget of the project, it was again difficult to take account of all needs and desires of everyone regarding the limited resources and funding.

> To this land, I am full of expectation and hope. I love forms of life here. I love Tristes Tropiques. It makes me feel that I am close to the truth of life. But meanwhile, I feel a sense of distrust and insecurity. I am like standing in front of a door, where life and freedom are on the other side of the door. I am excited, hopeful, but also anxious and nervous, afraid of embracing it with my open arms.
>
> (Field diary, July 30th, 2019, the second field trip)

As the above field diary showed, I was faced with inner contradictions at many times. Those spaces were like 'floating spaces' for me. Chapter 7 has described the 'floating space' as those that were under construction, where regulations, rules and formality remained to be set and where opportunities were provided for different stakeholder groups to cooperate and collaborate. For me personally, the 'floating space' was somewhere in which I was uncertain about how to behave and act. It was a space that I searched for, wanting to do something inside it, but simultaneously, I was not well prepared and found it hard to position myself. Although I had demonstrated several power-related issues in DBSA's practice and made several critiques and suggestions from an academic perspective, when it came to taking actions and making changes, it might be a different story and more ethical dilemmas arose. Understanding power was just a starting point, but more importantly, how to utilise power by oneself and

with others was a further lesson to learn. As suggested by Gilchrist and Taylor (2016), this exercise of power can be interpreted both negatively and positively. While a negative view regards power as inevitable, a positive view of power can search for the potential for change 'from below' after recognising multiple possibilities behind it (ibid: 66). The next section is then going to discuss this changing of power across the course of my research in more details.

8.4. Reflections on the changing of power

To achieve a higher degree of local involvement in shared decision makings, Laverack (2001) suggests nine organisational aspects of programme operation towards community empowerment (as shown in Table 8.4.1). He calls these areas 'operational domains' where individuals and groups find possibilities for community empowerment and socio-political changes (ibid:135). By employing the 'domain' approach, practitioners are able to help people better understand different areas that influence their lives and develop strategies to identify problems and solutions collectively (Laverack, 2005). Under the framework, my second fieldwork addressed several domains in practice, alongside constant reflections on power dynamics.

1.	Improves participation
2.	Develops local leadership
3.	Increases problem assessment capacities
4.	Enhances the ability to 'ask why'
5.	Builds empowering organisational structures
6.	Improves resource mobilization
7.	Strengthens links to other organisations and people
8.	Creates an equitable relationship with outside agents
9.	Increases control over programme management

Table 8.4.1. Nine 'domains' to build community empowerment (Laverack, 2001)

8.4.1. Developing local leadership and capabilities in problem assessment

Chapter 7 has reported the danger of DBSA presenting certain local coordinators as community leaders, which had caused inequality and conflicts among community members.

To avoid the issues of selecting local leaders, Goodman et al. (1998, cited in Laverack, 2001) suggest a pluralistic approach to develop appropriate leadership, creating chances for community capacity building through interactions among existing positional leaders or reputational leaders. In doing so, it was important to recognise and bring in local strengths in all dimensions.

When researching the implementation of the LFC project among partner schools, for example, several principals reported the amount of food supply was often not enough and the time for delivery was irregular. As there existed no standard of recording, it had become one of the major difficulties in monitoring the project. Volunteer tourists in the LFC team had discussed this issue, drawing lessons from feeding programs in China and similar projects delivered by western organisations, but without identifying simple and sensible solutions. The answer was later found at a local community school whose principal offered his knowledge and experience in resolving the problem. As shown in Figure 8.4.1-(left), the principal stacked food properly at his office, which would be locked after he left. He designed different types of containers to measure the amount of food delivered every time (see Figure 8.4.1, right). Also, he made a record book by himself, keeping notes of received food and used food in the units measured by the self-designed container (see Figure 8.4.2).

When volunteer tourists saw the clear records on their arrival, they were very impressed. With the consent of the principal, the LFC team learned from the model and generalised it for the whole feeding project. Because of this initiative, the principal of the school was invited to share his experience with others in the community meeting, and he was given the 2019 Best LFC Award. This strategy to include more local knowledge in project management and problem-solving with annual awards was used to develop long-term local leadership. Instead of granting power to certain local coordinators to decide everything, as long as one had capabilities in certain areas, he or she could undertake leaderships in the area and educate others. In this way, local people were able to exchange ideas and build capabilities together, which was a part of the continuum of community empowerment (Laverack, 2001).

Figure 8.4.1. Stacked food at the principal's office (left) and the self-designed container for food measurement (right).

Figure 8.4.2. Record book about received food and used food.

Additionally, considering the power of knowledge, it was essential to understand whose knowledge counted in problem assessment. As indicated by Laverack (2001:139), "problem

assessment is most empowering when the identification of problems, solutions to the problems and actions to resolve the problems are carried out by the community." An example related to this point was in dealing with the issue of water. When the LFC team discussed the criteria for school selection, many volunteer tourists mentioned that a steady running water source was a necessity, believing it was closely linked with food security. As there are prevailing water-borne diseases in Mathare (Recback, 2007), a lack of a source of clean running water near schools meant that it would be hard to ensure the safe use of cooking water for students and teachers. For a similar reason, the LFC team requested that all partner schools ensured students washed their hands before each meal and staff cleaned plates and spoons after meals. Volunteer tourists all agreed that indicating the importance of water gave emphasis on hygiene. However, this strict focus on the 'water issue' was criticised by an American researcher in the field. From her perspective, she assumed that there was a serious water shortage in informal settlements like Mathare, so it was unrealistic to set such a high standard about the water usage for schools. She thought the Chinese group was dominating the 'knowledge' and increasing the burden to the local community by setting requirements for the use of water.

To assess the problem, the team tried to involve more local people's knowledge and experiences. As reported by many teachers at community schools, it was quite usual in Mathare for children to play with each other on the floor. They usually put their hands in mouths after touching the floor and walls. Teachers had been quite concerned about the hygiene of school children under these circumstances. In addition, local people indicated that there was indeed a lack of access to water before 2007 in Mathare and residents had to buy water by using tanks at a relatively high price at vendors. However, after the slum upgrading programme in 2007, a storm-water drainage system and water taps had been built up in most areas. The water cost had become lower than the informal water market. This meant that most Mathare residents were able to access clean running water and it was not really 'unrealistic' to address the water issue for the feeding project. As shown in a poster from the USAID and the Kenyan ministry on the wall of a community school (Figure 8.4.3), adverts for local people regarding the importance of hands washing had been in place for a long time. A school teacher

explained that, while there was sometimes a need to buy water from the community tap when facing water deficiency, the school had its own water tap and water tank which could provide stable flowing water for most of the time. He agreed that students should wash hands before meals for hygiene purposes, and they had implemented that quite well since the project began. Some other local people indicated the concerns about the increased cost of water usage and suggested an adjustment to the budget for water cost. Taking those voices into consideration in project improvements subsequently, the LFC team eventually decided to keep the clean running water as an important criterion in school selection and requested hand washing before meals at all partner schools.

Figure 8.4.3. A poster about handwashing on the wall of a community school.

In these examples, the involvement of local people into problem assessment had enabled a better understanding of the issue to be acquired rather than imposing someone's own assumptions. For one thing, it had been recognised that local people held rich knowledge in understanding their own situation and resolving issues by drawing on their everyday life and working experiences. Their knowledge might count even more than professionals in many circumstances and should definitely be respected, trusted and learned by practitioners. The

recognition of local people's strength in problem assessment would be the basis of understanding and creating an equitable relationship between the local community and the organisation. For another, it was important to understand that local knowledge is fluid, dynamic and evolving. With external influences, increased level of education and changing life needs, local people developed capacities in problem assessment and adopted new ideas to improve their livelihoods (Briggs and Sharp, 2004). The constantly evolving local knowledge would then bring possibilities of community empowerment in the long run.

8.4.2. Increasing control over programme management

One of the biggest lessons learned from research findings in the first visit was the importance of inviting more local participation in DBSA's spaces of power, especially in building up DBSA's under-developed 'floating spaces'. This reflected Laverack's empowerment domain of programme management that outside agencies should increasingly share control over programme management with the community, including decisions on "planning, implementation, evaluation, finances, administration, reporting and conflict resolution" (Laverack, 2001:142). In doing the action research, as mentioned in Section 8.2, improvement of DBSA's structure with increasingly formalised work and an effective communication system had been implemented to address this domain partially. This section reflects further on power during this process.

Regaining power: a victory?

After setting up the new criteria for the feeding project, the LFC team evaluated the current partner schools to see if they met the requirements. All schools were asked to submit a new application in order to renew the feeding contract, with ineligible schools asked to make adjustments accordingly. If the school still failed to meet the requirements, DBSA would consider ending the feeding for the school. This step was a correction for DBSA's previous informal work in school selection, but it also intended to improve the project implementations in the long run. In 2019, DBSA planned to eliminate one or two schools on the current feeding

partner list, and DBSA's director saw it as a strategy to demonstrate the importance of following the regulations and to alert the local community about the elimination mechanism otherwise. During the fieldwork, volunteer tourists particularly reported one unqualified partner school. According to their research, the school management was very disordered. They did not have proper school documents such as students' attendance records, teaching plans or curriculum schedules. Some teachers at the school did not go to class when required. The time for meals for students was very irregular every day. After the provision of food, the number of registered students in this school dropped by twenty per cent according to the reporting documents from the school, which was a quite abnormal case.

DBSA's director explained that the school was provided with food in the first place because the school principal was chosen by the local coordinators as the president of the football tournament, from which the school gained advantages to be included in the feeding project. Chapter 7 has revealed DBSA's particular local coordinators together with their close allies, had gained a lot of power in Mathare and they had used the power to constrain DBSA and the other community members. In this example, the school principal happened to be a robust ally fellow of DBSA's two local coordinators. He behaved quite uncooperatively when volunteer tourists wanted to communicate with him and arrange visits to the school. Eventually, volunteer tourists produced a final report about their research and evaluations on schools. The team organised a community meeting to publish all the relevant information. In addition to introducing the new criteria and supervision system for the LFC project, volunteer tourists announced the new application around for the feeding project, emphasising that even the current partner schools did not have privileges in the selection process.

Surprisingly, the principal of the school mentioned above actively came to the team after the meeting, dragging one volunteer tourist secretly to a corner. "I was quite nervous and I did not know what he wanted to do at that moment," the volunteer tourist (JJ, female, DBSA) recalled, "but he talked with humility to me that he realised his school did not do the work very well and he promised he would work hard to correct that". When the volunteer tourist told the story to the team, all team members cheered and showed great excitement. After

being ignored several times in their work with the school, they finally found the solution to constrain the uncooperative principal and regain power. – It was like a fight and revenge for them and they gained a temporary victory.

At the end of 2019, according to volunteer tourists' evaluation of schools and information collected from the new-round application, DBSA eventually decided to stop providing food to the highlighted school. As a manager of the project, I was a part of this decision process. I understood volunteer tourists' feelings about requiring cooperation from the local partners as well as the necessity to have the elimination mechanism as insurance against the improper implementation of the project. Followed by the previous discussion about keeping a balance between the vulnerability and teaching quality in considering the selection, the intention was to ensure fairness, to maximise the use of resources and to develop education in the community in the long run. On the other hand, I sensed the weight and responsibility of holding power when becoming a direct actor in the process. After being eliminated from the feeding project, I could imagine students in that school may transfer to other schools. The situation of the school would get worse and it might even be closed down. I asked myself: "am I prepared to have power, to use power and take consequences of that? How can it be exercised in a more appropriate way?"

Clarifying rights and responsibilities

From my observations, one of the biggest challenges for sharing control with the local community over project management was the distrust and dissatisfaction from DBSA's staff members and volunteer tourists. They seemed to view certain powerful community members as 'enemies' of a kind and tended to dismiss their requests or suggestions even when they could have been considered as reasonable. This subjective feeling had affected behaviours of DBSA's staff members and volunteer tourists towards local people, and especially those who were assumed to hold too much power. Trying to reflect on this, a possible solution was to define clear roles, responsibilities and line management of all the stakeholders (Rifkin, 1990, cited in Laverack, 2001). Similarly, a volunteer tourist (LQ, male, DBSA) pointed out: "Two dimensions of issues need to be considered in cooperation, rights and responsibilities. Both

have to be shared", and he believed this would be a basis for seeing the local community a truly equal body.

The primary activity undertaken by the LFC team in clarifying rights and responsibilities in project management was to introduce the '8+2 model'. As explained in Chapter 7, DBSA planned to set up an investment model for the feeding in which the DBSA provided eighty per cent of funding, with the responsibility for the remaining twenty per cent resting with the partner schools themselves. The twenty per cent was expected to serve as a part of the 'responsibilities' of the local community while receiving the 'rights', and this responsibility was expected as a starting point from which local people could contribute to sustaining the projects collaboratively in the long run. The model was explained and concerns were discussed at the community meeting, so as to leave room for the schools and parents to prepare in advance of the proposed implementation of the model a year later.

Related to the model, some local people reported that they found the changing number of students enrolled at schools hard to manage, given the amount of food provision was fixed according to the budget and contract. As volunteer tourists found from their fieldwork, the number of students that a community school could sustain depended on their teaching faculties and physical conditions. Accepting too many students might lead to decreased teaching quality. Therefore, schools needed to decide on the numbers of students according to their own capabilities and cover the cost of the exceeding numbers by themselves. As a preparation for the new '8+2 model', volunteer tourists communicated with partner schools that the team would review the number of students covered in food provision at the beginning of each academic year, but the schools should take care of the exceeding number of the student by themselves during the one-year contract. This was another way to clarify the responsibilities of the local partners.

These two examples were expected to demonstrate that the responsibility of the local community was not only about investing money in the project, but also sustaining the project in the long run. The latter was addressed more as there remained a risk that the local partners

were unable to find enough money by themselves. Comparatively, experiences and skills in project management were the longer-lasting asset that might be beneficial to local people. While partner schools received the food provision, they should meanwhile ensure the proper implementation of the project by keeping the required records and receiving evaluated under DBSA's supervision system. For DBSA, on the other hand, it was their responsibility to make sure the proper use of the money and to benefit as many needy children as possible, while trying not to increase local dependency. As suggested by Goodman et al. (1998, cited in Laverack, 2001:139), "a sense of cohesion amongst its members, a concern for community issues, a sense of connection to the people and feelings of belonging manifested through customs, place, rituals and traditions" are crucial to guarantee community empowerment. Although the local community and DBSA might be responsible as different stakeholders, the overall objective of both was more or less the same, namely to improve education and fulfil local empowerment in Mathare. Under this consensus and cohesion as suggested in the following quotations, different forms of power on the ground seemed to be easier to understand from both sides, and more shared decision-makings became possible.

> What they are doing by providing the lunch, they are doing a lot of good work to the children. I am talking about the children, not on behalf of schools. Because I told you, the aim of the schools is kind of a centre for children, to take care, they are children centres.
>
> (WM, male, local community worker, Mathare)

> If I have to compare what the government has done, what DBSA has done, and even what UNICEF has done, I will not compare DBSA with the rest. DBSA will be taking the first position. Because when a child has been given food and a good learning environment, at least a place they can sit on their desk, a safe place, a good class. That is what DBSA has done, in only 3 years, with the school here from 2007. So far, UNICEF just came in one day. It has been almost 11 years. What DBSA has done in three years, the government has not done in 11 years. So if it comes to the ranking, I will say DBSA has done much for the children, because it is for the children, for the children in Mathare.
>
> (EH, female, local school principal and director, Mathare)

The flow of power

Additionally, Laverack (2001) highlights the significance of not only formal organisational structures, but also social dimensions of personal relationships and connections. This point was reinforced for me by the practice of photo-taking in Mathare. Like many volunteer tourists, when I first went to Kenya in 2012, I took pictures with local children and schools, keeping it as a good personal memory of the experience and telling friends in China about lives in this remote country. Gradually, however, I felt uncomfortable about this, but I did not know exactly why. During the second field trip, there was a time I gave my camera to a child in Mathare. He was very excited once he got the equipment and he took pictures of almost everything. When he focused on me though and the camera clicked and flashed ten times, I started to become unease even though I knew the camera still belonged to me and I could delete those photos anytime I wanted. At that moment, I felt a sense of insecurity as if he had become more powerful with the camera than me. I realised the power relations related to cameras when one could decide which scenes to record and whom one turned the camera to.

When discussing this with volunteer tourists, one of them told me he usually knelt down when he wanted to take pictures of local children. I asked him if that was an attempt to make himself more equal to children. His answer was that: "On the one hand, it's for equality. On the other hand, it's an interaction, or a possibility of interaction. At least, my action sends a signal that I am willing to listen to you". This reminded me that power was not only a comparison of who was more powerful and who was not, but it was fluid and interactive. It was everywhere within our lives and our relationships with others like capillaries. When accepting this and seeing power from a positive-sum view, the Chinese group and the local group were no longer binary opposites. One might be powerful at a particular time or in a particular space but could be powerless in other times and spaces. The important thing was to focus on specific issues rather than personnel and be aware of the imbalance all the time, never losing the possibility for exchange, communication and interaction.

By linking this recognition to other practices in the second field trip, I thought of what the Italian author Elena Ferrante describes in her Neapolitan Novels as 'dissolving boundaries'.

Summarising all my reflections on power above, a 'dissolving boundary' meant there no longer existed an absolute boundary between 'good' or 'bad', 'right' or 'wrong', 'giver' or 'receiver', 'self' or 'other' (McEwan, 2001: 95). This perspective was like the powercube framework, where the cube is a continuum, and there are no absolute lines between each cube as it constantly changes and interacts (IDS,2009). Beyond dualistic thinking or even beyond pluralistic thinking stood my belief that everything was closely linked with each other and consisted of the complexity of the social world as a whole. As claimed by Ledwith (2005), "it is by challenging the way we see the world that we open ourselves to new worldviews, new possibilities for creating a world that is just, sustainable, and non-violent, and this new understanding, in turn, changes the way we live our lives" (p10). I think the important thing was what you believe in, how you make judgements and what you choose, especially in the areas at the intersections of dissolving boundaries. To answer these questions personally, I wrote on my fieldnote:

> Make choices and judgement by wisdom. Act with kindness and honesty. Take responsibility and consequences with brave.
>
> (Field diary, August 17th, 2019, the second field trip)

8.5. Linking power and change to the supra-organisational level

As explained in Chapter 4, this research adapted the power cube model by modifying the levels of power to encompass a 'super-organisational level', an 'organisational level' and a 'sub-organisational level' (see Figure 8.5.1). This section specifically analyses power and change at the supra-organisational level. It looks at relevant influences above the Chinese organisation-local community relationship. These include DBSA's dealings with the Kenyan government, the broader implications of China's policy approach to overseas aid for Kenya as a country, and questions of global engagement and international relations between China and Kenya.

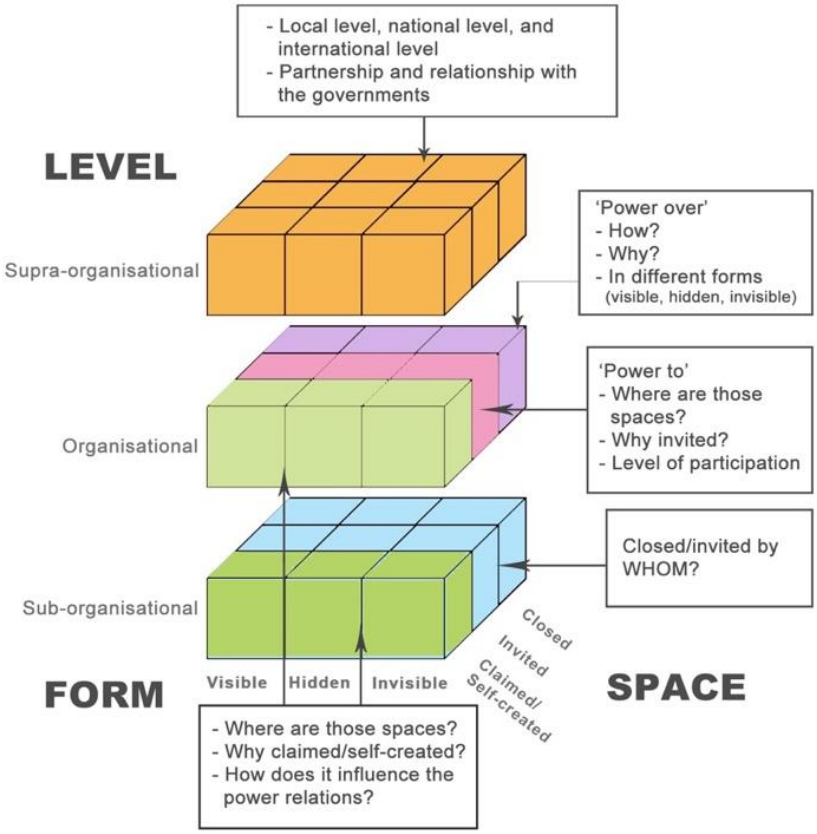


Figure 8.5.1. Adapted version of the powercube framework (IDS, 2009)

8.5.1. Partnerships with the government

Laverack (2001) suggests that building links with other people and organisations is an essential domain for tackling community development problems. Partnerships can serve as a catalyst for empowerment when responsibilities, interests and resources could be shared among different stakeholder groups (ibid). In particular, DBSA's partnership with the Kenyan government was identified as an ongoing issue by both local people and Chinese volunteer tourists, and it was an area of change across the course of the research. As a local interviewee on my first fieldwork visit said, "NGOs should be in line with the government", advocating the development of close relationships with government officials, following governmental policies and being properly monitored. In solving issues in Mathare in the future, the government should indeed undertake a key role, which closely links with community power structures (Pawar, 2017). As the director of DBSA reported: "We don't want to do things in

the way of a reversal of the order of host and guest[26]. We are merely playing an assistant role", and he believed cooperating with government helped to make development projects more self-sustainable in the long term.

In 2018, DBSA finally developed this partnership with the Kenyan government. DBSA's Lunch For Children project started to cooperate with the Mama Feeding Program (MFP) under the Office of the Spouse of the Deputy President (OSDP), an entity in the Executive Office of the Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya. As claimed in the MFP's official profile, it was launched by the spouse of the Deputy President of Kenya in early 2018, aiming at providing nutritious and well-balanced meals to vulnerable children at informal settlements in Kenya (MFP, 2018). In the partnership, DBSA funded two informal settlement schools under the MFP scheme (but not in Mathare), covering food provision for approximately 1070 students, and MFP was responsible for all project implementations on the ground.

Within the partnership, there seemed to be mutual value for both sides. On the one hand, the director of DBSA indicated that the partnership was a big movement for the organisation. Through the connection with the government, DBSA firmed its foundation in Mathare and Kenya. The partnership served as a signal that DBSA's development interventions, especially the feeding project, were acknowledged and supported by the Kenyan government. As DBSA aimed to cover as many needy children as possible, working with the OSDP obviously had enabled accesses to a larger number of communities and schools. As suggested by DBSA's director, although the partnership had not involved practical issues in Mathare directly, it might provide an opportunity to raise the government's attention to develop policies and tackle general issues of the marginalised groups in the society like those who lived in informal settlements. On the other hand, the OSDP got benefits as the partnership brought them Chinese funding, which, in turn, helped them to sustain and expand the influences of their feeding program. Although DBSA were relatively new operators in development interventions in Kenya, local people thought there existed a lot of possibilities to work with Chinese. As

[26] "喧宾夺主"in Chinese.

suggested by the local coordinator, "by coming to DBSA I am able to learn to work with Chinese. It's another group and another world power coming up fast" (DD, male, local school director, Mathare).

Figure 8.5.2. DBSA's director signed the Memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the representative from the Office of Deputy President, Kenya about the feeding project. (Source: press photo, DBSA, August 28th, 2018)

On the basis of the symbiotic relationship, DBSA and the OSDP had arranged several meetings from 2018 onwards to discuss future opportunities. However, the partnership with the OSDP had also posed potential risks that DBSA would be involved in some local politics. For instance, the opportunity was introduced by one of DBSA's local coordinators, who started a position in the OSDP in 2017. As a result of this initiation, there was the potential for alignment between holders of governmental and community power. This could unknowingly pose the danger of expanding the gap between the powerful and the powerless in the local community. Especially given DBSA now became dependent on this certain local coordinator's network with the government, in the longer run, the local coordinator might get more control on community issues and, thereby, place more constraints on DBSA. Relying on community members to build up connections to other actors, as shown in the example, might be a typical challenge for organisations to develop partnerships with other agencies.

In addition, DBSA's director was concerned about being involved in tribal and political fights because of the partnership. At the time, the president of Kenya and the deputy president of Kenya were from two opposing political camps. DBSA's director implied that the deputy president office tended to hold a con-China view in politics. Thus, when working with the deputy president's office, he did not know what consequences would bring to the organisation if they were affected by the political battles in the future and how the international relation between China and Kenya would modify their partnership. To this extent, engagement at the national level involved further complex power relations across a range of stakeholder groups with different interests. The DBSA director recognised that his organisation played a small role within these relations, but they could be significantly affected if they failed to play that role sensitively. While predominantly working at the grassroots level, DBSA turned to a relatively powerless actor when working at a higher level, and this change was a significant challenge. The following subsection will continue this discussion of the role of organisations like DBSA in the broader development context.

8.5.2. The role of NGOs: from the national level to the international level

> Interviewer: "How do you think the situation of Mathare would change without those external agencies and volunteer tourists?"
> LQ, (male, volunteer tourist, DBSA): "It would still get better, but slower. What we have brought are not merely technology or something. The international organisations actually accelerate their development."

> Imagine there are 60 per cent of people in the city living in slums. Without so many NGOs, it might have become a strong contradiction among classes. They might fight. But with NGOs, they are somehow comforted. I feel they have weakened the contradiction between people and their government and decreased their sharpness and ability to negotiate with the government. This is a power dimension. In China, there are strict regulations on NGOs, which is something I always criticised of. But after coming to Kenya, it makes me see the

other face of what I have criticised. I was quite disappointed that it comes to this result. I was quite disappointed.

(DF, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

As revealed by Banks and Hulme (2012), concerns regarding the legitimacy of NGOs increased with their growth in the development sector in recent decades. The above quotations represented two different views from the Chinese volunteer tourists on the role of NGOs in development, which reflected the debates in broader development studies. Some volunteer tourists defined themselves as 'global citizens' of the globalisation era, believing they were doing positive things in the world through various development practices in different countries. Others expressed their doubts that the Kenyan government's failure in resolving issues in informal settlements might be deliberate in order to "defraud loving hearts from international communities" (DF, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA), and volunteer tourists might play the role of accomplices during this process. As implied by Coalter (2010), some NGOs show new forces of neo-colonialism as they have promoted forms of dependency intentionally and unintendedly. Similarly, the quotation above from volunteer tourist DF indicated her suspicion that local dependency on international aid had brought contentment amongst people living in slums, which was utilised by the government to retain their power, soften internal contradictions, avoid rebellions that had featured in Kenyan history and transfer local people's unsatisfied attention towards the government. Further, as she explained, this might be an important point for future consideration about NGOs' legitimacy:

Because of the intervention from NGOs year after year, whether from top-down or bottom-up, they (local people) have lost the ability to solve problems. They are comforted so well. Beyond the grassroots level, they are completely implementing liberal economics. Compared with other countries in the world, they have set fewer barriers. Without strong primitive capital accumulation nor barriers, it can be very terrible. I cannot say NGOs resulted in the situation. But at least, their governments, the people, together with NGOs over the globe and multilateral organisations like the World Bank and the United Nations, adding to the colonial history and the current capital market, the whole international

communities play a part.

(DF, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA)

It should be noted that her concern about the impairment of local people's awareness and awakening was different from the mindset problem indicated by other volunteer tourists, Many volunteer tourists tended to address self-resilience and individual strength, which were likely to come from their privileged personal backgrounds. Instead, what this volunteer tourist indicated was from a more holistic view of international development, taking broader stakeholder groups at a higher level into account. The research previously found DBSA were emphasising a non-relational 'power to' and 'power with' the local community as they did not see themselves holding a lot of power. That finding actually reflected their self-identification as the powerless at the supra-organisational level other than in project implementation on the ground. As Banks and Hulme (2012) argue, "given the non-political arena in which they operate, NGOs have had little participation or impact in tackling the more structurally entrenched causes and manifestations of poverty" (p2). Likewise, DBSA was socially and politically excluded in many spaces at the supra-organisational level. For example, they had little power to influence local policies in resolving many community issues, and the exclusion made it hard for them to engage in local challenges regarding the lack of political voice and structural inequality. On the other hand, trying to avoid politics in practice, DBSA itself had given up some opportunities to achieve broader social and political goals in further movement, but it remained orientated towards project-based and target-oriented programmes with the focus on material poverty and individual-level education.

In response to such dilemmas, Banks and Hulme (2012) illustrate that NGOs may feasibly return to their roots and engage in participatory empowerment. Linking it to the above comment from volunteer tourist DF, the top-down approach and bottom-up approach did not need to be mutually exclusive, but the two can happen concurrently. Although DBSA was focusing on non-political projects, as it grows, I suggest it may be possible to adapt its role as a direct service provider and resource provider to become supporters within broader public affairs, to enhance capabilities of local communities and assist them to engage in collective

action by themselves (ibid). Also, with some of the volunteer tourists seeing themselves as 'global citizens', Gaventa and Tandon (2010) point out the need of linking actions across multiple levels and building up an effective vertical alliance. Apart from implementing development projects at the grassroots level, international volunteer tourists might think about working with civil society groups and generating their own civic voices with local people, drawing different perspectives and experiences through various innovative approaches. If that could be realised, it could represent significant progress, moving from Chinese volunteer tourists' seeking mindset change for local people individually to enhancing collective assets in the long run.

8.5.3. Influences from China's policy and accountability to donors

The story of DBSA, as a Chinese organisation representing a significant trend in international development, shared several similarities with western narratives. In particular, quite a number of Chinese volunteer tourists and staff members assumed local people lacked the motivation to work hard by themselves or take actions for change. This might indicate a danger of post-colonialism in the Chinese story as well, in that they viewed the local community as inferior and problematic without thinking about privileges they had when compared with the Other. On the other hand, from observations and interviews with the Chinese group, prevailing discourses of post-colonialism, for example, the division between the West/China and the rest and between the developed and developing countries, were rarely heard. Neither did volunteer tourists give emphasis to differences between western and Chinese actors in development. When referring to development interventions, they often saw the international community as a whole, reflecting on challenges of DBSA in general terms that were similar to all the other international organisations.

A specificity of China's scenario came from the unique Sino-Africa relationship and impacts of certain policies within this relationship. As was reviewed in Chapter 2, the most recent strategy of China's international development and diplomacy was the Belt and Road Initiative

(BRI) which was announced in 2013, and comprised of large scale funding and projects (Alon, et al., 2018). Under the BRI, the government of China encourages more Chinese organisations to 'go global', and Kenya has become one African country included in the BRI (Taylor, 2013; Ehizuelen and Abdi, 2017). DBSA leaders saw the BRI and related policies as a positive sign that DBSA and other overseas organisations which were doing development projects in Kenya would gain more support and attention from the Chinese government in the future. Thus, when introducing and advertising themselves, DBSA usually mentioned the BRI actively. For instance, in the most updated introduction profile of DBSA (DBSA, 2019), it was common to see sentences start with "In response to China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)…" As implied by a staff member, being linked with national policies like the BRI was intended to bring a sense of hope and future opportunities for their key stakeholders, including both their donors and beneficiaries.

Alongside the BRI, President Xi also announced the South-South Cooperation Assistance Foundation in 2015, providing three billion dollars of aid to support countries of the global South, and the plan covered partnerships with various types of international organisations, civil society organisations and think tanks. As was introduced in the official document:

> The set of South-South Cooperation Assistance Foundation is for the Chinese government to support SDG 2030 and used as an important tool to support the sustainable development of other developing countries. It embodies the Chinese government is paying attention to and provide substantial support to the South-South cooperation. It demonstrated that China is an accountable country and it welcomes other countries to 'take the ride' of China's development, so as to realise common development.
>
> (CIDCA, 2018).

These claims represent a Chinese style of discourse about international development, which seeks differentiation from a western colonial type of development. Instead, it places China as

a similar ally addressing 'common development'[27] in the global South.

Related to national policies, Chinese governmental foundations had sought to undertake an increasing number of on-the-ground projects by themselves or by cooperating with existing Chinese civil society organisations. Even though Chinese organisations might have comparatively less experience in international development interventions, they prefer supporting them to funding other international institutions directly. As suggested by a staff member of DBSA, cooperating with multilateral institutions and distributing fund through multiple layers meant that local people might be unclear about the ultimate sources of funding. Although this seemed to imply a political purpose of China's story in terms of increasing influences culturally, ideologically and psychologically, DBSA believed the engagement with wider Chinese development policies and practices was a good opportunity and they happened to stand on the right place to be included within the new narrative.

However, while striving to link with power at the supra-organisational level, DBSA found the scheme of national policies such as the BRI and the South-South Cooperation Assistance Foundation remained unclear for small oversea non-government organisations like itself. A volunteer tourist raised doubts that: "we always say the future of DBSA is connected with certain relevant policies. We heard a lot about the Chinese charity organisations' going out, and the government policies and documents say so everywhere. But honestly speaking, I don't really understand what it means" (WQ, female, volunteer tourist, DBSA). This demonstrated that the impacts of national-level Chinese policies remained vague and abstract. At the time of the research, these policies were more about giving a vision that China valued international relations with African countries like Kenya and they might provide increasing support in the international development sector. However, a staff member of DBSA reported that, while government-oriented foundations were delivering international aid more at the nation-to-nation level, "only limited funding and support had been provided to civil organisations like us that were doing projects implementation on the ground" (MH, male, Chinese staff member,

[27] "共同发展" in Chinese.

DBSA). Although policies might grow in the future, there seemed to be a long way to go in realising those claimed goals of common development and common progress.

From my observations as both a researcher and a practitioner, DBSA received funding from Chinese governmental foundations like China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation. But the power relation between DBSA as an executor and those foundations as donors might not be very equal. In a sense, this inequality echoed the feeling of DBSA's staff members and volunteer tourists that they were not very powerful actors in other ways. During my second field trip, two donors of DBSA's feeding project happened to visit Kenya, and I could identify the bureaucracy involved. DBSA's staff members, volunteer tourists and local partners all followed the donors around and always put them as a priority during the whole period of their stay. As Banks and Hulme (2012) indicated, the cost of accountability to donors is high in many cases and organisations could only be able to continue and grow if they satisfy donors. For DBSA, it had to account for the use of money in every practice and required by donors to sustain the organisation itself in the long run. This type of pressure from donors partially explained the Chinese group's being keen to get things done and the control that they exercised toward the local community. To a certain extent, the unequal relationship between donors and NGOs at the supra-organisational level had led to DBSA giving less consideration to the grassroots community than to external donors, which could result in further neglect of lasting social and political change in recipient communities (Banks and Hulme, 2012).

These difficulties again indicate the importance for NGOs like DBSA to rethink empowerment and take local participation more seriously in project design and implementation. As suggested by Banks and Hulme (2012: 14), "without greater commitment to their community-driven and grassroots approach, there is no means through which NGO programmes can be realigned with local realities and brought closer to goals of empowerment." Seeking funding opportunities from newly initiated national policies and other powerful bodies was necessary for DBSA to sustain themselves. Meanwhile, reflecting the interplays across different levels (see Figure 8.5.1), they had to balance the focus of accountability to supra-organisational-level donors and sub-organisational-level beneficiaries.

8.6. Conclusion

After struggling and reflecting on the meaning and objectives of doing this research, I decided to take the practitioner role as the team leader of DBSA's LFC project, returning to the field for the second time and trying to implement some organisational changes. Regarding key issues found after the first fieldwork research, I tried to set up the structure of DBSA and address principles such as mutual respect and mutual understanding amongst volunteer tourists and other DBSA practitioners. A two-way communication system was created as a more efficient informal channel between DBSA and local people. By organising regular community meetings as a way to enable more transparent information sharing and idea exchange, opportunities were generated for further discussions between local members and DBSA about project implementation and community issues.

To reflect on my own positionality when doing action research, I found it a mix of organisational, professionalising and empowerment elements. My role was more like a negotiation intermediator on behalf of local people but also with considerations of DBSA's management aims. Many change interventions were led by me as a practitioner-researcher, based on my professional knowledge and academic research background. Throughout the process, I was struggling in my own 'floating spaces' where I was uncertain about how to behave and act and where I found it hard to make decisions when practical dilemmas arose. Many answers remained unclear, but a positive view of change and power might always contain potentials and possibilities.

To achieve a higher degree of local involvement, Laverack (2001) suggests nine domains for practitioners to better understand different dimensions of community empowerment so as to develop effective strategies for change. Reflecting on the action research during my second field trip, a new approach to developing local leadership and local capabilities in problem assessment was created. Rather than granting 'power to' or imposing the will of certain local coordinators, local strengths in all dimensions were recognised and included in seeking to resolve problems. Additionally, the importance of increasing control over programme

management and local participation was addressed, through a process which highlighted the rights and responsibilities for both the organisation and the local community were highlighted. With more local investment and involvement in DBSA's projects, the community shared responsibilities to sustain projects with DBSA, to improve the overall education level in Mathare and to fulfil local empowerment in the long run. On the basis of this consensus and cohesion, the research reveals that different groups might better understand the intentions behind forms of power and generate possibilities for collaboration. Additionally, the research links the social dimension of personal relationships to the organisational structure. It significantly acknowledges the flowing nature of power through interactions and the potential to see power positively. The term 'dissolving boundary' is used as a summary of all reflections on power, referring not only the continuum of power across different dimensions but also a changing view rather than binary thinking of development and power.

Linking to power at the supra-organisational level, the research suggests China was trying to tell its own narratives in international development, within which DBSA's story was a typical representative. To strengthen links with external agencies, DBSA had developed the partnership with the Kenyan government in respect of the feeding programme. However, while receiving benefits from the partnership, DBSA faced potential risks in becoming involved in political games at the local and national level. Also, when attaching to Chinese national-level policies such as the BRI and the South-South Cooperation Assistance Foundation, DBSA found the specific schemes remained vague and abstract, even though they seemed to bring great hope to both DBSA and their intended audience. The unequal relationship between donors and NGOs had made on-the-ground organisations like DBSA politically powerless and resulted in it giving less consideration to the grassroots community than external donors.

These challenges led to the question of NGOs legitimacy in the broader development context. As implied from both literature and volunteer tourists, NGOs have been criticised of promoting local dependency both intentionally and unintendedly. By engaging NGOs in physical provision and social welfare, the government tends to comfort people who are

unsatisfied with the state and to soften the contradictions within the country. For DBSA as an external agency in Mathare, the research reveals that its operations had, to date, remained largely outside of the formal political. As DBSA tried to focus on project-based interventions but sought to avoid politics in community development, they seemed to have excluded the possibility of broader social and political changes with the local community. The chapter highlights the importance of balancing the focus of accountability to supra-organisational-level donors and sub-organisational-level beneficiaries. It recommends there might still be chances for DBSA to help the local community in tackling more structurally entrenched social problems as it grows, if DBSA would evolve their approach of individual mindset change towards further social and political changes for community empowerment.

Chapter 9 Conclusion: Lessons for the Future

Introduction

This chapter reviews the research journey, offering a summary of the whole thesis, addressing critical findings of the research and illustrating lessons that can be drawn for DBSA's work in Kenya and volunteer tourism in general. Through these findings, the thesis has made methodological, empirical and theoretical contributions to thinking in the fields of volunteer tourism and development studies. These include the use of the powercube to discuss the distinctive complexities of power and control in NGO-local relations in volunteer tourism with its short term, seasonal projects. The research employs several qualitative research methods, including participant observation, in-depth interview methods and participatory action research to study the topic in depth. A thematic data analysis approach, with a hybrid method, is applied to logically differentiate the ways in which power is exercised in volunteer tourism. Under the systematic structure, the interplays of different groups across different dimensions in the powercube are critically investigated. Especially when looking at power across different levels and spaces, the problems of the practices are well-identified. Changes to improve these practices are suggested. The powercube is used with a combination of different conceptualisations of power, the ladder of participation and other frameworks in community development, which all provide robust theoretical underpinnings. There is scope for learning from the procedures of analysis in this thesis, which may be developed for future research on volunteer tourism and community development.

This empirical research also contributed to improvements and developments in practice. After data collection and analysis from the first field trip, I conducted a piece of action research for organisational change and deeper investigations on power dynamics. Drawing on key findings from the study, I got the chance to understand the field, identify problems and employ people's suggestions in taking action. In return, doing action research enabled me to rethink some of the research findings. Two field trips with different purposes make the whole research journey cyclical. Research components, including data collection, analysis, practices, actions, evaluation and reflections all interact with and feed into each other, allowing me a

deeper understanding of power dynamics in volunteer tourism. By focusing on the local community's perspective, the thesis recovers voices for international volunteer tourism from a bottom-up perspective, offering a comparison with the views of Chinese practitioners.

In addition, through the analysis of a Chinese organisation's practice in Mathare, Kenya, this research brings narratives of community development initiatives led by Chinese non-governmental organisations into focus as these are largely absent in the current international development literature. Throughout the journey, as an academic researcher, who also took a practitioner role, my individual experience represents an example of Chinese nationals' involvement in international development affairs. My explorations consisted of deep involvement in practice, understanding through interactions and exchanges, constantly reflecting on situations and self-positionality, and working to handle complexity and uncertainty. This is not the end of my journey. Whether as an academic researcher, a practitioner or a human being, I will always continue my exploration on volunteer tourism, international development, community empowerment and try to find my value and position in the field.

This chapter, as the conclusion of the thesis, identifies the key arguments of the research journey. It begins with explanations of the debate about whether to prioritise physical or psychological needs in community development. Cultural accounts of the different understandings regarding this debate are discussed, and a typology of volunteer tourism projects focusing on different dimensions is suggested. Next, the chapter highlights the limitation of the Chinese organisation's narrative in that it addresses the personal development of local people, while neglecting structural problems in society. The impacts of DBSA's practice are summarised, many of which are relevant for volunteer tourism in general. From a power perspective, the chapter discusses the paradox between 'power to' and 'power over', suggesting potential directions for small NGOs like DBSA to make improvements. A new concept of 'floating spaces' under the powercube framework is introduced and explained, with recommendations for its future development. Furthermore, the chapter indicates the difficulty of balancing power within the community, as well as dealing with relationships with

the governments and external donors. It proposes that 'claimed spaces' might not always be democratic, a feature to which attention should be paid in both power analysis and development practices. Finally, the chapter reflects on the limitations of the research, closing with some recommendations for the future practice of volunteer tourism and community development.

The physical-psychological debate

By researching international volunteer tourism as an example in the broader context of international development and community development, this thesis reveals its complexity and provides new insights on this relatively new trend. It highlights the rather polarised debate amongst the individuals involved in this study about prioritising the physical or psychological dimensions of the local needs in development interventions. DBSA had developed a range of projects offering direct material support, including school building, feeding and scholarship programmes, alongside important informal educational work, attempting to build confidence and work towards what they regarded as 'mindset change'. Both its staff members and volunteer tourists found it hard to strike a balance between what they saw as the two dimensions (physical and psychological). From the literature, there have been brief illustrations about the existing fields of volunteer tourism projects, involving activities in education, environment, general development, health care and others (Brass, 2016). However, this literature lacks further clarification about different types of volunteer tourism practices. As the balance between material (physical) provision and helping in relation to psychological needs has been a prevailing debate in community work (Batten, 1967), the distinction between the physical and psychological identified in this thesis might also serve as a broader typology for future research in volunteer tourism, though bearing in mind that the distinction is rather simplistic both conceptually and in practice. By drawing on more empirical research in volunteer tourism, the overall balance of projects in the two broad categories may be investigated, and further nuances, differences and interrelations between the two can be identified. In this way, it helps to get a clear picture of the focus of volunteer tourism in the development sector and to understand how it can better fit with existing development approaches.

In the case of DBSA's practice, there were also differences in understandings of physical-or-psychological priorities between groups. The Chinese volunteer tourists and practitioners tended to address internal attributes for change such as the importance of individual-level mindset and one's own motivation to take actions, while local people overall valued the physical provisions as an improvement to their current living conditions in the slum more. The differences in thinking had shaped the relationship between the Chinese group and the local community. Local people were likely to refer their relationships with the Chinese group as 'host-guest', and they explained it was African culture to make volunteer tourists feel welcomed and needed. On the other hand, local people's hospitality was also a mix of 'fear and respect' and they held a sense of insecurity, worrying that the assistance from DBSA might stop someday. This, in turn, explained why local people valued what they regarded as the physical side more and wished to gain more ownership of projects. Local people were concerned that informal educational activities would be hard to sustain without Chinese practitioners, and they believed physical provisions could be longer-lasting, and some (like buildings) would be owned by them once completed.

Chinese volunteer tourists and staff members of DBSA, however, saw themselves as an indirect booster of changes, a view which the research suggests may arise from cultural differences. As the importance of making efforts by oneself is deeply embedded in Chinese traditional culture, it made volunteer tourists and Chinese practitioners believe it should apply to African people as well. This cultural account was similar to individualistic forms of development prioritised by practitioners from western countries, which is one major element of the postcolonial critique of western structures of knowledge and power (Strongman, 2014). As Sylvester (1999: 718) states, development studies have been "too steeped in Western bureaucratic authority to generate substantially new ideas". To reorientate the approach, marginalised local cultures need to be better recognised and included in collaborations towards more structural forms of development (Strongman, 2014). Hence, these arguments might require future studies from African researchers to further identify the distinctions from the perspectives of African and local cultures.

Individual development versus structural inequities

Additionally, the thesis reveals how the underlying structural causes of both physical and psychological problems were left unchallenged. It finds that DBSA focused much more on individual deficits of local people but seemed to neglect problems and issues within the wider social system affecting the community. Based on their understanding of the local community, DBSA employed mainly a needs-based and problem-solving approach towards community development, making a lot of efforts in doing informal education training projects. However, as this approach lacked the systematic diagnosis of social conditions and the nature of problems in Mathare, the thesis argues it might have essentially failed to meet local needs.

Linking to literature, the distinction between seeking individual development versus seeking structural change is very prominent within the wider development field historically and central to conceptions and concerns about community empowerment. As Ledwith (2005) argues, the personal-level empowerment that focuses on people's capacity building and confidence development is far from enough to address problems of inequality in local society. Being empowered individually is a good starting point. In the long run, however, over-emphasising individual deficits could reinforce the extent of social vulnerability that exists amongst people in Mathare already (Nols, et al., 2017) or internalise local people's views of themselves as incapable of making positive changes (Kretzmann and MacKnight, 1993). For the structural transformation of social inequality, Kretzmann and MacKnight (1993) suggest communities should draw on existing assets for development and higher-level empowerment, such as the socio-political empowerment, is required to make collective action happen (Taylor, 2003). This means DBSA may need to include more local strengths and resources in planning its response to local problems, drawing on the existing capabilities of the Mathare community. Meanwhile, it should transform its approach to take more structurally entrenched social problems into consideration and support broader public policy goals as its work and influence grow.

As a result of the focus accorded to individual deficits and personal-level empowerment, the research identifies that DBSA intended to activate local people to get out of the slum rather

than to improve the living quality inside the slum, which is quite different from conventional community development approaches. For DBSA, the self-help concept was embedded in their overall vision and their interventions to promote local people's self-capabilities. Nevertheless, after acquiring skills and getting opportunities, DBSA ultimately encouraged local people to find better lives out of the slum. As people could have different options and choices for lives once get out of the slum, this made it difficult for community members to develop shared and explicitly focused goals, let alone an evolved organisational strategy to achieve the goals through collective actions. As Gilchrist and Taylor (2016) indicate, collective action and organisational development are two central features of community development in addition to informal education. However, encouraging a collective spirit was largely missing in DBSA's empowerment and community development practice. As a result of its strategy towards local people getting out of the slum, more radical models of community development that seek structural change through encouraging collective political advocacy seem not to be applicable for DBSA, and it remained hard for them to resolve structural problems of the community or to achieve sustainable community development.

Furthermore, DSBA's focus on local people getting out of the slum means that Chinese volunteer tourists and practitioners tended to overlook more collective representations of Mathare as a community and its potential and strengths as a collectivity. Their emphasis on individualistic routes out of the slum, in the long run, might cause detachment of members from the community. Apart from the cultural account that 'community' is a relatively new concept in Chinese culture and daily lives, the form of volunteer tourism with short-term and seasonal projects might be another reason for the individualistic focus. Because neither volunteer tourists nor Chinese staff members spent a long time living in Mathare with community members, it led to their lack of understanding about the community and their weaker attachment to the community. Compared with community development approaches that value interactions, participation and coordination with local communities (Keith, 2015), volunteer tourism seems relatively individualistic in that it is mostly geared towards the convenience and needs of volunteer tourists or the organisation. This might be the evidence to identify the limitations of short-term volunteer tourism projects in addition to negative

impacts from literature as explained in the next section.

Impacts of volunteer tourism

There is little empirical research studying negative impacts of volunteer tourism from the local community's perspective. To fill in the gap, this thesis has examined particular problems by applying guidelines indicated from literature. Regarding key aspects suggested by Guttentag (2008), this research finds that unequal power relations existed between local people and the Chinese group. More control was held in the hands of DBSA's Chinese staff members, while the local community had a low degree of involvement in key decision-making areas. Some volunteer tourists had shown a superior attitude towards local people, perceiving that they lacked skills. Volunteer tourists' lack of understanding about the local situation, alongside the short-term nature of the work, resulted in some unsatisfactory practice. The research also reveals the risk of DBSA's practice increasing local dependency. These findings are quite consistent with the suggestions of negative impacts identified in the existing literature on volunteer tourism, which suggests it often brings burdens to the receiving communities and disrupts local development agendas (Simpson, 2004; Thompson and Taheri, 2020).

However, the research finds those negative impacts were mainly pointed out by volunteer tourists themselves, who expressed a feeling of lacking the capability to resolve deep-rooted community issues. Local people rarely mentioned those negative sides. Rather, they emphasised on their appreciation of the benefits the community had received, especially physical improvements to the learning environment and living conditions. Similar findings have not been mentioned in volunteer tourism literature. However, the overwhelmingly positive comments from local people should not be taken to imply that negative impacts of DBSA's practise did not exist. For one thing, local people might not want to voice the negatives because they were afraid of being excluded. This culture of silence was a consequence of the unequal power relations between them and the aid providers (see Keith, 2015:79). For another, the research suggests it might be because local people viewed volunteer tourists, along with the organisation and donors behind them, as a whole 'Chinese body'. Through

seeing beyond the benefits they have gained and by expressing their appreciation, local people were actually expecting future contributions from the 'Chinese body' to improve conditions in the community further. By contrast, Chinese volunteer tourists might be restricted due to their short-term status as volunteer tourists, hence focusing more on their individual contributions.

In general, the impacts of volunteer tourism should continue to be investigated. For one thing, findings in one empirical study may not explain other cases of volunteer tourism practices. More evidence would be needed to illustrate the points made. For another, even for this research, it would require further longitudinal research, as long-term impacts take time to become apprarent, especially for development interventions addressing informal education and psychological empowerment. There have been no studies found that have looked at long-term impacts of volunteer tourism. By following the change of local people's views as things move on, how local community development could be affected by these volunteer tourism practices may be better investigated.

The paradoxical practices of DBSA and forms of power

This thesis finds a paradox in DBSA's empowerment practices. As Chinese volunteer tourists and practitioners assumed local people had 'mindset problems', they thought it necessary to hold control in crucial decision-making areas in the process of local capacity building. This highlighted contradictions in the Chinese organisation's narrative. On the one hand, DBSA wanted to encourage self-responsibility amongst local people and make sustainable changes. On the other hand, they did not trust local people, so they chose to take control of the projects.

Because the Chinese practitioners understood 'empowerment' in non-relational terms as 'power to' to get things done, they conducted several 'power over' exercises when doing projects. Information about how to approach decision-makers, specific project plans and timescales, explicit selection criteria and sensible feedback was mostly unavailable in the local community. This demonstrated a hidden form of DBSA's power in closed spaces. Although they claimed to bring in more local involvement, this mostly remained at the non-

participation and tokenism levels. Strategies such as manipulating, informing, superficial consultation and placating were undertaken by the Chinese group to retain control, leaving little room for local participants to negotiate or adjust. While some local people expected more substantial power in project design and implementation, most of them were influenced by the hidden or invisible forms of power. As many of them were unknown or unaware of the 'rules of the game', it was hard for them to participate further. The research also reveals that, in many cases, local people's tolerance and cooperation was not forced by the power of the Chinese group, but out of concern of being excluded from receiving benefits, and this had been utilised by DBSA to constrain local behaviours.

In the development sphere, this paradox between 'power to' and 'power over' is an issue that haunts all development work, particularly for the small-scale and short-term work with limited funding and for practices not tied into any local or national development policies in the host country. It also links to the issue of directive versus non-directive working. As suggested by Batten (1967) in his classic text, rather than deciding for people, the process of self-determination and self-help through learning and participation is essential for community work. Whether direct intervention or indirect approaches are employed depends on different development objectives (Keith, 2015). As 'group process' and 'achieving set goals' are two vital and inseparable themes in community development (ibid: 101), practitioners ought to communicate and negotiate with community members and progress through undertaking constant reflection.

For DBSA to avoid this paradox in practice, a medium-term or long-term community development strategy for working with local people and building community capacity incrementally would be needed. Setting up a clear structure for the organisation's work is a first step that has started to be tackled with, particularly through my work as a practitioner-researcher. However, given minimal resources, few permanent staff and a constantly changing voluntary workforce, it remains difficult for DBSA to make substantial improvements. This demonstrates the disadvantages of small-scale organisations, and especially foreign agencies, in community development. It also reveals the limitations of the

volunteer tourism model in sustainable development for local communities. As Develtere and Bruyn (2009: 921) suggest, this type of non-traditional development initiative lacks essential resources, knowledge and experience in development compared with other actors such as the state and multilateral organisations. On the other hand, such initiatives generate some opportunities to bring in fresh strengths and new forms of cooperation. To overcome these difficulties with meaningful progress, DBSA should reduce its dependence on informal volunteer tourists, but work in more collaboration with other NGOs, local groups and the government, which, nevertheless, might involve more complex power dynamics.

The powercube and the concept of 'floating spaces'

Using the powercube framework, the thesis offers a systematic analysis of volunteer tourists and staff members' practices from the perspectives of local community members. In addition to investigating different forms of 'power over' in closed spaces, the research explores possibilities for opening more spaces and involving more local participation. Particularly considering the limitations of DBSA's short-term volunteer tourism model and the advantage of harnessing local strengths, it reveals a symbiotic relationship between DBSA and the local community. DBSA needed the contribution of local people in project implementation, maintenance and network expansion, especially after volunteer tourists left the site. This showed the necessity and possibilities for collaboration in invited spaces.

Moreover, the research brings the concept of 'floating spaces' into the powercube analysis. The dimension of space usually distinguishes how power is acted out in closed spaces, invited spaces and claimed spaces (IDS, 2009). However, this study found the analysis of power challenging in terms of these spaces as DBSA's structure remained unclear, which had resulted in lots of informal work. This informal work led to many unsettled and underdeveloped areas of power that were hard to define in terms of the existing categories. Thus, I termed those undefined spaces 'floating spaces', standing in parallel with other types of spaces and waiting to be constructed into forms of invited, closed or claimed spaces. The floating status of power areas is precarious and full of uncertainties, regarding relationships between different groups and overall integration with the community development agenda. In DBSA's case, the floating

spaces were not made deliberately by the Chinese practitioner but arose due to the lack of formality. The floating status was long-lasting because the spaces were not well recognised or taken seriously by DBSA practitioners. In other cases, however, the floating spaces might be utilised for different types of 'power over' – there are no obvious 'rules of the game' in these spaces, so there is a threat of more hidden or invisible forms of power being utilised and and manipulated.

In another sense, given the rules of the game have not been set, the existence of floating spaces also brings opportunities for participation and partnerships. In constructing these spaces, there are possibilities for different groups to negotiate and collaborate. For example, in this study, DBSA's Chinese practitioners relied heavily on local capacities and resources to sustain many of their operations. They particularly needed to have more local involvement in developing the 'floating spaces', making it reasonable and acceptable for the local community so as to increase effectiveness and efficiency in work to meet local needs. If the floating spaces could be formalised with community members' inputs and on their terms, local people could have a better sense of ownership of DBSA's projects and work more cooperatively to get things done.

As a newly proposed concept, future research may further expand the concept of 'floating spaces' within the powercube framework. This might involve investigating the changing ownership of those spaces during the development process, to see if there are other forms of 'floating spaces' that exist for other reasons and to explore possibilities and strategies for community empowerment in the 'floating spaces'.

The balance of power within the community: conflict within claimed spaces

In addition, this thesis reveals that certain community members, who were promoted by the Chinese organisation as local coordinators, had created 'claimed spaces' to constrain the power of DBSA. Within these 'claimed spaces', oppression from these increasingly powerful local coordinators occurred at the expense of other local community members. By controlling access to information on DBSA's projects and plans, the local coordinators dominated those

'claimed spaces' with their allies. Based on their local resources and networking, they utilised the invited power from DBSA to favour schools that they were allied within project selection, competitions and participation. In contrast, other local competitors were excluded from getting benefits.

Cornwall indicates that spaces emerge "out of sets of common concerns or identifications" (IDS, 2009: 16). As Kohn (2000, cited in Cornwall, 2002) suggests, the relatively powerless can create power within invited spaces through forms of resistance and collective action on the basis of hegemonic norms or shared interests. However, this research reveals 'claimed spaces' may not always be democratic. 'Claimed spaces' can also be shaped by power relations, as becomes apparent when they are analysed across different levels. For example, at the organisational level, local individuals utilised the 'claimed spaces' to compete with the power of DBSA. Nevertheless, in such resistance, these individuals did not represent the thoughts and desires of all community members at the sub-organisational level. Regarding the diversity of the local community, such as differentiation of gender roles of community members, occupational opportunities and degrees of benefits they have derived, local people's views varied from person to person. The failure to recognise the diversity and the uneven distribution of power in those 'claimed spaces' could result in exclusion and powerlessness for some (Charnley, et al., 2009). Thus, I suggest we should not assume the homogeneity of local people in 'claimed spaces'. As the powercube is more than a continuum, some cubes, like the cube of 'claimed spaces', might contain an infinite number of sub-cubes or sub-clusters. There may be forms of 'power over' conducted by the owners of 'claimed spaces' towards others, which could lead to the occurrence of new sub-claimed spaces created by the oppressed.

In this research, other community members who were unsatisfied at their exclusion tried to fight against the powerful local coordinators by working together. There had been long-standing conflicts amongst groups in the local community, in forms of violence or political game playing. Considering these battles, local people rarely blamed the DBSA for holding unequally distributed power in respect of local people, but their dissatisfaction was mainly

towards the local coordinators. As community members were split according to different alliances and different interests, there was a danger that any progress towards overall democratic practices for the local community and local people coming together collectively would be impeded.

For DBSA, their staff members and volunteer tourists had been aware of their involvement in changing the existing community balance and bringing a new order. Trying to guide these inevitable community changes into a more positive direction, this research suggests the need to improve the organisational structure for project operations. More importantly, it points out the necessity to increase the level of transparency, as well as the significance of setting up an effective communication system between the organisation and local people, and within the community. These might bring some lessons about power dynamics and practical implications in the future, especially for external agencies to become better integrated into the community development agenda.

International NGOs tied to external donors

Finally, considering power at the supra-organisational level, the thesis reveals the challenges and difficulties DBSA was facing when it sought to link local community-level practices to the national-level partnerships and external Chinese policies. On the one hand, working with the Kenyan government brought risks of becoming entangled in local politics for DBSA, which was something they tried to avoid. On the other hand, when it came to the Chinese government's national development policies like the BRI and the South-South Cooperation Assistance Foundation, specific information remained vague and non-transparent for small-scale organisations like DBSA. This made DBSA realise their politically powerless position in the development sector. In another sense, as getting continuous financial support became a significant and urgent challenge, DBSA focused too much on seeking funding and resources. The research argues that this caused DBSA practitioners to pay less consideration to the grassroots community. Overall, DBSA showed significant limitations in undertaking its project-based interventions in non-political arenas, thereby forgoing further possibilities for social and political changes with the local community.

These are common issues for a lot of international development work. As Edwards and Hulme (1996, cited in Banks and Hulme 2012) suggest, NGOs' high dependence on donors means they have been "compromising their grassroots orientation, innovativeness, accountability, autonomy and ultimately, their legitimacy" (p11). To align their objectives and priorities for funds, NGOs moved away from broader goals of empowerment (Banks and Hulme, 2012). These commonalities imply similarities between the Chinese narrative and that of others, leading to questions regarding the role of on-the-ground civil society organisations in international development. Regarding DBSA's practice, the research recommends it is essential for their future interventions to balance accountability to the supra-organisational-level donors and the sub-organisational-level beneficiaries. DBSA should seize opportunities to expand individual empowerment for further community empowerment as its projects grow. In this way, it may be able to realise structural transformation in community development in the future.

Moreover, this thesis indicates some specific issues related to how the Chinese organisation and the Chinese government see their roles in international development. The Chinese government uses its development discourses to cast itself as a 'responsible power' and its rise as 'peaceful development' while taking the lead in the global South. It places emphasis on inclusive development on the basis of common interests and for mutual benefit. For DBSA, as one example of a Chinese overseas organisation, it sees itself as a catalyst for the local community's empowerment and change, trying to avoid being rescuer or direct provider. Its intention echoes with some empowerment approach in community development, which aims to draw out local people' existing capabilities. From this view, although DBSA relies heavily on the short-term volunteer tourism model for its project at the moment, at least, its overall objective is more inclined to longer-term community work and sustainable development. Thus, it might have been atypical in some respects as a volunteer tourist organisation, and it shows some of the intentions of Chinese civil society organisations' development work to be more grassroots oriented.

Critical reflections

Drawing from many of the above findings, this study conducted action research for organisational change in the second field trip, bringing research findings to practice and making critical reflections during the process. In addition to developing greater formalisation of DBSA's structures and creating a two-way communication system, this study reflected an empowerment approach to achieve a higher degree of local involvement. Specifically, the research developed local leadership and local capabilities in problem assessment by appreciating the different local knowledge of various actors. To increase local participation in programme management, the rights and responsibilities for both the Chinese organisation and the local community were particularly highlighted. As long as the two groups could achieve consensus to sustain projects and fulfil local empowerment collaboratively in the long run, the thesis suggests the cohesion would bring mutual understanding and generate more opportunities for partnership. From a power perspective, the research reveals the flowing nature of power through interactions and exchanges as well as the significance of seeing positive possibilities of power.

However, this study, like many others, has faced some difficulties and limitations, which future research may take into consideration and may be able to improve. Primarily, when conducting two field trips, I found my constantly changing positionality quite challenging. After I spent time getting along with local people, explaining my research purpose and interacting with them, they had expressed their thoughts and concerns very openly to me. But as a Chinese researcher, I have to admit many local people might still perceive me more as a member of DBSA because of my Chinese appearance, not recognising my researcher role very clearly. This might have brought some invisible influences on the research. If time and resources allow, future research in this field may avoid these influences, by spending longer in the field or by selecting a case that could minimise misunderstandings.

Additionally, as a practitioner-researcher in my second field trip, I was like an intermediary negotiating between DBSA and the local community. I felt that I was working on behalf of local people to address their needs and desires in practice on the one hand, but I also had to

consider certain management aims of DBSA on the other hand. It was not easy to keep the right balance between the two aims, and I was constantly struggling in my own 'floating space' where I was not sure how to act or how to use power. The instability and uncertainties of my own 'floating space' were similar to other 'floating spaces' identified in the research. Understanding of this space requires development on the basis of knowledge, skills, ethics and integrity. I had to acknowledge some of my decisions and practices, as outlined in the thesis, might be imperfect.

Specific explanation of the local community's diversity, including issues of ability/disability, employment and educational status were limited. For instance, in terms of disability, I was not aware of and did not observe any students in Mathare schools with learning disabilities or physical disabilities. Espeicially in conditions of extreme poverty and disadvantage in Mathare, disability was not highlighted per se as everyone is disadvantaged. However, as suggested by Munsaka and Charnley (2013: 766), "the identification and analysis of disabled people's participation should go beyond what an individual actually does to identify the range of available opportunities from which she/he may choose". With hindsight, it would have been useful to have included specific questions about whether people felt any of their own physical or psychological characteristics limited their contribution to, and benefits from, DBSA services and activities. If I have the opportunity to continue this research in future, these issues would be explored in more depth, with closer consideration of whose voices are heard by me as the researcher.

Moreover, by drawing on data from perspectives of the Chinese volunteer tourists, the organisation's staff members and the local people, this thesis has a focus on narratives of China's development approach in a single in-depth case study. However, comparisons between Chinese practices and western or non-Chinese practices in international volunteer tourism have not been made, nor has there been consideration of other Chinese organisations' work in different Kenyan communities. Future research may be able to compare the findings of this case study with practices of other organisations, especially those from western countries, to further examine if the Chinese narratives identified in this study may be

distinguished from those of the West.

Recommendations and implications

Through all the process of this research and the practical experiences it has entailed, I have developed a more profound understanding of volunteer tourism and international development. There remain many issues that require and are worthy of further investigation. However, I gained new and meaningful insights in both doing research and seeing the world. I chose the term 'dissolving boundary' to summarise my reflections on power, complexity and uncertainty throughout the journey so far. As revealed by Gaventa (2006), the imagery of 'boundary' is inherent in the idea of spaces and shaped by power relations. Freedom means the capacity to participate, to define and to develop those power spaces (Gaventa, 2006). From my point of view, freedom is also the recognition that there no longer exists an absolute boundary between various forms of binary thinking. After understanding the complexities and dynamics of international volunteer tourism in this study, I realise it is too simplistic to analyse the world in terms of binaries such as the powerful and the powerless, autonomy and control. Instead, a different view is needed that all elements of the world and our understandings of it are interrelated, constituting a holistic social world and bringing potential and possibilities for the future.

With this understanding, the thesis comes to a close with some summarised recommendations for policies and practices of volunteer tourism in international development and community development. Firstly, it is essential that volunteer tourism organisations understand the national and local contexts within which they are working. They should have a clear community development focus, with aims and objectives agreed and regularly reviewed in consultation with local people. Although for many volunteer tourism organisations, it may yet be beyond their capacity to change the social and economic constraints that limit and impoverish local people's lives, it is rather necessary for them to at least realise the structural causes of local problems. On the basis of that, they need to work with local people as far as possible. Power relations should be constantly reflected upon in practice among different stakeholder groups across different levels. To ensure more genuine

participation of local people, community work approaches, such as asset-based empowerment, should be properly developed to gradually build local capabilities and to enable local involvement in various projects.

Next, for practitioners in volunteer tourism organisations, both long-term staff and short-term volunteer tourists, it is important to locate clearly where accountability lies for decisions and actions. To realise the flowing nature of power is important. Groups that are powerful in one way may be not in another, and unequal power relations could exist everywhere, even within homogeneous groups. With this understanding, volunteer tourism practitioners should always look for possibilities for positive change on the basis of symbiotic relationships, shared benefits or common interests to develop the 'floating status' of spaces. A clear organisational structure, as well as smooth communication, are particularly necessary to ensure the meaningful involvement of local people in the change process.

Finally, opportunities for more structured learning and reflection should also be created for volunteer tourists, so that they can be better embedded in community development agendas and contribute to discussions about strategic planning. To realise higher levels of community empowerment, community members, local groups, different types of organisations, practitioners and volunteer tourists should all work together, not only for more effective implementation of development projects, but also to advocate for policy change, to draw attention to structural inequalities and to work for improvements at community and societal level.

Appendix 1: Interview guide

1) Participants of volunteer tourists

Questions:

- Why have you come to Kenya to participant in volunteer tourism project?
- How is your experience here overall? Is there anything different from you expectation?
- How do you identify your role? Do you identity yourself as volunteer or tourist or a combination of the both?
- What does the volunteering experience means to you?
- What do you think is helpful and needed to the receiving community?
- What have you done for your volunteering project during you stay here? Do you think you achieved your goal?
- What do you think is shortcomings of such work?

2) Participants of volunteer tourism organizations

Question:

- What is the aim of your volunteer tourism organization? What does the organization expect? Does it tell what you want to do?
- What kinds of projects are you running? How do you achieve your goal?
- What measurements are taken to ensure that the skills of volunteer tourists match the projects to which they are assigned?
- Do you think volunteer tourism changes the life of people in host community? Explain your answer please.
- What are the differences between local organizations and international organizations?
- Compare with government, what is the importance of volunteer non-government organizations for receiving communities?
- How do you think about the statement that international volunteering is a complicity of neoliberalism government?
- What do you think the local community need most? What do they expect to get from international volunteers?
- Are there any suggestions you want to make to the increasing number of volunteers who are coming to Kenya?
- Are there any improvements you can think of for receiving communities?

Follow-up questions:[28]

- What has been changed/improved/adjusted in the past one year? And why?
- Have you ever communicated with the chief or the elders of the community? What did they say?
- Are you aware of the new reforming power dynamics in the community?
- What do you think of your organisation's role in this new community balance?

[28] Follow-up questions are planned questions for the second fieldtrip.

3) Participants from receiving communities

Questions:

- What is your experience/interaction with international volunteer tourists?
- To what extent, do you think volunteer tourism achieve meeting your needs? What do they wish to get from international volunteer tourists?
- Is it something they truly want or they can benefit from?
- What else do you think that people in local communities need? Food? Education? Information?
- To what extent do you expect the role of state government for welfare system?
- Do you think that international volunteer tourism make up the absence of state government support at this stage?
- Do you identity yourselves as active receivers, passive accepter, service users or consumers in volunteer tourism?
- Do you think you have equivalent freedom to choose or make decisions during volunteer tourism practice?
- If you could design a volunteer tourism project in your community, what issues/concerns will you address?
- Do you like these international volunteers? Why or why not? (culturally, manner, skills, etc.)
- What are the things you are not satisfied about current volunteer tourism projects?
- What are the things that you would like to remind those international volunteers of?
- To what extent do you depend on NGOs and international volunteers to improve their lives?
- What part would you like to change and why?

Follow-up questions:

- What happened in the last one year? Any improvement of those projects?
- Have you heard from the Chinese organisation or been communicated by them?
- What do you do when you confront some problems of the projects?
- Are you aware they are coming back this summer vocation and do you know what they are going to do?

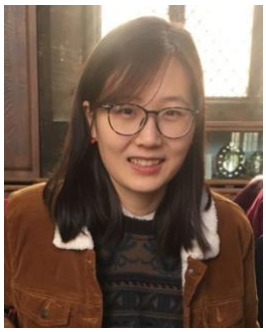
Appendix 2: Participant information sheet and consent form[29]

(a)

A study of international volunteer tourism from perspective of receiving communities in

INTERVIEWS OF LOCAL PEOPLE

Participant Information Sheet



Hello, my name is Wang Yi and I am a doctoral student from Durham University in UK. I am going to stay at Nairobi for the next few months.

I'd like to hear about what local people like you think about those international volunteers and the projects they are doing in your community because you are the most important people to talk about it. I want to hear from you about your experience of volunteer tourism, your expectation and desires and any other thoughts from you. I hope that your voice could be heard by those volunteer tourists and organizations, so as to make sure those projects can help you as much as possible.

Would you be interested in helping me find out how can those volunteer projects might be improved?

If you aren't interested in joining in, there's no problem. It will not affect anything about the current project that you are involved in. If you are interested, that is great! But before you decide for sure, I want you to think about a few things:

- Remember, you do not have to say 'yes'. It is your choice. No one will think any differently of you if you decide that you don't want to.
- If you say 'yes', you are invited to participate in a one-to-one interview during which you will be asked questions related to volunteer tourism, your experience and your view of it. The interview should take no longer than one hour and will be audio-recorded.
- Interviews will be conducted in the place we settled, and you are more than welcome to suggest an alternative if you prefer.
- Still, you can stop joining in at any time you want to. Just because you say 'yes' at the beginning does not mean that you have to join in until the end. Generally speaking, there is no

[29] The participant information sheets were made differently for different research participants (local people, volunteer tourists, DBSA staff members). The language in the sheet for local people is simpler and more informal, and some explanations were slightly different across research subjects according to their different interests.

risk for participation in this research. However, the topic may involve some sensitive questions that you may find it uncomfortable to talk about. You won't have to do anything that you feel uncomfortable with. If you decide that you no longer wish to participate in the study, you are welcome to withdraw at any time before or during the interview without providing an explanation. That is no problem! And I will use the data collected at the point.

- If you complete the interview but decide within two weeks that you wish to withdraw, please contact me by email saying so and I will use the data collected at the point.

- I will always keep the recording and notes of our work in a safe place. I won't show them to anybody else. Those transcripts and notes will be retained until submission of the final project report, after which they will also be destroyed.

- If I ever write about the work that we have done, I will always change your name so that no one else will know what it is you said when you talked to me. And I will not talk to anyone else about what you say to me, unless you tell me that you or someone else is in danger or could be at risk. But I will talk to you and to the people at your community about what could be done to help before talking to anyone else.

- Findings and benefits: I expect to also use my findings to improve policy in practice with volunteer tourists and raise questions for future researches. To this end, I will provide you with my findings if they wish and a summary report will be sent to the agencies involved.

Do you have any questions?

If you have some questions, I will try to answer you. I will be at (place) on (date and time) to tell you more about this work and I will be happy to answer any of your questions or worries. If you can't come then, you could tell a staff member that you want to talk to me and I will come and speak to you at a better time.

Or if you wish, you can also write email to me to ask any questions at yi.wang2@durham.ac.uk.

If you wish to complain, kindly please write to my supervisor Sarah Banks at s.j.banks@durham.ac.uk.

(b)

A study of international volunteer tourism from perspective of receiving communities in

INTERVIEWS OF ORGANIZATIONS/VOLUNTEER TOURISTS

Participant Information Sheet

My name is Wang Yi. I am currently doing a PhD degree at Durham University, UK about international volunteer tourism from perspectives of receiving communities. I would like to invite you to take part in this research and the data here will be undertaken as part of my PhD research.

An outline of the study is provided below. Please read this information carefully before you decide to take part. Please contact Wang Yi (contact details below) if you have any questions.

Research Outline

Volunteer tourism is a combination of volunteer work and leisure travel. In recent years, volunteer tourism has become increasingly popular and there have been a number of studies examining the positive effects of volunteer tourism and the motivations of volunteer tourists. However, there have been few studies that focus on receiving communities of volunteer tourism, especially with regards to its possible negative impacts. This study focuses on perspectives from receiving communities, with specific emphasis on international volunteer tourism in Kenya. In particular, the study is concerned with: the expectation and desires of receiving communities; the work done by volunteer tourists and its outcomes; and the interaction between different stakeholders involved in volunteer tourism.

(organisation) This research aims to help volunteer tourism organizations better understand the thoughts of participants and needs of receiving communities, thereby undertaking better projects to achieve goals in the future.

(volunteer tourists) This research aims to help volunteer tourists better understanding and reflect on the work they have done in receiving communities as well as drawing lessons from past for future's better work.

Participation Details

What are you asked to do? You are invited to participate in a one-to-one interview during which you will be asked questions related to volunteer tourism, your experience and your view of it. The interview should take no longer than one hour and will be audio-recorded. Interviews will be conducted in the place we settled and you are more than welcome to suggest an alternative if you prefer.

What will happen to your data: Interview recordings will be stored electronically on a password-protected device and I will send the data back to my protected Durham email Onedrive account every day. To assist with analysis, written transcripts of the interviews will be produced and stored in the same secure manner as the original recordings. Following transcription, the audio-recordings will be destroyed. Transcripts will be retained until submission of the final project report, after which they will also be destroyed.

How anonymity will be assured: Names and identifying information will be excluded from transcripts to ensure anonymity. Further, full transcripts will not be shared with others and only short excerpts/quotes will be used in the final report. In all cases, a pseudonym or number will be used in place of your real name when referring to your data.

What are the risks: Generally speaking, there is no risk for participation in this research. However, the topic may involve some sensitive questions which may be uncomfortable to talk about, or which might cause distress or anxiety. In this case, you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point (see below) under the principle of 'no reason, no penalty' to be given. Nevertheless, if you believe that participation is likely to result in significant distress or anxiety, you may also choose not to participant in the study anyway.

If you change your mind: Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question which is asked during the interview and if you are uncomfortable answering a question then you are encouraged not to.

If you decide that you no longer wish to participate in the study, you are welcome to withdraw at any time before or during the interview without providing an explanation. If you complete the interview but decide within two weeks that you wish to withdraw, please contact me by email saying so and I will use the data collected at the point.

Findings and benefits. The findings of this research will include research data from interviews, participant observations as well as training workshops and seminars with an element of participatory action research. I will analyse the data collected and use it for my PhD and possible publications. I expect to also use my findings to improve policy in practice with volunteer tourists and raise questions for future researches. To this end, I will provide participants with my findings if they wish and a summary report will be sent to the agencies involved.

How to get in touch: If anything in this information sheet is not clear or you wish to ask any questions, please contact Wang Yi at yi.wang2@durham.ac.uk. If you wish to complain, please write to my supervisor Sarah Banks at s.j.banks@durham.ac.uk.

(c)

A study of international volunteer tourism from perspective of receiving communities in

DIALOGICAL WORKSHOPS

Participant Information Sheet

Hello, my name is Wang Yi and I am a doctoral student from Durham University in UK. I am going to stay at Nairobi for the next few months.

I'd like to hear about what local people like you think about those international volunteers and the projects they are doing in your community because you are the most important people to talk about it. I want to hear from you about your experience of volunteer tourism, your expectation and desires and any other thoughts from you. I hope that your voice could be shared with the others in your community and be heard by those volunteer tourists and organizations, so as to make sure those projects can help you as much as possible.

Would you be interested in sharing your ideas about volunteer tourism in an interesting way or helping me find out how can those volunteer projects might be improved?

If you aren't interested in joining in, there's no problem. It will not affect anything about the current project that you are involved in. If you are interested, that is great! But before you decide for sure, I want you to think about a few things:

- Remember, you do not have to say 'yes'. It is your choice. No one will think any differently of you if you decide that you don't want to.
- If you say 'yes', you are invited to participate in the dialogical workshops. I will distribute one digital camera to each research participant and teach you basic skills to use cameras for taking photographs and videos. Afterwards, you are free to take pictures or videos that is related to the topic I gave about volunteer tourism. Or if you wish, you can also draw to express your thoughts and ideas.
- This dialogical workshop will last for around 4 weeks and it will be undertaken weekly. Each workshop will be around 60 minutes. For the first week, I will organize a workshop to introduce how to use cameras for taking pictures and filming. After basic training, you will have the freedom to take cameras back home for pictures or videos that are relevant to your experiences with international volunteers. Then the next week, you will share images or videos with others, discussing issues about volunteer tourism. The location of workshops will be at (venue). And all the dialogical workshops will be audio-recorded.
- You are on the centre of the workshops because what you think about and say about volunteer tourism matters.

- If you are willing to, you could also interview the other people in the community and ask their opinions about volunteer tourism. Don't worry, I will tell you tips about doing so if you decide to do so.
- At the end of the project, I will organize a closure exhibition if you wish. But we can discuss about it in detail later on if you decide to take part in it.
- For those pictures and videos you take and your drawings, you can decide to put their name/identity for them or some of them. Or you can also choose not to show your names on them. Both are totally fine.
- Still, you can stop joining in at any time you want to. Just because you say 'yes' at the beginning does not mean that you have to join in until the end. Generally speaking, there is no risk for participation in this research. However, the topic may involve some sensitive questions that you may find it uncomfortable to talk about. You won't have to do anything that you feel uncomfortable with. If you decide that you no longer wish to participate in the study, you are welcome to withdraw at any time before or during the interview without providing an explanation. That is no problem! And I will use the data collected at the point.
- I will always keep the recording, notes, the images and videos of your work in a safe place. I won't show them to anybody else. Those transcripts and notes will be retained until submission of the final project report, after which they will also be destroyed.
- If I ever write about the work that we have done, I will always change your name so that no one else will know what it is you said when you talked to me. And I will not talk to anyone else about what you say to me, unless you tell me that you or someone else is in danger or could be at risk. But I will talk to you and to the people at your community about what could be done to help before talking to anyone else.
- Findings and benefits: I expect to also use my findings to improve policy in practice with volunteer tourists and raise questions for future researches. To this end, I will provide you with my findings if they wish and a summary report will be sent to the agencies involved.

Do you have any questions?

If you have some questions, I will try to answer you. I will be at (place) on (date and time) to tell you more about this work and I will be happy to answer any of your questions or worries. If you can't come then, you could tell a staff member that you want to talk to me and I will come and speak to you at a better time.

Or if you wish, you can also write email to me to ask any questions at yi.wang2@durham.ac.uk.

If you wish to complain, kindly please write to my supervisor Sarah Banks at s.j.banks@durham.ac.uk.

Consent Form

By signing below, you confirm the following:

□ I have read and understood the Participant Information sheet and I understand what it is about (or someone else has explained it to me);

□ I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and about anything I am unsure about;

□ I understand that I do not have to join in and therefore, I may refuse any question asked of me and I can stop joining in it at any time without explanation or penalty;

□ I understand that what I say or the work that I do maybe used by Wang Yi for her doctoral study and publications after the work is finished but she will not use my name except in circumstances when Wang Yi comes across something that suggests a risk of harm to myself or to others.

□ I agree that my participation will be audio-recorded and later transcribed for analysis;

□ I agree to participate in the study, and I am satisfied with being interviewed.

Participant Name ……..

Participant Signature ……..

Date ……..

Researcher Name ……Wang Yi……

Researcher Signature ……..

Date ……

Appendix 3: Core selection criteria of Lunch For Children (version 2019)

CORE SELECTION CRITERIA OF LUNCH FOR CHILDREN		
Category	Items	Requirement
School Management and Paperwork	Students Roster	• Keep a full set of documents going back at least 3 years • File and store the paperwork appropriately
	Parents contacts	
	Student academic performance records	
	Attendance records of students and teachers	
	School fee schedule and payment records	
	Syllabus	
	Work plan	
	Receipts and relevant contracts, e.g. rent, electricity, water	
Education quality[30]	Teacher-to-student ratio	Maximum 1:45
	Student academic performance in exams, e.g. KCPE	Reasonable
	Teacher qualification and certificates, e.g. ECD, P1	Minimum 30%
Financial conditions	School fee collection	Sufficient to cover school expenses
	Teacher salary payment	Reasonable and timely
Facilities	Water	Consistent, safe and easy to access
	Kitchen Hygiene	Clean and tidy
	Dining venue	
	Storage	

[30] Criteria of these items were made according to requirements from Kenyan state's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

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