

Perspectives on ecotourism and volunteer tourism in post tsunami  
Khao Lak, Thailand

by  
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B.A., University of Alberta, 2003

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**Abstract**

The Sumatra-Andaman tsunami, which devastated countries bordering the Indian Ocean on December 26, 2004, resulted in an unprecedented loss of human life and property. In Thailand, the beach resort area of Khao Lak suffered the most severe damage. The period of recovery and rebuilding following this tragedy offers ample opportunities to develop more sustainable forms of tourism, such as ecotourism.

This study set out to gain an enhanced understanding of tourist markets and visitor experiences in Khao Lak one year after the tsunami. Two main tourist types, beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists, were identified after an initial period of familiarization with the site. The dominant presence of volunteer tourists in Khao Lak one year after the tsunami was a surprising finding. Motivations, trip characteristics, and demographics of tourists were collected through targeted surveys. The importance of ecotourism principles was explored in order to assess interest and potential demand for ecotourism experiences.

The results show that beach resort and volunteer tourists differ significantly in several respects. Volunteers are more likely to travel to Khao Lak alone and stay for longer

periods of time. Beach resort tourists tend to be older and less formally educated than volunteers.

Importance-Performance Analysis was conducted on travel motivations and satisfactions. Overall, respondents were very satisfied with push and pull reasons for visiting Khao Lak, and no immediate management action is warranted. Volunteers were motivated by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Volunteers want to assist with post-tsunami recovery, but they also want to gain personal development rewards.

A factor analysis was performed on the importance of 12 ecotourism principles, drawn from supporting literature. The loadings of each sample produced a 3-factor solution labeled 1) nature 2) stewardship and 3) local culture. Segmentation analysis grouped respondents into ecotourists, semi-ecotourists, and non-ecotourists. Ecotourists are respondents that relate high importance to all 3 factors. Semi-ecotourists score high in 1 or 2 factors, and non-ecotourists attach low importance to all factors. The distribution of respondents in each tourist segment does not differ between the beach resort and volunteer sample.

Several motivations related to natural features and activities in the destination environment are more important to ecotourists than non-ecotourists. However, there are few differences in trip or demographic characteristics among segments. In the beach sample, non-ecotourists are less likely to have a university education than ecotourists. In the volunteer sample, ecotourists are more likely to be younger, under 35 years of age.

About one third of respondents in each sample are identified as ecotourists, and just over half are semi-ecotourists. This suggests that there is strong demand for ecotourism among international visitors to Khao Lak. Established protected areas such as nearby Khao Lak-Lum Ru National Park may offer venues for future ecotourism development.

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# Chapter 1- Study Overview

## 1.1 Introduction

Tourism is the largest service sector of the global economy. It has grown steadily in size and economic value since 1950, and is expected to continue on this trajectory until at least 2020 (WTO, 2006a). Alternative forms of tourism, such as ecotourism and volunteer tourism, are the most rapidly growing segments of this global industry (WTTC, 2006). In contrast to mass tourism, alternative tourism is commonly viewed as more sustainable since it operates on a smaller scale and often engages in minimizing, or even confronting social and/or environmental impacts (France & Earthscan, 1997). In the context of less developed nations, ecotourism is promoted as an effective way of generating economic leverage for nature conservation. Similarly, volunteer tourism is conceptualized as a way of supporting poor communities, where resources for social and environment programs are lacking.

Alternative tourism in Khao Lak, Thailand is explored in the context of rebuilding one year after the 2004 Sumatra-Andaman tsunami. Khao Lak was initially developed like other Thai resorts as a beach destination for international tourists. However, following the sudden collapse of local tourism in the wake of the tsunami, opportunities to diversify Khao Lak's tourism industry and integrate more sustainable practices such as ecotourism were suddenly created. The tsunami's aftermath also drew hundreds of international volunteers, who have played a significant role in tourism redevelopment. Volunteer tourists remain active in Khao Lak today, more than 2 years after the disaster (TVC, 2007). An overview of alternative tourism, Thai

tourism, and the impacts of the Sumatra-Andaman tsunami will be presented to give context to the research study. The study purpose and research objectives will be presented at the end of the chapter.

## **1.2 Alternative Tourism**

Whether for business or for pleasure, international travel has been steadily growing in volume and value over the past six decades (WTO, 2006b). However, intensification of tourism is also correlated with negative impacts including environmental degradation, inequitable distribution of economic benefits, and exploitation of traditional cultures (Butler, 1980; Dearden, 1991; Ghimire, 1994; Young, 1999a; Cohen, 2001; Adams & Infield, 2002; Weinberg, Bellows, & Ekster, 2002; West & Carrier, 2004).

Thailand has reaped plentiful economic benefits from its rapidly growing tourism industry, but it has not been immune to the aforementioned impacts. These impacts have been especially acute in popular resort areas such as Phuket, where strong tourism demand coupled with ardent government support has stimulated intense coastal development. While the latest census figures reported 313,000 full-time residents, Phuket's actual population is much higher due to an enormous influx of seasonal migrant workers and 4.5 million tourists per year (TAT, 2006). Ballooning visitor levels have led to environmental problems including water scarcity, inadequate waste management, and deforestation (Cohen, 2001).

As passing visitors, tourists are seldom aware of the industry's negative impacts since they are not saddled with its consequences. Rather, local residents are disproportionately affected by outcomes such as inflated commodity prices, high real estate costs and overburdened waste management systems (Cohen, 2001). Large hotels and golf courses use huge volumes of water, which can lead to increased tariffs to meet elevated demand. Hotel conglomerates can easily afford higher prices for water, while rising expenses for basic goods can be a great burden to local residents.

The emergence of "new" or "alternative" forms of tourism has often been viewed as a response to the negative consequences of mass tourism at popular destinations such as Phuket (Clarke, 1997). Alternative tourism is an umbrella term used to describe several types of specialized travel. This may include travel to environments typically untouched by mass tourism, such as wilderness areas and poor rural communities, or participation in particular activities such as adventure sports or volunteering.

Alternative tourism is conceptualized as a shift to more sustainable forms of leisure travel that address the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural impacts of tourism (Weaver, 2006). Whereas mass tourism is large-scale, impersonal, and unsustainable, alternative tourism is, in principle, small-scale, personalized, and sustainable (France, 1997; Mowforth & Munt, 2003).

While the premise of alternative tourism is laudable, the implication that it is a panacea for all of mass tourism's ills has been challenged. Rather than being a

distinct remedy, alternative tourism creates many of the same environmental and socio-cultural impacts, such as economic leakage and an inequitable distribution of benefits. These may be less discernable only because they exist on a smaller scale (Butler, 1992; Weinberg et al., 2002). Furthermore, successful alternative tourism ventures may slowly transform into mass tourism enterprises or act as a precursor for the latter (Weaver, 2006). Rather than being a righteous surrogate to mass tourism, it may be argued that alternative tourism merely encompasses newly lucrative forms of tourism driven by increasing demand for customized and flexible special interest travel (Mowforth & Munt, 2003).

### **1.2.1 Ecotourism**

Among multiple categories of alternative tourism, ecotourism is arguably the most prominent. Contemporary discourses have attempted to distinguish ecotourism from other forms of tourism by emphasizing its broader conservation and social justice goals. Although a standard definition is elusive, there is general consensus that ecotourism is more than simply tourism in nature. Rather, ecotourism should provide educational opportunities and strive to be socially and environmentally sustainable (Wight, 1993; Blamey, 2001; Stone & Wall, 2004; Carrier & Macleod, 2005). There is considerable debate over how managers should design and deliver these educational and sustainability outcomes. Some argue that ecotourism should merely provide an enjoyable tourism experience while minimizing any negative impacts, while others counter that ecotourism has a responsibility to enhance environmental conservation and social welfare (Orams, 1995).

Ecotourism is viewed as having a great conservation potential in less developed countries, where poverty has been linked to increased pressure on natural resources (Adams & Infield, 2002; Hvenegaard & Dearden, 1998; Young, 1999b). In theory, ecotourism is an ideal tool for sustainable development because it promises collective benefits to the economy, local people, and the environment. However, ecotourism in practice has been heavily criticized for falling short of its proclaimed goals (Ross & Wall, 1999). Concepts related to ecotourism will be developed more fully in the literature review in Chapter 2.

### **1.2.2 Volunteer tourism**

Like ecotourism, volunteer tourism is classified as a subset of alternative tourism. Volunteer tourism is defined as travel that includes participation in organized social or environmental projects with mutual benefits extending to both the volunteer and the host community (Wearing, 2001). While the benefits of volunteer driven projects to the host community may be more tangible, volunteers themselves gain personal benefits such as work skills, social relationships, and inter-cultural experience. Rather than being compensated for their efforts, volunteer tourists often pay substantial fees to cover the costs of their trip (Brown & Lehto, 2005). While most volunteers are from developed nations, most volunteer tourism opportunities are in less developed countries, where basic social and environmental needs are more acute (Galley & Clifton, 2004).

In addition to situating this study within a broad tourism framework, an overview of important issues related to the study context is warranted. The two following sections briefly discuss tourism and post-tsunami impacts in Thailand, and at the study site of Khao Lak.

### 1.3 Tourism in Thailand

Since popularization of mass international travel in the 1960's, Thai tourism has experienced nearly uninterrupted growth (TAT, 2003; TAT, 2006). Thailand's long-standing reputation for political stability and public safety in a historically volatile region continue to attract a great number of visitors from abroad. Over a forty-year span, international tourist arrivals increased by 125 times, from about 80,000 visitors in 1960 to nearly 10 million visitors in 2000. Despite the destruction wreaked by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the overall impact to Thailand's tourism over 2005 was a minimal 1.5% decrease in tourist arrivals. The latest figures report a record-breaking 13.8 million visitors in 2006 (TAT, 2006).

**Table 1.1- Thailand international tourism statistics**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Arrivals</b>	<b>Length of stay (days)</b>
1960	81,000	3.0
1970	629,000	4.8
1980	1,859,000	4.9
1990	5,299,000	7.1
2000	9,509,000	7.8
2006	13,822,000	8.2

Source: (TAT 2003, 2006)

In addition to Thailand's swelling tourist volumes, the average length of stay has also increased. Length of stay has grown from an average of 3 days in 1960 to an average of 8 days in 2006 (TAT, 2003; TAT, 2006). This combination of massive tourist numbers and longer stays has resulted in strong tourism revenues. Since the early 1980's, tourism has been Thailand's most valuable economic sector, far exceeding the value of textiles, rice, or rubber (Cohen, 2001; Higham, 2000). Travel and tourism generated 29.6 billion USD in 2006, a 14.3% share of the Thai economy. Tourism is also a significant source of employment generating 3.8 million jobs, 10.7% of total Thai employment (WTTC, 2006). Both the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) forecast continued growth of tourism in Thailand and across the Southeast Asia over the next decade.

Tourism is well integrated in Thailand's export-oriented economic planning (Higham, 2000; Kontogeorgopoulos, 1999). The Tourism Authority of Thailand's (TAT) current promotion policy states that it will market tourism as a "major instrument for improving the economy through job creation and generation of revenue for the country" and seek to "attract increasing numbers of quality international tourism arrivals" (TAT, 2003, p.39). The quest to expand the tourism sector has stimulated major investments in infrastructure by the Thai government with limited attention granted to rural development and environmental conservation (TAT, 2003). As a force for economic development, Thailand's government has consistently supported continued growth, productivity and expansion of tourism (TAT, 2003).

In response to the 1997 Asian Economic Crisis, tourism was singled out as a principle recovery strategy. In 1997, TAT launched the “Amazing Thailand” campaign to highlight Thailand’s cultural and natural attractions. This campaign targeted international visitors in an effort to boost tourism numbers and valuable foreign exchange earnings after the devaluation of the Thai Baht (Higham, 2000). In concordance with government policy short-term profits, intensive land use, and rapid tourism infrastructure development were promoted over more cautious long-term planning (Cohen, 2001). Consequently, the growth of Thailand’s tourism industry can be generally characterized as uncontrolled, with lesser concern directed at developing or implementing zoning and visitor management plans.

#### **1.4 Coastal tourism and ecotourism in Thailand**

Tourism in Thailand is concentrated primarily along a north-south axis, anchored by Chiang Mai in the north and numerous islands and coastal zones along the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea in the south (Cohen, 2001). While Chiang Mai is an important tourism destination, 70% of Thailand’s tourism revenue is generated from coastal and marine environments (Meprasert, 2006). The island of Phuket, the ‘Pearl of the Andaman’, is the Thailand’s primary coastal destination, receiving over 3 million international visitors per year (TAT, 2006). The primary attraction of Phuket and other beach resorts in southern Thailand is sea, sun, and sand tourism (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2004). Thailand’s appeal as a tourist destination is highly dependent on the quality and cleanliness of its natural environment. However, Thailand’s vigorous tourism promotion and uncontrolled growth threatens the very

environment on which it depends (Cohen, 2001). Tourism in coastal areas causes a myriad of environmental problems related to intensive resource use. Environmental degradation at popular Thai coastal destinations such as Pattaya, Koh Samui, Koh Chang, Phuket, and until recently, Khao Lak, has raised concerns over mass tourism and its future growth.

Only recently has the Thai government addressed environmental degradation as a threat to the long-term health of its lucrative tourism industry. In 1995, TAT commissioned several reports to explore the potential of ecotourism development (Kontogeorgopoulos, 1999). While ecotourism is generally conceptualized as small-scale sustainable and educational nature-based travel, TAT paradoxically sought to incorporate 'ecotourism' into its existing mass tourism sites. Instead of developing it apart and distinct from mass tourism, TAT conceptualized it as "a means of both improving existing sites and conserving the natural and cultural resources upon which tourism to these sites depends" (Kontogeorgopoulos, 1999, p.320). In this way, TAT envisioned ecotourism as a greening of the tourism industry that would ultimately boost its policy of growth and bolster its image as a tropical paradise.

### **1.5 Impacts of Sumatra-Andaman tsunami on Khao Lak**

Triggered by a massive 9.0 magnitude undersea earthquake, the December 26, 2004 Sumatra-Andaman tsunami devastated Thailand's southwest coast. Final figures report 5,395 deaths, 2,817 missing, and 8,457 persons injured in Thailand alone (UN Thailand, 2005). Many thousands more were displaced as 47 coastal villages were

completely destroyed and more than 4,800 homes were damaged (D-TRAC, 2007). Total tsunami damages in Thailand are estimated to be 2.09 billion USD (Asian Development Bank, 2005). Measured by loss of human lives and property, the Sumatra-Andaman tsunami is the worst natural disaster to ever hit Thailand (UN Thailand, 2005).

The 2004 tsunami directly impacted six provinces that border Thailand's Andaman coast (D-TRAC, 2006). Tourism is the most important industry in several of these provinces, and suffered the greatest economic losses of any sector (UN Thailand, 2005). The height and strength of the tsunami's waves as it hit the coastline varied significantly, resulting in differing degrees of damage. The area of Khao Lak in Phang-nga province was worst hit. Nearly every hotel built along the beaches of Khao Lak was completely destroyed by the surging waves (Birkland, Herabat, Little, & Wallace, 2006).

In addition to being the most heavily damaged zone, Khao Lak has also been slowest to attract tourists back to its beaches. Negative media attention following the tsunami has been cited as a major obstacle (Ichinosawa, 2006). Nightmarish media images were repeatedly broadcast for months from the worst hit areas. This led potential visitors to assume well into 2006 that areas such as Khao Lak were not ready to accommodate visitors, when this was not the case (WWF Thailand, 2005). Stories of missing and unclaimed bodies discouraged Thais and other Asians from visiting the Andaman coast due to superstitions of ghosts rising from the dead when relatives do

not perform the proper burial rituals. Western tourists were further dissuaded due to long-standing government issued travel advisories against the region (Sharpley, 2005; Rittichainuwat, 2006).

## **1.6 Post-tsunami volunteerism in Khao Lak**

The Sumatra-Andaman tsunami was the most deadly and costly tsunami recorded in modern history. It triggered an unprecedented response in international aid totaling over 5 billion USD from governments and private donations (ADB, 2005). Apart from monetary donations flowing in from around the world, remedial action to deal with the chaotic aftermath of the disaster was needed. Volunteers acted immediately to search for bodies and evacuate survivors. They also provided medical attention and delivered basic needs such as water, food and clothing before Thai governmental agencies could organize emergency services (Rodsutti, 2005).

Volunteers have continued to play a major role in Thailand's long-term tsunami recovery. Following the tumultuous initial stages of emergency response, volunteer roles have diversified and organization has improved (TVC, 2007). Influxes of volunteers that have arrived to help with the disaster have been managed through an array of NGOs. While several prominent international organizations such as the Red Cross, World Vision, and Medecins Sans Frontieres established offices near Khao Lak, many more new NGOs were formed in direct response to the tsunami (D-TRAC, 2006). It is these newly formed NGOs that commonly use volunteers to fill roles from administration to project implementation.

The strong presence of NGOs and volunteers in Khao Lak has extended beyond the initial period of disaster relief mitigation. Although basic aid delivery and most housing and boat reconstruction was completed within 12 months of the tsunami, most of the 181 NGOs involved in tsunami recovery have extended their mandate beyond the one year mark. In a survey by the Disaster Tracking Recovery Assistance Center (D-TRAC), 18% of the 106 aid agencies they surveyed planned to operate in Khao Lak for at least 5 years. Of the NGOs that have remained active in Khao Lak, several operate chiefly through volunteer labor. These include Habitat for Humanity, the Tsunami Volunteer Centre, and numerous faith-based groups such as We Love Thailand, the Christian Community Centre, and Mercy Foundation (D-TRAC, 2006).

Khao Lak has gained a reputation among young travelers as 'a place to volunteer' due in large part to the flexible and steady supply short-term volunteer opportunities organized through the Tsunami Volunteer Centre. Volunteers have extended their services beyond tsunami relief through working as English teachers, art instructors, and child-care providers. The Tsunami Volunteer Centre has also used volunteers for innovative projects such as converting surplus clothing donations into decorations and recycling battered longtail boats into furniture. It is expected that volunteers will continue to travel to Khao Lak from abroad for as long as NGOs can facilitate placements for them (TVC, 2007).

## **1.7 Purpose of Study**

The main goal of this study is to examine aspects of tourism redevelopment in Khao Lak, Thailand, one year after the December 26, 2004 Sumatra-Andaman tsunami. More specifically, this study will investigate visitor experiences and the potential of ecotourism development through examining the importance of ecotourism principles in two main visitor segments, beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists. Although the collapse of Khao Lak's tourism industry was tragic, it offers opportunities to redevelop tourism in new ways. Khao Lak was initially created as a beach resort area, and later used as a launching point for scuba diving excursions to the Similian Islands. However, land-based ecotourism has not been developed in Khao Lak, despite the presence of nearby natural areas. Post-tsunami development of land-based ecotourism could serve to diversify tourism opportunities and create more sustainable practices.

Despite an extensive body of criticism, there is evidence to support the idea that ecotourism can be used to promote sustainable development through providing economic and community incentives for environmental conservation (Langholz, 1999; Foucat, 2002; Stem, Lassoie, Lee, Deshler, & Schelhas, 2003). The potential to develop land-based ecotourism in Khao Lak was examined through tourists' perceptions, motivations, and satisfactions. This was achieved through seeking an enhanced understanding of diverse tourist segments in Khao Lak through visitors' own evaluations of their experience. The research was guided by tourism literature focused on theories and concepts related to ecotourism and volunteerism.

### 1.7.1 Research Objectives

This thesis has 4 main objectives.

1. To identify and describe the main visitor segments in Khao Lak
  - i. Are there distinct segments of international tourists in Khao Lak?
  - ii. What are the trip characteristics of tourists?
  - iii. What are the demographic characteristics of tourists?
  
2. To examine tourist experiences in Khao Lak
  - i. What recreational activities do resort tourists participate in?
  - ii. What motivates tourists to visit Khao Lak?
  - iii. How satisfied are resort tourists with their reasons for visiting Khao Lak?
  - iv. Khao Lak?
  
3. To examine volunteer experiences in Khao Lak
  - i. What types of work do volunteer tourists perform?
  - ii. What motivates volunteers to engage in service work?
  - iii. Are volunteer tourists focused on volunteering as the main purpose of their trip?
  
4. To assess visitors' perceptions of ecotourism.
  - i. How important are ecotourism principles to resort tourists and volunteer tourists?
  - ii. Is there a difference in the importance of ecotourism principles among resort and volunteer tourists?
  - iii. Are there one or more dimensions of ecotourism that are more important to resort or volunteer tourists?
  - iv. Are tourist segments (ecotourists, semi-ecotourists, non-ecotourists) significantly different in their motivations, trip or demographic characteristics?

### **1.7.2 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is organized into 7 chapters. Chapter 2 presents a critical review of supporting literature. Chapter 3 describes the study site and methods, including questionnaire design and data collection. The results are encapsulated in three chapters. Chapter 4 presents basic descriptive summaries, Chapter 5 presents factor and segmentation analysis, and Chapter 6 includes data on motivations and satisfactions. A discussion of the main findings is included after each results section. Chapter 7 is the concluding chapter, which includes a summary of the study and reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of the research.

## **Chapter 2- Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This study examines the experiences of the main tourist groups in Khao Lak, beach vacationers and volunteers, one year after the Sumatra-Andaman tsunami. The potential of developing ecotourism in Khao Lak is investigated through assessing the importance of ecotourism principles among respondents in the two samples.

The literature review provides a theoretical backdrop for the subject areas of motivation, ecotourism, and volunteer tourism. Motivations are essential for understanding visitor satisfaction and influence choices regarding behavior and activities, which are important components of this study. Ecotourism literature is summarized to clarify its basic meaning and outline areas of ambiguity. Theoretical models posited by Laarman and Durst (1987), Orams (1995), and Weaver (2005), help to organize definitional chaos, and enhance understanding of ecotourism's interpretive range. This study builds on work by Chapman (1995), Palacio & McCool (1997), Hvenegaard & Dearden (1998), and Weaver & Lawson (2002), which identify and characterize ecotourist types.

Existing scholarship on volunteer tourism is presented to better understand this unique tourist type. The only theoretical construct in this area divides 'volunteer-minded' tourists, those that go on holiday mainly to volunteer, from 'vacation-minded' tourists who volunteer as a small component of their trip (Brown &

Morrison, 2003). The literature review will also point to gaps in our understanding of volunteer tourism.

## **2.2 Motivations**

Motivation refers to a psychological condition in which an individual seeks to achieve fulfillment (Jang & Wu, 2006). Moutinho (2000) emphasizes that motivation leads an individual to certain types of actions in order to seek satisfaction. Common to these conceptualizations is the idea that motivation drives behavior (Goosens, 2000).

In tourism studies, motivation is linked to destination choice, holiday activities, satisfactions, and may predict future tourism trends (Crompton, 1979; Cha, McCleary, & Uysal, 1995; Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Enhanced understanding of motivations can also guide the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities to cater to specific tourist markets (Beh & Bruyere, 2007).

In volunteer studies, motivations are essential for understanding personal task choices, commitment and continuity of service (Yeung, 2004).

General travel motivations will be reviewed first, since these are essential for understanding both beach resort and volunteer tourism. Motivations specific to volunteering will be discussed later in the chapter.

### **2.2.1 Travel motivations**

Motivation is often framed as a desire to satisfy a need. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1954) first influenced this conceptualization. Maslow proposed a five-stage model of motivations in order of increasing importance as: physiological, safety,

social, esteem, and self-actualization. Needs theory posits that an individual tries to satisfy their most basic needs first, before moving on to higher level needs. Building on Maslow's theory, Pearce (1988) proposed a modified needs-based model to better fit the dynamics of tourism. Termed the Travel Career Ladder (TCL), it is composed of five hierarchical levels- relaxation, simulation, relationships, self-development, and fulfillment. It is based on the premise that less experienced travelers have lower needs, and may advance to higher levels needs over time with experience. However, the concept of evolutionary stage development prevalent in needs theory has been questioned and models such as the TCL have been criticized as poor predictors of travel behavior (Ryan, 1998)

An alternative to needs-based theories, recent scholarship has focused on describing travel motivations through push and pull factors (Cha et al., 1995; Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Turnbull & Uysal, 1995; McCabe, 2000; Jang & Cai, 2002; Jang & Wu, 2006). This theory asserts that tourists are pushed to travel by internal emotional drivers and pulled by external attributes of the destination. Push factors that increase personal desire to travel precede pull factors that affect where, when, and how one travels (Goosens, 2000). Push and pull factors have been identified and organized in many different ways. Dann (1977) first applied the idea of push factors in his identification of anomie and ego-enhancement as dominant travel motives. Anomie refers to the desire to escape or 'get away from it all', while ego-enhancement refers to the social status rewards accrued through travel. Later, Iso-Ahola (1982) identified two main types of push and pull factors-

personal and interpersonal. Similar to Dann's view, Iso-Ahola argues that people are motivated to both escape from personal and/or interpersonal problems at home and seek out personal and/or interpersonal rewards in a new place.

Crompton (1979) presents a more extensive list of 9 travel motives, 7 push factors and 2 pull factors. The push motives are need to escape, rest and relaxation, prestige, health and fitness, adventure, social interaction, and excitement. The pull factors are cultural novelty and education. Contemporary cutting edge research has reorganized these push and pull factors. Contrary to Crompton, Jang and Cai (2002) categorize cultural novelty and education as push factors. Jang and Wu (2006) also incorporate cultural novelty as a push factor. Pull factors in the preceding studies focus on attributes directly related to the destination. These include recreational opportunities, ease of travel, facilities, cost, and cleanliness and safety (Yuan & McDonald, 1990; Turnbull & Uysal, 1995; Jang & Cai, 2002; Jang & Wu, 2006). So, although needs theories were favored in the past, Jang and Cai (2002) argue that push and pull factors are the most appropriate measures for studying contemporary travel motivations.

## **2.3 Ecotourism**

### **2.3.1 Defining Ecotourism**

Ecotourism is well recognized as a distinct form of tourism. However, there has been a great deal of confusion and disagreement over its meaning (Orams, 1995; Edwards, McLaughlin, & Ham, 1998; Fennell, 1999; Honey, 1999a; Bjork, 2000; Blamey, 2001; Weaver, 2005; Donohoe & Needham, 2006). Despite dozens of ecotourism

definitions presented over the past 20 years, there is a marked lack of consensus.

Early definitions, such as those by Ceballos-Lascurain (1987) and Boo (1990), focus exclusively on recreational and natural elements. Their definitions are as follows:

“Travelling to relatively undisturbed areas or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals” (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1987, p.13)

“Tourism to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specific objective of admiring, studying and enjoying the scenery and its flora and fauna” (Boo, 1990, p.3)

While Ceballos-Lascurain and Boo equate eco-tourism with nature tourism, contemporary definitions have incorporated social and educational components linked to ideas of social justice and sustainability (Fennell, 2001). Still, ecotourism definitions vary widely in the themes that they highlight and describe. In the midst of a notoriously mutable discourse, Blamey (2001) argues that 3 dimensions succeed in capturing ecotourism’s main essence. According to this view, ecotourism is 1) nature-based, 2) educational, and 3) sustainably managed. Table 2.1 references alternate studies that have also attempted to summarize the concept of ecotourism as composed of several distinct elements. Despite using other categories and labels, they may fit into the categories of nature, education, and sustainable management as proposed by Blamey. These 3 categories were chosen to frame Table 2.1 because they represent the most succinct yet complete summary of the ecotourism concept. Rather than viewing other cited studies as inferior to Blamey’s, it is useful to see them as alternative interpretations.

**Table 2.1 Delegation of definitional themes based on Blamey's (2001) ecotourism dimensions**

	<u>Nature</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Sustainable Management</u>
Pederson (1991)	Protection of natural areas	Educational	Generate revenues, Local participation
Buckley (1994)	Nature-based	Environmentally educational	Sustainable management Support conservation
Wallace & Pierce (1996)	Nature opportunities	Increase awareness	Minimize impacts, Empower local people Economic benefit to locals, Support conservation
Honey (1999a)	Natural destinations	Environmental awareness	Empower local people, Respect local culture Minimize impacts, Fund conservation
Newsome et al. (2001)	Nature-based	Environmentally educative	Ecologically sustainable, Locally beneficial Satisfactory to participants
Sirakaya et al. (1999)*	Natural sites	Educational travel	Environmentally-friendly, Responsible travel Low-impact travel, Contribute to local welfare
Fennell (2001)*	Natural setting	Educational	Benefits for locals, Culture Support conservation
Donohoe & Needham (2006)*	Nature-based Preservation/conservation	Educational	Sustainable, Distribution of benefits Ethics/responsibility/awareness

\* Content analysis studies, Sirikaya et al. study includes 6 common themes

In the following section, principles of ecotourism are outlined through the framework of 3 ecotourism dimensions: nature, education, and sustainable management.

### **Nature**

A nature-based setting is the most obvious prerequisite of ecotourism. More specifically, the site should be 'relatively undisturbed', 'undeveloped' or 'uncontaminated' (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1987; Boo, 1991; Valentine, 1993). Although there is some ambiguity of what this exactly means, urban gardens and zoos with captive animals are nearly unanimously excluded (Weaver & Lawton, 2007). There is consensus that ecotourism destinations should protect plants and animals in their natural habitats. Oftentimes, this is achieved through formally protected areas such as National Parks (Honey 1999a). However, unprotected areas may be equally or even more suited for ecotourism since this may help to justify conservation initiatives in new areas (Blamey, 2001). Although ecotourism seeks to preserve nature, continuous pro-active planning, management, and monitoring are needed to assure that conservation goals are being met and balanced with desires for tourism development. Low impact and self-propelled recreational activities facilitate human-nature interactions, while minimizing environmental degradation (Wallace & Pierce, 1996).

### **Education**

An integrated educational component is one way that ecotourism is distinguished from other types of nature tourism (Newsome *et al.*, 2001). In Table 2.1, Buckley (1994), Honey (1999a), and Newsome *et al.* (2001) specify that education should be

environmentally based. Others embrace a more thematically inclusive understanding that includes local cultural and historical elements (Donohoe & Needham, 2006; Fennell, 2001; Sirakaya, Sasidharan, & Sonmez, 1999). Ecotourists have different preferences for education delivery, from self-guided learning to formal presentations (Blamey, 2001). Correspondingly, educational services may vary from informational signage to interactive interpretive programs (Weaver, 2001). Aside from satisfying curiosity about local flora and fauna, education may enhance conservation through alerting visitors to damaging behaviors and requesting voluntary compliance to curb negative impacts (Orams, 1995). Deeper transformational outcomes, including changes to more pro-conservation values and attitudes may also transpire through on-site education. Ecotourists may become more conscious of their own actions and even attempt to raise the awareness of others (Stem et al., 2003).

### **Sustainable Management**

Like education, sustainable management is an essential component of ecotourism. Sustainability includes environmental, socio-cultural, and economic domains. In Table 2.1, environmental sustainability is reflected in labels such as ‘minimizing impacts’ and ‘environmentally-friendly travel’. Management action in the form of enforcing zoning restrictions and other regulations to uphold environmental conservation goals can be very effective. However, compliant behaviour among ecotourists in natural areas as demonstrated through voluntarily minimizing personal impacts and supporting sustainable tourism operations is also important to meet sustainability goals (Carrier & Macleod, 2005; Orams, 1995; Weaver, 2005).

Additional support through monetary inputs such as entrance fees and donations contribute as well (Ross & Wall, 1999).

Socio-cultural sustainability is reflected in 'empowering local people', 'local participation', and 'respecting local culture'. This branch of sustainable management draws on values of equality and respect (Blamey, 2001). It is also based on the premise that local communities are most likely to collaborate in natural areas protection if they share in the benefits (Agarwal, 1997). Meaningful participation by local communities is widely cited as effective in brokering partnerships with stakeholders, and furthering goals of environmental conservation (Brokelman & Dearden, 1990; Horwich, 1993; Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Mvula, 2001; Nepal, 2002; Charnley, 2005). Ecotourists may passively or actively participate in upholding socio-cultural sustainability. Passive involvement begins with awareness and preventative efforts to avoid negative social impacts. Ecotourists' may also take action to ensure that local people benefit financially from their visit through spending money at locally owned and operated businesses.

Connected to environmental and socio-cultural sustainability, tenets of economic sustainability also surface (Pederson, 1991; Wallace & Pierce 1996; Honey 1999a). This is explicit in 'generating revenues' and 'funding conservation', and implicit in 'distribution of benefits' and 'supporting conservation'. One of the main reasons that ecotourism is so attractive to developing countries and aid-granting institutions is that it promises to fund nature conservation through external tourism revenues. The

success with which protected areas can support their operating expenses and programs through entrance fees and other tourism revenues is mixed (Mvula, 2001; Adams & Infield, 2002; Stem et al., 2003). Popular ecotourism destinations can generate impressive revenues to fund supporting infrastructure, education, and conservation initiatives. However, remote areas that are difficult to access may have to depend on government funding or revenues generated from more popular tourist destinations. Minimizing economic leakage, the migration of monetary benefits to parties outside of the local area, is key to strengthening the positive feedback loop between tourism revenue and conservation (Walpole & Goodwin, 2000). Sustainable management recognizes that environmental, social, and economic factors are interconnected, and all three must be balanced to meet the high goals set by ecotourism.

### **2.3.2 Ambiguity in Ecotourism**

Ecotourism has been heavily criticized for its ambiguity, which has impeded a clear understanding among stakeholders and the public (Weaver, 2005). However, many argue that ecotourism is an inherently fuzzy concept and subjective interpretations of its meaning are unavoidable. Blamey (2001) alludes to the definition of a nature-based experience.

“Does walking through regenerated forest areas, or swimming in slightly polluted or littered lakes or streams, or for that matter any public beach, constitute a nature-based experience? What about the tourist who travels to Nepal, arguably an ‘ecotourism destination’, but gets no closer to the Himalayas than sitting in a restaurant with great views of the Annapurna range?” (Blamey 2001, p.8)

Clearly, interpretation of a term such as 'relatively undisturbed' natural area is highly subjective. While there are different ideas of what education should entail, this component is far less vague than the concepts of nature or sustainability. The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987, p.43). It is not this definition that is contentious, but the impossibility of knowing if an action or a broader management plan is 'sustainable' (Mowforth and Munt 1998, Weaver, 2005). Weaver and Lawton (2002) argue that it is more realistic to consider intent and a 'best practice' approach to sustainability. By this they mean, "ecotourism must make every reasonable effort to pursue sustainable outcomes" (p.270). However, this does not help to solve the inherent fuzziness of the concept as 'reasonable effort' is no less vague than the concept it is trying to clarify.

With little definitional congruity, there are diverse interpretations of what the label actually means. Conservation groups, multilateral aid organizations, government ministries, and tour operators, have all adopted ecotourism and applied it to mean very different things (Orams, 2001). This diversity stems largely from divergent motivations for initiating ecotourism. While tour operators may interpret ecotourism from a marketing point of view, environmental groups see ecotourism more strictly as a means to preserve natural areas (Ross & Wall, 1999). Consequently, some definitions are more conservation and community oriented than others. However, the lack of a universally accredited ecotourism definition means that any group may use

the term freely. Edwards et al. (2000) argue that the proliferation of “homegrown” definitions and interpretations helps stakeholders feel responsible for and committed to their own ecotourism policy. With the varied demands and priorities of divergent groups, mandating an overarching definition may be counterproductive.

However, others express concern that ‘far too much’ gets labeled as ecotourism (Honey, 1999b). Volumes of published definitions have led to the criticism that the term lacks operational guidance. Butler (1994) suggests that definitional consensus is “unnecessary unless the term is to be used in legal or administrative documents” (p.664). In response, many counter that it is just these legal documents that are needed to formulate policy and certification initiatives. Clearly, efforts to develop these have been impeded by the lack of definitional consensus (Fennell, 2001; Donohoe & Needham, 2006). The gap between ecotourism theory and what is labeled ecotourism in practice has led others to question the credibility and legitimacy of the term (Ross & Wall, 1999). Furthermore, definitional variance has led to its widespread use as a marketing tactic to attract tourists. The positive and commercially lucrative connotations of the eco- prefix have made ecotourism a popular buzzword in the travel industry. As a result, ecotourism is often used as a brand to promote destinations and gain a ‘green edge’ in the market place rather than to conserve nature (Carrier & Macleod, 2005).

### 2.3.3 Ecotourism Typologies

In an effort to organize and categorize different interpretations of ecotourism, several conceptual frameworks have been developed. These include Laarman and Durst's (1987) hard-soft dichotomy, Weaver's (2005) minimalist-comprehensive model, and Orams' (1995) distinction between passive and active ecotourism orientations.

Laarman and Durst (1987) categorize ecotourism into 'hard' and 'soft' dimensions. These terms refer to the degree of physical effort exerted as well as the level of interest in the surrounding environment (Laarman & Durst, 1987). 'Hard-core' ecotourists engage in more physically demanding recreational activities, and are more likely to seek out longer and more remote 'wilderness' experiences with little demand for supporting infrastructure or interpretive facilities. They are interested in direct engagement with flora and fauna through bird watching or other forms of nature study. Furthermore, they are most likely to have prior knowledge and experience visiting natural areas and participating in low impact recreation activities.

In contrast, 'soft' ecotourists tend to have a casual interest in natural attractions. Consequently they are less willing to endure physical discomfort to engage in outdoor nature activities, and require more supporting infrastructure. While 'hard' ecotourists participate in dedicated ecotourism travel, experiences among 'soft' tourists are usually short in duration or make up a small portion of a longer multi-purpose trip. Frequently, these 'soft' ecotourism experiences are an unplanned addition or an inadvertent discovery on the way to other tourist sites (Grossberg, Treves, & Treves,

2003). This hard-soft dichotomy accords with Duffus and Dearden's (1990) model of specialization, which distinguishes novice generalists from expert specialists in wildlife-oriented recreation. Hard ecotourists are exploratory users with expert specialized knowledge of ecotourism attractions and sites, while soft ecotourists are novice generalists with little specialized interest that are attracted to sites already developed for tourism (Duffus & Dearden, 1990).

Although Laarman and Durst connect intense physical exertion with dedicated interest in nature, the two are not always correlated. Kersetter, Hou and Lin (2003) describe a segment of Taiwanese birdwatchers with high environmental awareness visiting easily accessible sites along coastal wetlands. Weinburg et al. (2003) use case studies of Monteverde, Costa Rica and Kaikoura, New Zealand to illustrate extremely successful ecotourism sites, which have developed to accommodate large volumes of tourists in comfort, including those with a passion for nature.

Concerns related to sustainability are incorporated into Orams' (1995) description of 'passive' to 'active' ecotourism orientations. Orams correlates passive and active ecotourism with low and high levels of human responsibility, respectively. Passive ecotourism seeks to be as innocuous as possible in order to minimize damage to natural and socio-cultural systems, whereas active ecotourism strives to engage ecotourists in environmental conservation and improve local standards of living. Educational opportunities in active ecotourism can also serve to change "attitudes and

beliefs to those that are more environmentally and ecologically sound” (Orams 1995, p.6).

Drawing from previous models, Weaver (2005) proposes ‘comprehensive’ and ‘minimalist’ ecotourism types. However, rather than focusing on level of interest and physical exertion, classification is based on sustainability outcomes. Minimalist ecotourism caters to a superficial interest in the environment through creating attractions based on an alluring animal or plant species. While this meets the most basic needs of the tourist, it does not seek to shape or change tourist behavior. Weaver argues that minimalist ecotourism can hinder sustainability by focusing on a singular charismatic organism to the detriment of others that are essential for supporting ecological integrity. In contrast, comprehensive ecotourism may enhance sustainability through affecting the tourists themselves. Comprehensive ecotourism focuses on the ecosystem as a holistic attraction to elicit a deeper understanding of the natural environment. Furthermore, it seeks to transform participant attitudes and behaviors to serve environmental sustainability goals.

Parallels can be drawn between Weaver’s minimalist-comprehensive dichotomy and Orams’ passive-active continuum. Both passive and minimalist ecotourism focus on maintaining the status quo and minimizing harm. Opposing this, active and comprehensive ecotourism strive for transformational outcomes where tourists adopt attitudes and behaviors that enhance environmental stewardship. Orams and Weaver adopt the ethical argument that increasing participation in ‘active’ and

'comprehensive' ecotourism can promote a more desirable form of tourism. The incorporation of ethical principles in ecotourism pervaded early discourses (Kutay, 1989; Jacobs, 1992; Wight, 1993). However, most contemporary discourses, excepting Weaver's, have distanced themselves from the ethics-based argument that ecotourism should lead the way towards sustainable development and revolutionize the pitfalls of mass tourism (Fennell, 2001).

Links can also be drawn between Weaver's comprehensive-minimalist model and the hard-soft dichotomy presented by Laarman and Durst. Both hard and comprehensive ecotourism are associated with high environmental commitment and dedication to learning experiences. Duffus and Dearden argue that the hard ecotourism of expert specialists is largely unobtrusive due to its small numbers and low demand for facilities. However, Weaver critiques the assumption that hard ecotourism is synonymous with "good" ecotourism to the exclusion of the softer types of nature-based travel. He argues that hard ecotourists, though smaller in number, tend to explore pristine environments and remote groups of people for longer periods of time, which can translate to disproportionate impacts. Despite their willingness to pay more for high quality ecotourism experiences, hard ecotourists cannot match the revenue flow generated by a large volume of soft tourists, who may be more effective in spurring economic incentives for conservation.

While hard ecotourism can be unsustainable, Weaver argues that comprehensive ecotourism does not fall into the same rigid framework. Rather, comprehensive

ecotourism accommodates a range of group sizes, physical exertion, and recreational settings to foster a holistic experience that may transform behavior and enhance sustainability. Weaver concedes that implementing comprehensive ecotourism is a challenge, and his discussion is limited to theoretical concepts. He fails to explain how his model may be applied or if it already exists in any practical setting.

#### **2.3.4 Ecotourist Typologies**

Attempts to categorize participants of ecotourism have also garnered several typologies based on differing objectives and methodologies. Using cluster analysis techniques, some studies segment classes of recognized ecotourists, while others try to separate ecotourists from a broad sample of travelers. Chapman (1995), Palacio & McCool (1997), and Hvenegaard and Dearden (1998) use motivational factors to segment tourists, while Kersetter et al. (2003) and Weaver and Lawson (2002) integrate behavioral elements.

Chapman (1995) surveyed park visitors to State Forests in New South Wales, Australia. Based on questionnaire data, Chapman divided visitors, all of who were assumed to be ecotourists, into groups reflective of their primary motivation.

Approximately half of the surveyed park visitors were classified as motivated by nature involvement (54%), followed by personal development (19%), relaxation (19%), and social activity (8%). Chapman attempts to categorize ecotourists based on mutually exclusive motivational categories. However, motivations literature suggests that tourists, including ecotourists, travel for multiple, overlapping reasons (Yoon &

Uysal, 2005). So, although Chapman employs a straightforward method of segmentation, it contradicts the premise that ecotourists are motivated for a combination of reasons that may be equally important.

Palacio and McCool (1997) surveyed a broad sample of travelers in transit at the Belize International Airport. Belize was chosen because it is widely recognized as a popular ecotourism destination. Segments were divided based on the importance of expected trip benefits and motivations among respondents. Their study segments respondents as 'Ecotourists' (18%), 'Nature escapists' (22%), 'Comfortable naturalists' (33%), and 'Passive players' (27%). However, the factors that Palacio and McCool use to identify 'ecotourists' do not correspond with criteria identified in the literature. 'Ecotourists' are identified as those that placed highest importance in a combination of four factors – 'escape', 'healthy activity', 'cohesive', and 'learn about nature'. While learning about nature is certainly valid, other factors of escapism, physical fitness, and social cohesion are not elements that can adequately distinguish ecotourists from other types of tourists.

Hvenegaard and Dearden (1998) identified 5 main tourist types in their study of visitors in Doi Inthanon National Park (DINP), northern Thailand. Unlike Chapman (1995), not all park visitors were assumed to be ecotourists. Rather, two ecotourist groups, (1) birding ecotourists and (2) general ecotourists, were differentiated from (3) highlights general tourists (4) highlights travelers and (5) trekkers. Data on respondents' park-based activities, motivations, and self-identity were used to

characterize each tourist type, derived by a cluster analysis. Although Hvenegaard and Dearden's typology thoroughly describes tourist segments in DINP, the generalization of the results is limited. DINP protects Thailand's highest mountain, an important natural 'highlight', and it serves as a popular area for trekking excursions. These unique qualities are not present in all ecotourism destinations; therefore the latter groups of 'highlights traveler' and 'trekker' may not be represented at other sites.

While previous studies segmented ecotourists based on motivational criteria, recent studies have integrated behavioral elements. Tourist behavior in natural environments is clearly linked to the severity of impacts. Since a major goal of ecotourism is conservation, the behavior of those that engage in ecotourism can be very telling of who is a 'true' ecotourist (Horwich, 1993). Kersetter et al. (2003) developed a combined motivational and behavioural profile of Taiwanese ecotourists visiting coastal wetlands. They found significantly different responses to intended behavior among segments identified as 'experience-tourist', 'learning-tourist', and 'ecotourist'. 'Ecotourists' agreed more strongly than other groups with behavioural statements reflecting an active participatory role in environmental conservation and education. This included significantly stronger intentions to volunteer with local conservation associations, educate other tourists about the wetlands, and assist in maintaining local environmental quality.

Weaver and Lawson (2002) also integrate a behavioral component in their study of ecolodge patrons in Australia. Based on responses to an extensive list of 37 behavioral statements, ecotourists were divided into softer ecotourists, harder ecotourists, and structured ecotourists. Structured ecotourists were a novel group identified by Weaver and Lawson, which shared the environmental commitment of hard ecotourists and the desire for escorted tours and facilities normally associated with soft ecotourists. Weaver and Lawson included additional questions regarding ecotourism motivations, opinions, and environmental attitudes in order to characterize and compare behavioral clusters. This study corroborates with the idea that intended or actual behavior an effective method of segmenting ecotourists.

Past studies have used divergent contexts and criteria to create contrasting typologies. Some typologies segment ecotourists into more refined groups (Chapman, 1995; Weaver & Lawson, 2002). Others examine a more general tourist population, and attempt to indentify one or more ecotourist segments (Palacio & McCool, 1997; Hvenegaard & Dearden 1998; Kersetter et al., 2003). Early typologies tend to focus on motivational variables, while more recent studies incorporate behavioural elements. Segmentation enhances understanding of diverse tourist markets sites and supports the idea that tourists and ecotourists are not homogeneous in their attitudes, motivations, and behaviours (Duffus & Dearden, 1990).

## 2.4 Volunteer Tourism

As a distinct form of alternative tourism, motivations related to the relatively new venture of volunteer tourism have yet to be fully developed. Volunteer tourism motivations are difficult to reconcile with those of mass travel because volunteers often reject the idea that they are tourists (Galley & Clifton, 2004). This viewpoint may be fortified by placements in poor communities or remote wilderness areas with no obvious mass tourism appeal or presence (Wearing, 2001). As such, this segment may identify wholeheartedly with motivations related to volunteering such character building or helping a community in need (Brown & Morrison, 2003). Typical mass tourism motivations related to the beauty and tranquility of the destination may be completely irrelevant. Alternatively, tourists that spend a short time volunteering as a part of a longer trip may not relate to motivations associated with volunteering. Volunteering may be viewed instead as an opportunity to explore places that few get to see or take photographs of an interesting ethnic group, motivations associated with leisure tourism. Fundamentally, volunteer tourists travel for a complex combination of reasons. Reasons that may be attributed especially to volunteer tourists have yet to be confirmed and clearly warrant more study.

As its own entity, volunteer tourism has attracted significantly less attention in the literature than ecotourism. Volunteer tourism has been somewhat obscured by a failure to differentiate itself from other types of alternative tourism (Wearing, 2001). Rather, tourists that engage in volunteering have often been categorized by their personal interests as eco-, cultural, or adventure tourists. Furthermore, long-term

religious or professional service volunteerism is usually not considered a form of tourism (Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004).

Volunteer tourism is defined as a form of travel that includes participation in organized and unpaid work projects. Projects generally focus on environmental conservation and/or poverty alleviation (Wearing, 2001). Volunteering vacations often entail individuals from developed countries paying large sums of money to work on projects in poor countries through organizations such as EarthWatch (Weiler & Richins, 1995), Habitat for Humanity (Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004), or Youth Challenge International (Wearing, 2001). These latter groups are among the most experienced and notable non-profit organizations engaged in volunteer tourism today. However, there are also increasing numbers of for-profit tourism operators and church organizations responding to rising demand in North America and Europe for volunteer tourism experiences (Rehberg, 2005).

#### **2.4.1 Characterizing volunteer tourists**

There is limited critical examination of volunteer tourism or its participants. As pioneering contributors, Brown and Morrison (2003) make an important distinction between two types of volunteer tourists- 'volunteer-minded' and 'vacation-minded'. As implied by their labels, volunteer-minded tourists devote all or nearly all of their holiday time to volunteering, whereas vacation-minded tourists volunteer as a small component of their overall trip. This division may also reflect differences in motivation, with volunteer-minded tourists motivated primarily by the desire to participate in a development project, while vacation-minded tourists are focused on a

variety of travel attractions and activities. Frequently, commitment to an intense short-term volunteer project leaves little free time to travel and explore other sites in the host country (Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). While this distinction is important, it is also viewed as a fairly simplistic dichotomy (Brown & Lehto, 2005). In reality, tourists dedicate varying degrees of time and importance to volunteering while traveling abroad.

Nearly all research thus far has focused on the volunteer-minded tourist, whether in environmental conservation, social development projects or religious mission work. Case studies and ethnographies of volunteers on dedicated short-term work projects predominate. Brown and Lehto's (2005) work is unique in that it attempts to learn more about vacation-minded tourists. With 15 participants in a focus group and 10 interviewees, this study is a preliminary attempt to learn more about the motivations of those who volunteer as a short component of a trip. Brown and Lehto identify 4 broad motivational themes of volunteer tourism- 'cultural immersion', 'giving back', 'seeking camaraderie', and 'seeking educational and bonding opportunities for children'. Based on these motivations, the authors make several sweeping conclusions. Brown and Lehto claim that vacation-minded tourists are "driven by a sense of adventure and desires for exploration and novelty that are not as prominent with the more serious volunteer travelers" (p.492). They elaborate stating, "altruism for the volunteer vacationers is much less apparent" (p.493). Neither of these statements is well substantiated by evidence in their data or elsewhere.

The authors go on to claim that values attached to 'seeking camaraderie' and 'bonding with family members' are specific to the phenomenon of volunteer vacationing. This latter claim is puzzling given that a large body of volunteer and travel motivations literature has identified social cohesion and bonding as significant motivations. While Brown and Lehto present a very interesting discussion of motivations among vacation-minded tourists, their arguments should be taken as inferences and at times presuppositions, based on very limited qualitative data. Substantially more research is required to understand vacation-minded tourists. The interplay of travel, volunteer, and volunteer tourism motives is especially complex, and more investigation is needed to make more meaningful and valid comparisons.

#### **2.4.2 Issues in volunteer tourism**

Literature on volunteer tourism is in its infancy. Much of the published work in this field are case studies, each situated within a specific context and place. Stoddart and Rogerson (2004) profiled the motivations and demographics of volunteers with Habitat for Humanity in South Africa. Galley and Clifton (2004) did the same for volunteers with Operation Wallacea in Indonesia, and Weiler and Richins (1995) described Earthwatch Australia volunteers. Broad (2003) characterized the experiences of volunteers at a Gibbon rehabilitation project in Thailand and Campbell and Smith (2006) studied the values of sea turtle conservation volunteers in Costa Rica. While these case studies are useful in building knowledge on volunteer tourism, their generalizability is questionable.

For example, the Galley and Clifton (2004) study of Operation Wallacea concludes that a major motive of volunteers is 'academic achievement'. However, the authors concede that Operation Wallacea is a U.K. based research ecotourism operator that "emphasizes the opportunity to conduct research for undergraduate dissertations or thesis purposes" (Galley & Clifton 2004, p.77). The predominance of single, female, British citizens, aged between 20 and 22 is therefore of little surprise. Given this bias, the demographic results cannot be generalized to eco-research volunteers, or volunteer tourists in general. A similar argument may be extended to case studies that examine volunteers in a specific project within a specific organization. Factors such as the project purpose, location, and cost exert strong influences on the composition of participating volunteers.

Volunteer tourism is also struggling to differentiate itself as a separate entity worthy of its own theoretical framework (Wearing, 2001). This effort is hampered by studies that encase it in ecotourism or volunteerism. Wearing (2001) relates volunteer experiences in Costa Rica as relating first to ecotourism, then to volunteering, and finally to leisure. Although he states that these elements are 'interactive', he does not attempt to develop a distinct characterization of volunteer tourism. Studies of eco-research tourists, including Weiler and Richins' study of Earthwatch volunteers and Galley and Clifton's Indonesian study buttress their ideas within the context of ecotourism. In a similar fashion, Rehberg situates his work on international volunteering among Swiss youth in theories and concepts borrowed from volunteerism. While subjects from these latter studies may be alternatively

considered as ecotourists or volunteers, outcomes contribute little to theory that advances knowledge of volunteer tourism as a distinct form of travel.

### **2.4.3 Volunteer motivations**

Volunteer motivations scholarship is dominated by applications of functional theory (Houle, Kaplan, & Sagarin, 2005). Functional theory is concerned with “the reasons and purposes that underlie and generate psychological phenomena” (Clary, Snyder & Stukas, 1996, p.486). It seeks to understand the emotional and social needs that individuals attempt to satisfy through their beliefs and behavior. Drawing on previous research findings and employing functionalist theory, Clary and his colleagues (1998) formulated the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI). They propose six motives: values, understanding, enhancement, career, social, and protective.

To summarize, the *values* function refers to altruism and the desire to help others. *Understanding* includes opportunities for learning and applying new skills. *Social* relates to relationships with others or engaging in an activity that is deemed to be important by friends or relatives. *Career* encompasses benefits that may improve future job prospects and professional development. *Protective* concerns escape from one’s personal problems or feelings of guilt. The final function of *enhancement* serves to improve self-esteem and overall confidence.

The functional approach is based on the idea that the same activity may serve different psychological functions for different people (Clary et al., 1996; Houle et al., 2005). Thus, volunteer motivations are unique to the individual, and may change over time. This approach runs contrary to earlier theories of motivation that viewed humans as reacting to internal or external needs (Maslow, 1970). Clary and others' (1998) six volunteer motivations reflect a combination of egoism and altruism that have been accorded by other studies (Hustinx, 2001; Wearing, 2001; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004; Yeung, 2004; Rehberg, 2005). In the VFI, the *values* function is clearly aligned with altruism, while *understanding*, *social*, *career*, *protective*, and *enhancement* may serve mainly self-development and personal satisfaction purposes. Although the balance of outward and inward motivations is not equal, there is nevertheless a melting pot of altruistic and self-serving reasons for volunteering.

Although Clary's Volunteer Functions Inventory has dominated the field, Yeung (2004) recently proposed an alternative phenomenological approach. Yeung argues that Clary's approach fails to capture "complexities and interactions that might characterize motivation from the perspective of individual experience and meaning" (23). Based on 18 in-depth interviews with Finnish volunteers, Yeung proposes an octagonal model based on four dimensions. These dimensions are described as getting-giving, continuity-newness, distance-proximity, and thought-action. Each dimension is conceptualized as an inward outward pairing, meaning that it ranges from focus on the self to focus on others at the opposite extremity. Dimensions are

not separate, but interact with each other. Yeung presents a new and innovative way to conceptualize volunteer motivations. However, characteristic of many qualitative studies, the octagonal model is based on a small sample of volunteers from a single religious organization. This raises doubts of how well Yeung's model translates to other contexts (Rehberg, 2005).

Yeung relates her octagonal model to larger societal trends of modernization. In particular, she points to the parallels between her inward-outward dimensions and the modernist theme of oneself versus others and the outside world. Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) argue that volunteering is moving from a 'collective' or group membership orientation, to a more 'reflexive' or singular orientation. This echoes modern social transformations that place greater importance on the individual and less importance on institutions such as religion. In a motivational context, collectively focused volunteers are driven by a sense of duty as members of a community. This community, traditionally based on religious affiliation, holds a shared set of values and performs a clear role in society. In contrast, personal values and interests motivate reflexive volunteers. These volunteers tend to be self-directed and make short-term commitments to specific projects.

A recent study by Hustinx (2001) of young volunteers in international work camps exemplifies several characteristics of a reflexive orientation. These include high expectations in regards to the flexibility of work terms, task selection, and personal benefits (Hustinx, 2001). Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) caution that their

collective-reflexive typology should be viewed as a continuum between two ideal types rather than a strict dichotomy. Although they allude to trends towards more reflexive styles of volunteering, they do not suggest that collective approaches are disappearing altogether. Rather, volunteerism is a complicated social phenomenon that incorporates both collective and reflexive elements, though the balance may be tipping more towards the latter (Yeung, 2004).

## **2.5 Summary of Literature Review**

This literature review focused on the theoretical foundations of motivation, ecotourism, and volunteer tourism research. Since this study examined travel and volunteer motivations, a review was presented on each topic. Push and pull motivations theory was described extensively as it figures prominently in cutting edge research.

A central objective of this study is to examine the potential of ecotourism development in efforts to rebuild Khao Lak's tourism industry. Despite the general consensus that ecotourism is nature-based, educational, and sustainably managed, this has not helped to resolve ongoing ambiguity and controversy over what should and should not be included as ecotourism. Due to a diversity of interpretations, numerous authors have attempted to simplify the definitional chaos by devising theoretical models. Laarman and Durst (1987) first suggested a hard/soft ecotourism dichotomy, followed by Orams' (1995) passive-active model and finally Weaver's (2005) minimalist-comprehensive continuum. Typologies have also been created to better

understand the participants of ecotourism. Following studies by Kersetter et al. (2003) and Weaver and Lawson (2002), this study uses behavior based ecotourism principles to segment tourist groups.

The large number of volunteer tourists present more than one year after the tsunami was an unexpected finding upon arrival at the study site. This group had a pronounced impact on local tourism dynamics during the field research period, and was incorporated into the study design. Academic scholarship on volunteer tourism is sparse. The main theoretical basis of volunteer tourism literature states that there are two types of volunteer tourists. For 'volunteer-minded' tourists, the main purpose of their holiday is participation in a volunteer project. In contrast, 'vacation-minded' tourists volunteer as a short component of their overall trip. Volunteer motivations have been methodically investigated. Clary and others' (1998) Volunteer Functions Inventory is used in this study to examine volunteer motivations.

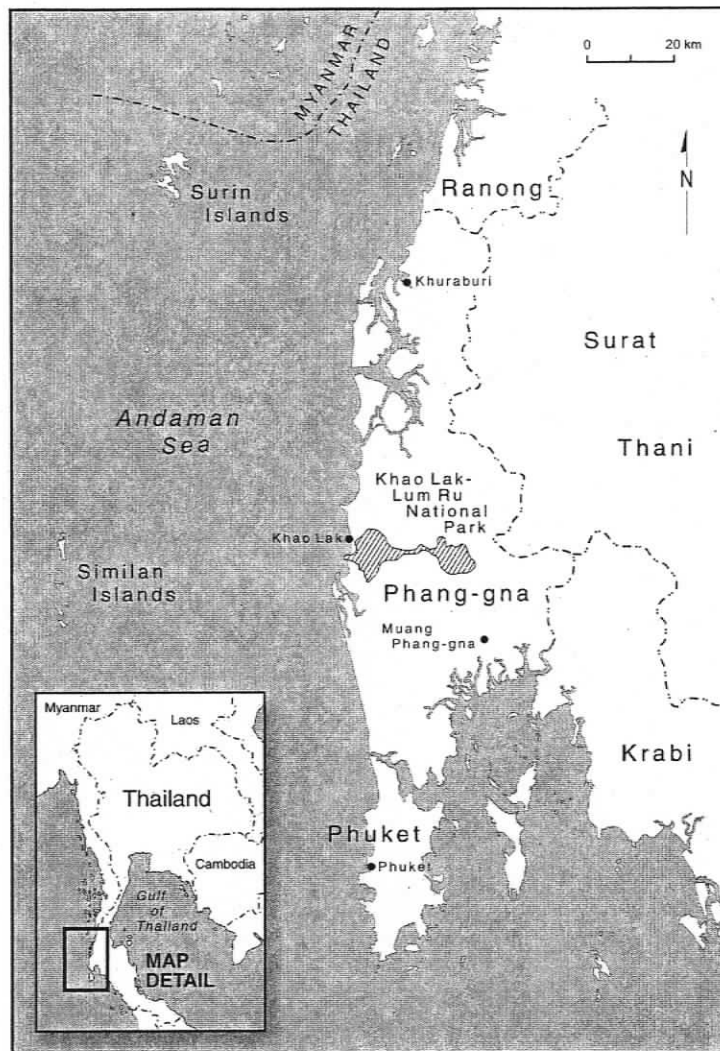
## **Chapter 3- Methods**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The following chapter outlines the research methods used in this study. First, the study site of Khao Lak, Thailand is introduced and described. Next, the advantages and disadvantages of a questionnaire-based approach are discussed in light of other methods that could have been used. A detailed dissection of the questionnaire design provides justification and theoretical support for its construction. Finally, the survey sampling techniques are outlined and challenges to the study implementation are presented.

### **3.2 Study site**

The research study site of Khao Lak is located in Phang-nga province, on the Andaman coast of Thailand. Khao Lak is a tourist town nearly exclusively made up of restaurants, travel agencies, hotels, souvenir shops, and other services for tourists. Khao Lak is approximately 100 kilometers north of the world-renowned beach resorts of Phuket. Its proximity to Phuket was a primary thrust of its development in the 1990's as an alternative to crowded beaches and overbuilt landscapes (WWF Thailand, 2005). Khao Lak was created as a quiet and peaceful alternative to Phuket, with smaller hotels and no raucous nightlife. Khao Lak is also advantageously located near the Similan Islands, Thailand's premier scuba diving destination. The Similan Islands are most often visited through multi-day live aboard diving trips, making Khao Lak the most direct boat launch point.



**Figure 3.1 South Andaman coast region of Thailand**

Although Khao Lak sought to differentiate itself from the saturated Phuket tourist market, its developmental stages followed a similar trajectory. Like Phuket, Khao Lak was built up very rapidly in anticipation and response to expanding tourism levels. From 1999 to 2004, Khao Lak's hotel capacity increased by 7000 rooms, making it the fastest growing tourism destination in southern Thailand (Birkland et al., 2006). Khao Lak's rapid expansion prompted a warning from TAT in August

2004 of an oversupply of hotel rooms. TAT further warned that Khao Lak was in danger of becoming 'like Phuket', and losing its ability to attract tourists looking for an alternative to noisy, crowded beaches (Phuket Gazette, 2004).

The beaches and villages around Khao Lak, in Phang-nga province, were by far the most ravaged areas of Thailand post-tsunami. Phang-nga province recorded 78% of Thailand's fatalities, half of which were foreign citizens (D-TRAC, 2007). Nearly all oceanfront development over a 25-kilometer area, stretching north and south from Khao Lak was completely destroyed by the waves, including several villages and dozens of hotels. Tourist fatalities were concentrated on the resort beaches of Nang Thong and Bang Niang, while more than one thousand Thais perished in the village of Nam Kem (UN Thailand, 2005)

### **3.3 Survey Methods**

The purpose of this study is to examine visitor experiences in Khao Lak, Thailand, in the context of tourism redevelopment one year after the December 2004 tsunami. A central goal is to assess the potential of developing ecotourism through learning more about the importance of ecotourism principles in two main segments, resort tourists and volunteer tourists.

Conclusions regarding tourists' motivations and the importance of various elements in their travel experience cannot be determined by observation alone. Rather, responses must be elicited directly from the tourists themselves (Jackson, 1988). This

may be done through various methods including interviews, focus groups, and mail, telephone, or face-to-face surveys. After assessing the feasibility of potential methods at the study site, an in-person survey technique was deemed to be the most appropriate and effective.

Although qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups are effective in gathering rich and detailed information, there are several disadvantages. Gathering qualitative data from individual respondents is time consuming, which limits the total sample size. Time restrictions for each interview or focus group also constrain the number of questions that can be asked. Recruiting a sample that adequately reflects the nuances of the target population can also be very challenging, and limit generalization of the results. A further problem specific to focus groups is that certain individuals may dominate discussions and influence the contributions of others. This may occur despite the moderator's efforts to balance focus group participation (Mitra & Lankford, 1999)

In the context of the study site in Khao Lak, Thailand, qualitative methods are difficult to apply in a multiethnic environment where the researcher does not speak the same native language as most of the respondents. Although most European tourists can speak English, their ability to express complex ideas about motivations and perceptions may be impeded in a second language. In contrast, questionnaires can be administered to a large number of people over a short time and with minimal cost. Surveys can be completed at the respondent's own pace and answers may be revised

before returning the booklet to the researcher. There are several ways that questionnaire surveys can be administered including by mail, e-mail, telephone, or in person. Since the target sample population for the study was international visitors to Khao Lak, Thailand, temporary contact information through hotels of room numbers, telephone numbers, or e-mails was confidential and not accessible. This made in-person surveying the only feasible way to administer the questionnaire.

In-person surveying has many additional advantages. In person delivery maximizes the response rate because the researcher can better persuade respondents that the study is significant and that their participation is important. Secondly, the researcher can provide any clarification and answer questions regarding the survey's content. A third advantage is that through interacting with respondents, the researcher may capture additional qualitative information that may enlighten data analysis and interpretation. These factors are very important in maximizing the quantity and quality of data collected in a multilingual sample population where many respondents are filling in a questionnaire in their second language (Neuman, 2000).

Despite its many advantages, several challenges accompany in-person survey methods. To begin, approaching each potential respondent individually requires a substantial investment of time and energy. Due to interpersonal contact, the researcher may bias responses simply by the image she projects. The researcher's appearance and use of language may affect how respondents think they should answer the questions. A conscious effort was made by the researcher to project a

professional and neutral stance in the field at all times. In order to minimize responses skewed for social desirability, wording in the questionnaire was kept as neutral as possible. For instance, the term 'ecotourism' was deliberately omitted from the surveys.

A questionnaire booklet was the primary instrument used in the research study. Prior to preparing the questionnaire, familiarity with the study site of Khao Lak was fostered through three weeks of observation of the town site, neighboring beaches, and Khao-Lak Lum Ru National Park. Knowledge of the area was supplemented through speaking with local tourism operators and long-term residents as well as collecting secondary data sources such as tourist maps and brochures at local agencies. This contextual information along with supporting literature helped to frame the research questions and optimize construction of the survey questions.

Two different questionnaires were prepared for the two main visitor segments in Khao Lak, beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists. Distinct surveys were necessary in order to form questions with content and wording that was relevant to each respective group. Both questionnaires were designed according to Dillman's "total design method" to maximize the response rate and response quality. The questionnaires were designed to be as easy to follow and understand as possible, minimizing the time and effort required by each respondent (Salant & Dillman, 1994). A questionnaire cover with the stylized image of palm trees in a booklet style format was created to capture the interest of potential respondents. The emblems of

the University of Victoria Marine Protected Areas Research Group (MPARG), the Thailand National Parks, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation Department, and Thailand National Parks office were placed on bottom of the cover page to legitimate the questionnaires as an officially sanctioned and professional instrument. The questionnaires begin with a short introduction stating the purpose of the study and encouraging participation in the study. Each question is accompanied by brief statement with instructions to minimize incomplete responses.

### **3.4 Research Design**

Two questionnaires were developed to examine distinct visitor experiences in Khao Lak. One questionnaire was targeted at beach resort tourists, and the other at post-tsunami volunteers. The questionnaires were designed to capture information about:

- Trip characteristics
- Select motivational factors
- Importance of ecotourism principles
- Demographic variables

There are significant differences between the motivations of beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists, so questions related to this theme were framed differently in each questionnaire. The beach resort questionnaire focused on motivations to travel (Q-3, Q-6), while the volunteer questionnaire focused on motivations to volunteer (Q-10). The introductory questions of each survey were written specifically for the targeted

respondent segment. The beach tourist questionnaire probed the participation and importance of recreational activities (Q-1, Q-2). The volunteer survey asked about volunteer opportunities discovery (Q-2), volunteer affiliation (Q-6, Q-7), type of work (Q-8), and previous volunteer experience (Q-9). The beach questionnaire also captured satisfaction with travel motivations and destination attributes. A detailed description and rationale for each section of the questionnaires follows in the appropriate section below.

A combination of closed, partially close-ended, and open format questions were used to elicit the best quality responses. Most questions employed a closed or partially close-ended format in order to make the survey as fast and easy to complete as possible (Neuman, 2000). Closed questions were used for questions where the full range of response categories was well established. This included questions on ecotourism principles, previous visits, gender, age, and education. Partially closed questions were employed where answers apart from those provided by the fixed response categories were possible (Salant & Dillman, 1994). This option allowed respondents to write in their own response in an "other" category. Open questions were used to gather specific data in cases where the range of responses was uncertain and very broad. This included short answer questions on length of stay and nationality. In addition to these, an open question at the end of the survey allowed respondents to share any additional comments.

Due to the significant presence of German speaking tourists in Khao Lak, the beach tourist questionnaire was translated into German. Although most Germans speak English as a second language, a translated questionnaire was much appreciated by German speakers and increased their ease of completion. A German scuba diving instructor working in the area and well versed in English completed the translation. An Austrian acquaintance verified the quality of the writing and corrected a few small errors in the translated document. Other European nationalities were much smaller in number and proficient in English, making additional translations unnecessary. The working language of the volunteer groups was English, so no translation of this questionnaire was needed.

A pre-test of the questionnaires was conducted to verify that all of the content was relevant and easy to understand. Pre-test respondents noted the time required to complete the survey. The elapsed time of 10-15 minutes was deemed satisfactory and helped to ensure that survey completion was not threatened by respondent fatigue. A trial of 24 questionnaires, 12 each for resort tourists and volunteers was conducted under conditions similar to those planned for the main study. In response to the pre-test, several questions were removed and others were edited.

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaire design- Beach resort tourists**

The beach resort questionnaire sought to learn more about tourist experiences in Khao Lak. The survey was composed of 19 questions divided into 5 sections. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on activity participation, motivation, and

trip satisfaction as well as information on trip characteristics, ecotourism values, and demographics.

**Section 1: Participation in recreational activities.** The first section of the survey identified the recreational activities that tourists participated in, or planned to participate in (Q-1). A complete list of recreational activities relevant to the Khao Lak area was compiled through examination of previous questionnaires applied in a coastal Thai context as well as familiarity with the site (eg. Topelko, 2007). A follow up question ranked the two activities that tourists were most interested in (Q-2). The goal of this section was to measure participation in key ecotourism activities such as hiking and scuba diving. From the respondents' point of view, this section is interesting and easy to complete.

**Section 2: Tourist motivation and satisfaction.** This section investigated travel motivations and more specifically, why visitors chose to visit Khao Lak. It followed with measures of how satisfied tourists were with their reasons for visiting Khao Lak. A list of push and pull factors was compiled through a review of travel motivation studies by Turnbull & Uysal (1995), Jang and Cai (2002), Yoon & Uysal (2005) and Jang & Wu (2006). Push factors are defined as internal drivers that foster a desire to travel, while pull factors are external attributes of the destination. Push factors, including psychological and socio-cultural motives, were placed in Q-3. Pull factors, including environmental and managerial motives, were organized into Q-6. Respondents were asked to score the importance each motive using a 5-point Likert

scale from “not at all important” to “extremely important”. Q-4 and Q-7 are ranking questions, where the respondent lists their top 3 most important push and pull reasons for visiting Khao Lak. Ranking questions require respondents to review all of the possible choices and make an ordered selection. Thus, they necessitate closer critical examination by the respondent. In cases where all motivations are scored as equally important on the Likert scale, a ranking question helps to separate those items that are most important.

Respondents were then asked about their satisfaction in response to the motivational push and pull factors (Q-5, Q-8). A 5-point Likert satisfaction scale from “very poor” to “very good” was used. A “not applicable” answer was also provided on account of motives such as ‘scuba diving to offshore islands’ and ‘to volunteer with tsunami recovery’ because they would be not at all relevant to some respondents. Exploring travel motivation is integral for understanding destination choice and tourist satisfactions. It may also guide future tourism management and predict short term tourism trends (Cha et al., 1995; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Yuan & McDonald, 1990).

**Section 3: Trip characteristics.** The purpose of this section was to learn more about tourist travel to Khao Lak. Open-ended questions were used to query the length of stay in Khao Lak and in Thailand, specified in number of days. Comparison between the two was designed to reveal the importance of Khao Lak as a holiday destination. This could differentiate between tourists that chose Khao Lak as a singular holiday destination versus those that used Khao Lak as a one or two day stopover on their

way to other sites. An open question format was easy to complete and captured an exact figure.

The number of previous visits to Khao Lak was included to further inform tourism dynamics in Khao Lak. In the pilot run of the study, several respondents commented that they had previously visited Khao Lak for several years in a row. Others remarked on how the area had changed before and after the tsunami. Therefore, it was useful to identify tourists visiting Khao Lak for the first time in February-March 2006, little more than one year after the tsunami, from those that had visited Khao Lak at some time before the tsunami.

**Section 4: Ecotourism principles.** The fourth section was constructed as a tool to measure the importance of key ecotourism principles among tourists. In the literature, three main dimensions define ecotourism as (1) nature-based, (2) educational and (3) sustainably managed (Fennell, 1999; Blamey, 2001; Stone & Wall, 2004; Carrier & Macleod, 2005). Sixteen items were developed to thoroughly represent elements of each dimension. These items were derived from a review of previous ecotourism studies in a developing country context (Young, 1999b; Foucat, 2002; Shelhas et al., 2002; Stem et al., 2003; Stone & Wall, 2004). Respondents were asked to rate each item on a 5-point Likert scale from 'not at all important' to 'extremely important'. This importance scale was designed to measure how strongly tourists relate to diverse elements tied to ecotourism. This section was titled "Your

Style of Traveling” so that positive connotations of the term ‘ecotourism’ would not skew the results.

**Section 5: Tourist demographics.** The final section captures characteristics to profile the study sample. Data on gender, age, education, and travel group was collected since these often mark significant differences in motivations and perceptions of importance (Cha et al., 1995; Turnbull & Uysal, 1995; Jang & Cai, 2002). The final demographic factor of nationality was clarified in the questionnaire to mean ‘country of residence’. The composition of Khao Lak’s tourist market was of considerable interest to the overall study. Several studies have demonstrated that tourists of different nationalities have significantly different trip motivations and satisfactions (Yuan & McDonald, 1990). A final open-ended question was designed to capture any additional comments that respondents wished to share.

### **3.4.2 Questionnaire design- volunteer tourists**

A second questionnaire was designed for volunteers engaged in post-tsunami rebuilding projects. It was comprised of 18 questions, divided into 5 sections. The sections were structured to collect data on trip characteristics, volunteering characteristics, volunteer motivations, ecotourism values, and demographics.

**Section 1: Volunteer Trip Characteristics.** The first section begins by investigating whether volunteering is the primary motivation of the trip. Volunteering as the main purpose of a trip versus volunteering as a small component of a trip was important for

understanding subsequent answers regarding trip characteristics and motivations. The second question of how individuals learned of such volunteering opportunities in Khao Lak was created to investigate whether participation was planned ahead of time or discovered by chance on site. It was also designed to explore independent versus interpersonal ways that drew people to volunteer in Khao Lak. Additional questions on the length of term volunteering, length of trip in total, and previous visits to Khao Lak were similar to those in the beach tourist questionnaire.

**Section 2: Volunteer characteristics.** The next section gathered information specific to each volunteer's assignment in Khao Lak. The first question differentiated those who traveled to Khao Lak independently from those that arrived with an organization or group. A follow up question asked volunteers to specify the organization that they were working with. Identification of volunteers working with religious versus non-religious organizations was important to distinguish in the questionnaire. It was also observed early on that volunteers affiliated with religious organizations usually arrived in groups from their home country. In contrast, volunteers with non-religious organizations usually made their own arrangements and traveled independently to the study site.

**Section 3: Volunteer Motivations.** The third section evaluated reasons for volunteering based on Clary and others (1996, 1998) Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI). The VFI is a rigorously tested instrument that has been used as a theoretical foundation for many subsequent studies on volunteer motivations (Houle et al., 2005;

Kemmelmeier, Jambor, & Letner, 2006; Taylor & Pancer, 2007; Finkelstein & Brannick, 2007). Volunteer motivations discussed by Regehr (2005) and Stoddard & Rogerson (2004) in an international context fit well within the VFI. Twenty out of the 30 scale items in the VFI were selected to represent the protective, values, career, social, understanding, and enhancement motivational dimensions of volunteering. The items that best fit the context of international volunteer tourism and the study site of Khao Lak were chosen. Those that seemed repetitive or irrelevant were not used.

**Section 4 & 5: Ecotourism values and volunteer demographics.** Sections 4 and 5 in the volunteer questionnaire are identical to those in the beach tourist questionnaire. Refer to the appropriate sections above.

### **3.5 Sampling Strategy**

Both questionnaires were administered in person so that the survey could be explained to each potential participant. In person contact and immediate collection of the questionnaire after completion were effective in maximizing the response rate. Tourists were defined as non-Thai adults on a holiday, and excluded ex-patriots or those working in Khao Lak. Volunteers were defined as non-Thai adults working in organized and unpaid projects in the Khao Lak area.

This beach tourist questionnaire study was administered over a 6 week period in February and March, 2006. The questionnaire was administered at two main beaches, Khai Nang and Bang Niang. The beaches were visited on alternate days between the

peak use times of 2 pm. and sunset at about 6 pm. Beaches are public spaces that are visited by nearly all tourists to Khao Lak and offered the best opportunity to capture a representative sample. One person from each couple or group on the beach was approached and asked to fill in a questionnaire in either German or English.

Individuals were approached regardless of their age, gender or ethnicity.

Respondents were given approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire before it was picked up. The response rate was very positive, approximately 85% of those approached agreed to participate in the study.

The volunteer questionnaire was administered over 4 weeks in March 2006. Non-governmental organizations that recruited short-term service workers were identified through informal interviews with volunteer tourists. Additional NGOs were sourced through snowball sampling, which was an effective method since many organizations worked closely with others in overlapping or parallel projects. Snowball sampling was especially effective in contacting organizations that did not have a prominent office space in town. The personnel coordinator for each NGO was approached for permission to administer questionnaires to its volunteers. Questionnaires were administered in person at volunteer work sites during the midday lunch break. Cooperation with NGO managers resulted in a perfect response rate among volunteers.

### 3.6 Challenges and Limitations

There were several challenges and limitations to the survey design and sampling strategy. The most significant challenge was the low volume of tourists visiting Khao Lak's beaches. While many tourists travel to Khao Lak for live-aboard diving trips, these visitors generally do not spend time relaxing on the beach. Most often, registered divers use Khao Lak as a launching point for their live-aboard trip, and may not spend additional time in the area participating in other recreational activities.

Despite administering the survey during the peak tourist months of February and March 2006, tourist numbers in Khao Lak were very low compared to pre-tsunami visitation levels. Although every effort was made to collect as many surveys as possible, the quantity of surveys collected was limited by several factors. First, the rate of tourist turnover was very low, thus the majority of tourists encountered each day had already been approached and completed the questionnaire. Secondly, many beachfront hotels have private demarcated areas with lounge chairs and swimming pools for their guests. These private lounging areas were very popular among hotel guests. While access to a few of these private hotel properties was possible, hotel guests in these private zones were far less accessible and receptive to participating in the survey. A third limitation was that many of those that frequented the beach were long-term employees at scuba diving shops or ex-patriots that were not suitable respondents for the study. A fourth challenge was that tourists could not be surveyed while engaged in common activities such as swimming, walking along the beach, or sleeping. Fortunately, subsequent passes along the same beach usually provided

additional opportunities to intercept tourists. The final challenge was the limited duration of the tourism season in Southern Thailand. The tourism season stretches from December to April. However, tourist levels in Khao Lak started to decline by mid-March and were extremely low by the beginning of April. This limited the duration of survey collection. Overall, limiting factors led to a more opportunistic sampling approach.

Language and communication were rarely a challenge in survey administration. The beach resort questionnaire was written in English and translated into German to respond to the large presence of German speaking tourists in Khao Lak. There were only two instances of language barriers that prevented the completion of the questionnaire. European tourists, including Germans, were generally able to understand my basic explanation of the questionnaire and the study purpose. Any confusion was generally resolved once the respondent read the title and cover page of the questionnaire.

## **Chapter 4- Descriptive Results**

### **4.1. Introduction**

A final sample of 203 usable beach tourist questionnaires and 133 volunteer tourist questionnaires were collected from the Khao Lak area. This chapter focuses on descriptive results of activities, trip length, demographics, and other contextual survey questions for each respective sample. Chapter 5 gives a brief overview of motivations' data for each sample. Finally, Chapter 6 presents factor analysis and segmentation analysis of ecotourism principles importance data.

### **4.2 Visitor characteristics**

#### **4.2.1 Beach tourist data- descriptive results**

The first question in the beach tourist questionnaire relates to participation in various recreational activities. This introductory question initiates a broader investigation of tourist experiences in Khao Lak. The first question is straightforward and interesting to complete in order to capture the respondent's attention and ease him or her into the flow of the questionnaire. From a full list of recreational activities, tourists were asked to indicate those that they have participated in, or plan to participate in, while staying in Khao Lak.

A majority of respondents spend time on the beach suntanning (84.7%) and swimming (72.9%). Khao Lak is a well-known launching point for scuba diving (48.3%) and snorkeling trips (45.8%). Just under half of all tourists participate in each of these two activities. Considerably fewer visitors participate in the remaining activities of hiking/walking (29.6%), boating (21.7%), elephant trekking (12.8%), birdwatching or nature study (10.8%), river rafting (6.4%), and camping (1.0%).

**Table 4.1 Participation by recreational activity (BQ-1)\***

Activity	Frequency (n)	Response (%)
Beach suntanning	172	84.7
Swimming	148	72.9
Scuba diving	98	48.3
Snorkeling	93	45.8
Hiking/walking	60	29.6
Boating	44	21.7
Elephant trekking	26	12.8
Birdwatching or nature study	22	10.8
River rafting	13	6.4
Camping	2	1.0
Other	46	22.7

n= 195 (8 cases missing)

Figure 4.1 illustrates the importance of beach suntanning and scuba diving among tourists to Khao Lak. One third of respondents ranked beach suntanning as their most important activity, with an additional 30% ranking it as their second most important

activity. Scuba diving was ranked as the top activity by 31.5% of the sample, but only 8.9% indicated that it was their second most important activity. Although many visitors participate in swimming, snorkeling, and walking, these activities are of lesser importance to tourists. River rafting, boating, birdwatching, elephant trekking, and camping are rarely ranked as important activities among tourists.

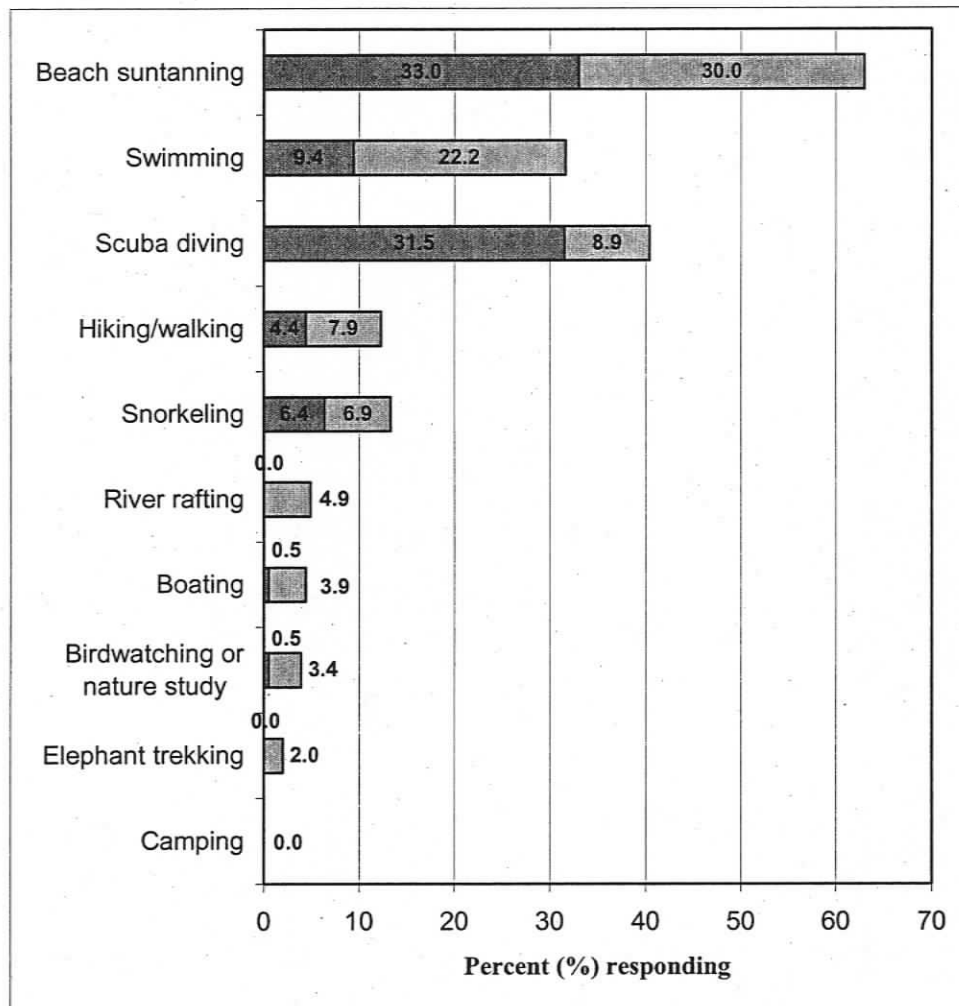


Figure 4.1 - Importance of recreational activities (BQ-1\*)

\* BQ and VQ denote questions in the beach tourist questionnaire and volunteer questionnaire respectively

Most tourists participate in several activities during their stay in Khao Lak. Slightly over half of the sample (55.4%) indicated that they participate in 3 or 4 activities. A quarter (25.1%) responded that they participate in 5 or more. Tourists active in only 1 or 2 activities make up the smallest proportion of the sample at 19.5%.

**Table 4.2 Participation by number of activities (BQ-1)**

Quantity	Frequency (n)	Response (%)
1 to 2 activities	38	19.5
3 to 4 activities	108	55.4
5 or more activities	49	25.1

n= 195 (8 cases missing)

#### 4.2.2 Volunteer tourist data- descriptive results

The volunteer questionnaire begins with a series of questions specific to the volunteer experience. The survey starts by exploring the importance of volunteering as a motivation to travel. The majority of respondents, 67.2%, stated that volunteering was the main reason for their trip. Twenty-two percent (22.1%) indicated that it was a planned component of their trip, while 10.7% decided to volunteer more spontaneously as an unplanned activity.

**Table 4.3 Importance of volunteering as a reason for travel (VQ-1)**

Response	Frequency (n)	Response (%)
Main reason for trip	88	67.2
Planned activity of trip	29	22.1
Unplanned activity of trip	14	10.7

n= 131 (2 cases missing)

Figure 4.2 displays the various ways that respondents learned of volunteering opportunities in Khao Lak. The most common methods were through membership with a church or non-governmental organization (29.4%) and via the internet (23.8%). Word of mouth through friends/relatives (15.9%) or by strangers (8.7%) was also common. Unique individual responses such as “through a sign on the bus” or “through my university” were collected in the ‘Other’ category. Less common methods of discovering volunteering opportunities include by chance on site (4.8%), the media (3.2%), or a previous visit (2.4%).

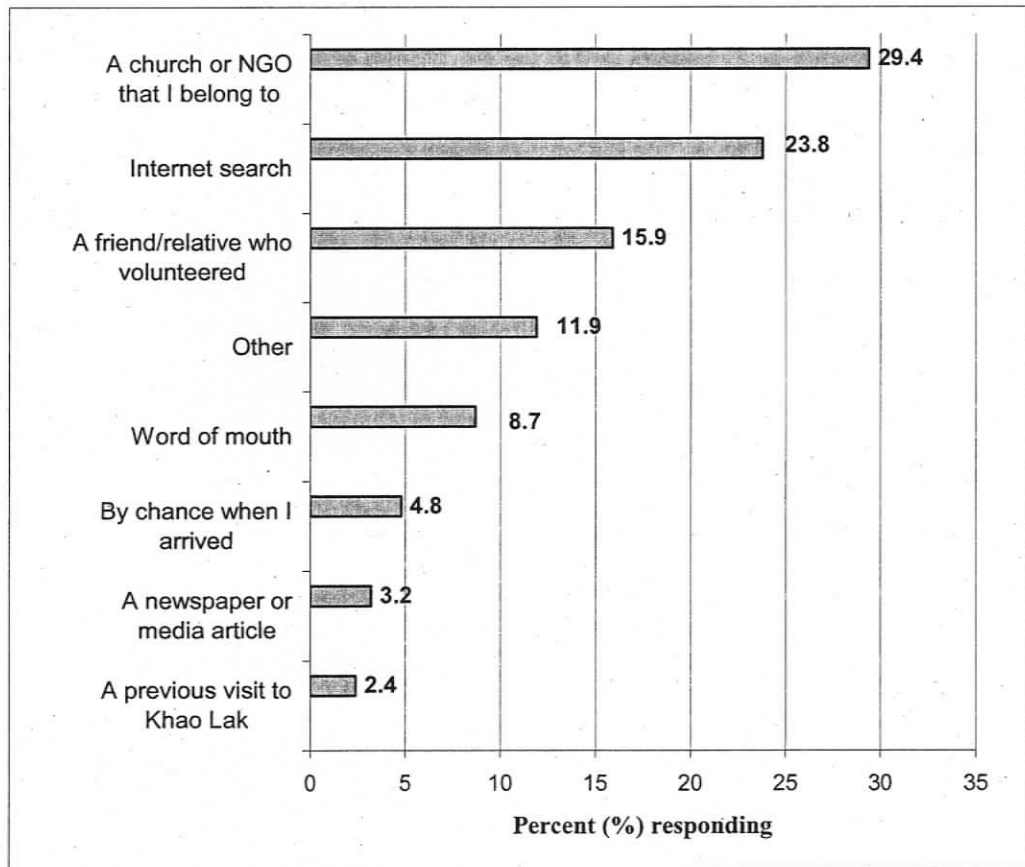


Figure 4.2 - Discovery of volunteering opportunities in Khao Lak (VQ-2)

Volunteering tasks can be divided into construction, education, and administration. Some volunteers switch projects or participate in more than one project, resulting in multiple responses. The most common volunteer job (69.9%) is house construction. Other types of construction include boat building (10.5%) and furniture making (9.0%). Education includes teaching English (20.3%) or Arts (2.3%). Environmental restoration (4.5%) is also focused on education since removal of debris from beaches and villages had already been completed. Six respondents (4.5%) were involved with administration and coordination of volunteer projects. 'Other' volunteer tasks included project development, fund-raising, community sports, marketing handicrafts, and operating a drop-in volunteer support centre.

**Table 4.4 Type of volunteer work (VQ-8)**

<b>Work activity</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Response (%)</b>
House construction	93	69.9
English teacher	27	20.3
Boat building	14	10.5
Furniture making	12	9.0
Environmental restoration	6	4.5
Administration	6	4.5
Community art projects	3	2.3
Other	15	11.3

n=133 (0 cases missing)

Tsunami relief and redevelopment organizations that use international volunteers can be divided into religious and secular organizations. Religious organizations are mainly affiliated with evangelical Christian mission organizations from the United States. Secular organizations include a collection of small NGOs founded in direct response to the tsunami by local Thais, ex-patriot survivors, or victim's families. Large international NGOs such as the United Nations, the Red Cross, and World Vision were not recruiting volunteers at the time of this study. Most volunteers (60%) were affiliated with secular NGOs, while 40% served religious organizations.

**Table 4.5 Type of tsunami relief organization (VQ7)**

Type	Frequency (n)	Response (%)
Non-governmental organization	75	60.0
Religious organization	50	40.0

n= 125 (8 cases missing)

#### **4.2.3 Beach and volunteer data- comparative descriptive results**

Several questions related to trip characteristics and demographics were included in both questionnaires. These common variables present opportunities for comparison between the samples.

The length of time that visitors stay in Khao Lak varies considerably. Some tourists use Khao Lak as a one-day stopover on route to scuba diving excursions in the Similian Islands, while others spend the entire European winter season on the same stretch of beach. This being said, most beach tourists spend less than 2 weeks in Khao Lak, with the largest segment of these (36.9%) staying 4 to 7 days. A

substantial proportion of tourists (21.2%) extend their stay to 8 to 14 days. In comparison, volunteers must stay in Khao Lak for at least one week, which is the minimum volunteer commitment set by tsunami relief organizations. Some NGOs, such as the Tsunami Volunteer Center, require that volunteers commit to at least 2 weeks of work. All of the respondents volunteering for '2 weeks or less' (35.2%) stayed for 7 to 14 days. Commitments of 2 weeks to a month, and 1 to 3 months, make up 19.7% and 17.2% of the sample respectively. Just over a quarter (27.9%) of respondents have volunteered or plan to volunteer for more than 3 months.

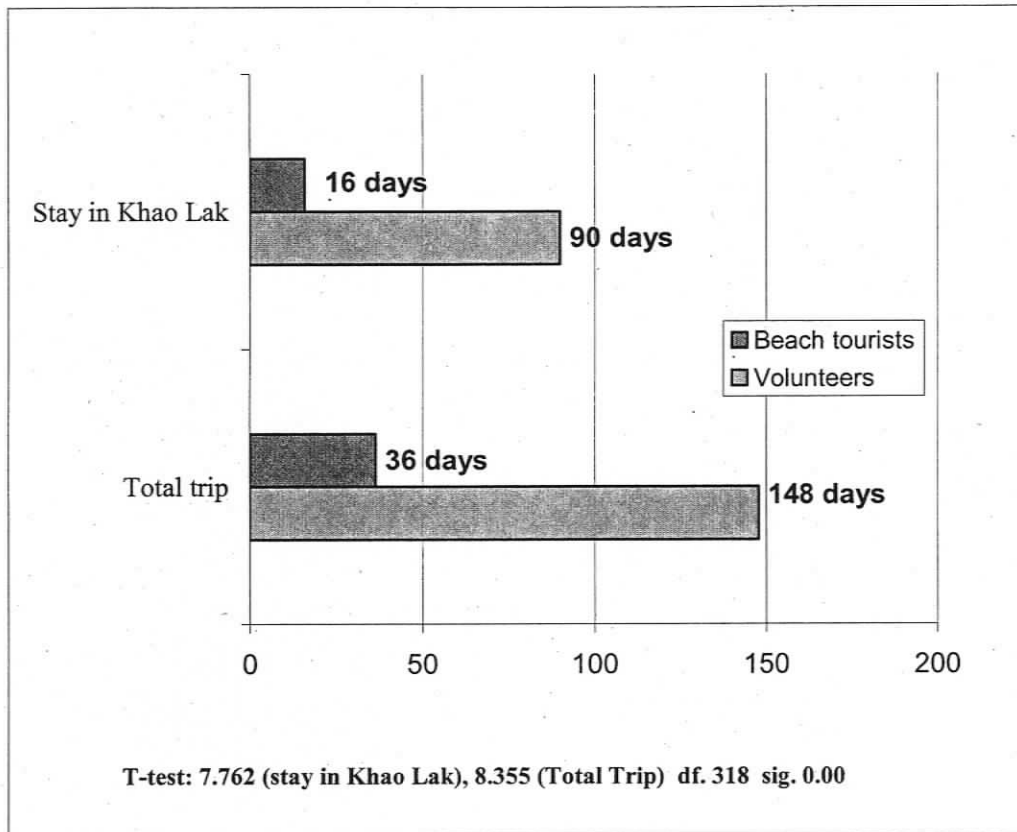
**Table 4.6 Length of stay in Khao Lak**

<b>Term:</b>	<b>Beach (%)</b>	<b>Volunteers (%)</b>
1-7 days	57.1	6.6
8-14 days	21.2	28.7
15-30 days	14.6	19.7
31-90 days	4.5	17.2
more than 91 days	2.5	27.9

Chi square 106.55, df. 4, sig. 0.00

The average length of stay in Khao Lak for beach tourists is 16 days and the average stay of volunteers in Khao Lak is 90 days. A pattern of longer stays among volunteers is reflected in their average total trip length. The average trip length of volunteers is 148 days, versus 36 days for beach tourists. Averages provide an interesting comparison between samples, but the figures themselves should be viewed critically. A small group of visitors stay in Khao Lak for several months at a time, inflating the average trip length. In reality, most beach tourists stay in Khao Lak for no more than a week, and 16 days would be a comparatively long residency. An

'average' volunteer work term is also somewhat misleading given that they vary enormously. A large segment of volunteers stay for 14 days or less, while others stay for more than one year. The figure of 90 days is an accurate average, but it is not indicative of a 'typical' length of stay.



**Figure 4.3- Average trip length of beach and volunteer tourists**

The proportion of time that tourists spend in Khao Lak versus other destinations offers additional insight into trip dynamics. This was calculated by dividing the length of stay in Khao Lak with the total trip length for each respondent. A large segment of beach tourists stay in Khao Lak as a short stopover. Forty-two percent of beach tourists spend no more than a quarter of their total trip in Khao Lak versus 14.9% of volunteers. Conversely, 36.4% of volunteers spend more than three quarters of their trip in the area, compared to 22.5% of beach tourists.

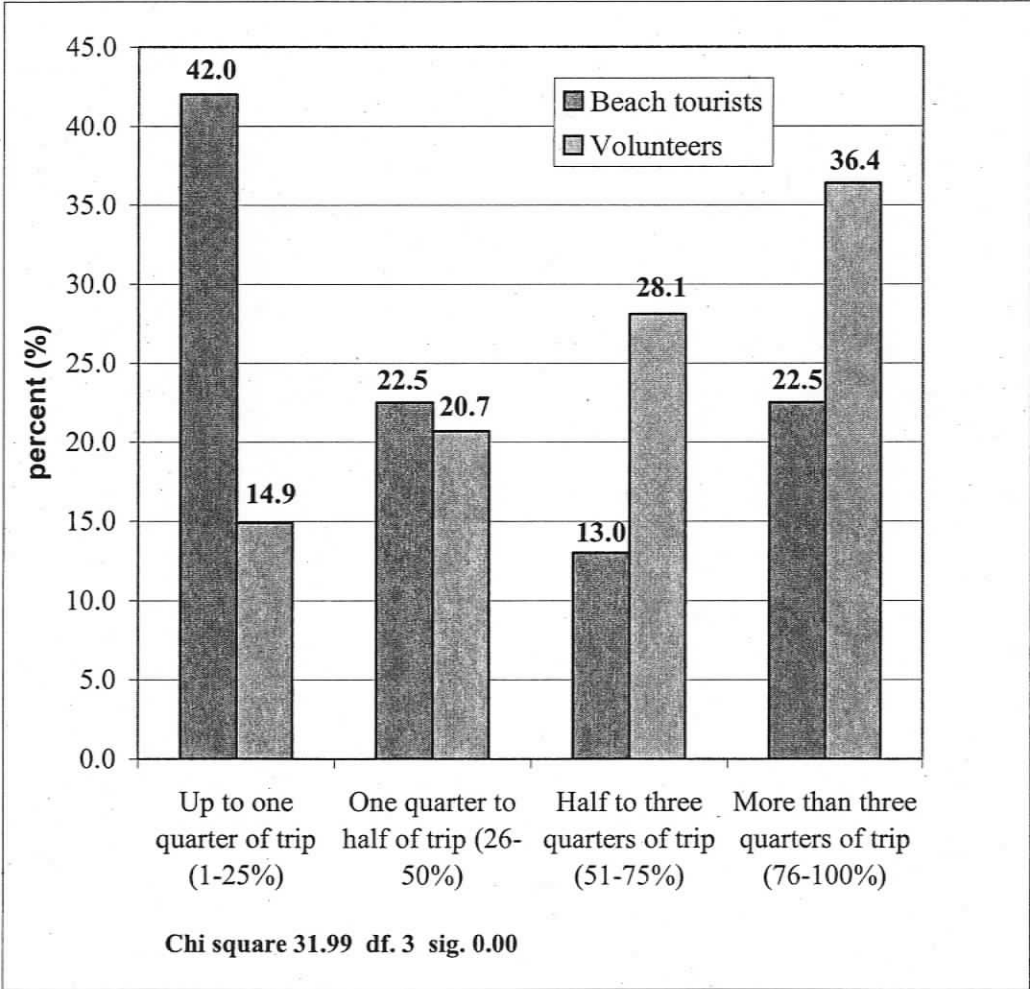


Figure 4.4 - Proportion of total trip spent in Khao Lak

Most respondents were visiting Khao Lak for the first time in 2006, and did not experience the area before the tsunami. However, a higher proportion of volunteers (86.3%) are first time visitors versus 67.2% of beach tourists. Nearly a quarter of beach tourists (24.9%) are returning to Khao Lak after 1 to 5 previous visits, and 8.0% have extensive knowledge of the area with more than 6 previous visits. Only 13.8% of volunteers had visited Khao Lak before through a previous visit.

**Table 4.7 Number of previous visits to Khao Lak**

Previous visits	Response (%)	
	Beach tourists	Volunteers
First visit	67.2	86.3
1-5 previous visits	24.9	13.0
6-10 previous visits	6.0	0.8
More than 10 previous visits	2.0	0

Chi square 17.53, df. 3, sig.0.00

Several demographic characteristics were collected. The division of males and females was approximately even in both samples. Females were slightly over represented in the beach tourist sample.

**Table 4.8 Gender of beach and volunteer tourists**

Gender	Response (%)	
	Beach tourists	Volunteers
Female	57.6	50.8
Male	42.4	49.2

Chi-square 1.47, df.1, sig. 1.0

Examining visitors' age, the largest grouping of volunteers (44.7%) is 25 years or under. In comparison, only 20.3% of beach tourists are in this youngest age category. Beach tourists are more heavily represented in the older age categories of 26-35, 36-45, and 46-55. The samples have similar proportions of older visitors over 56 years old.

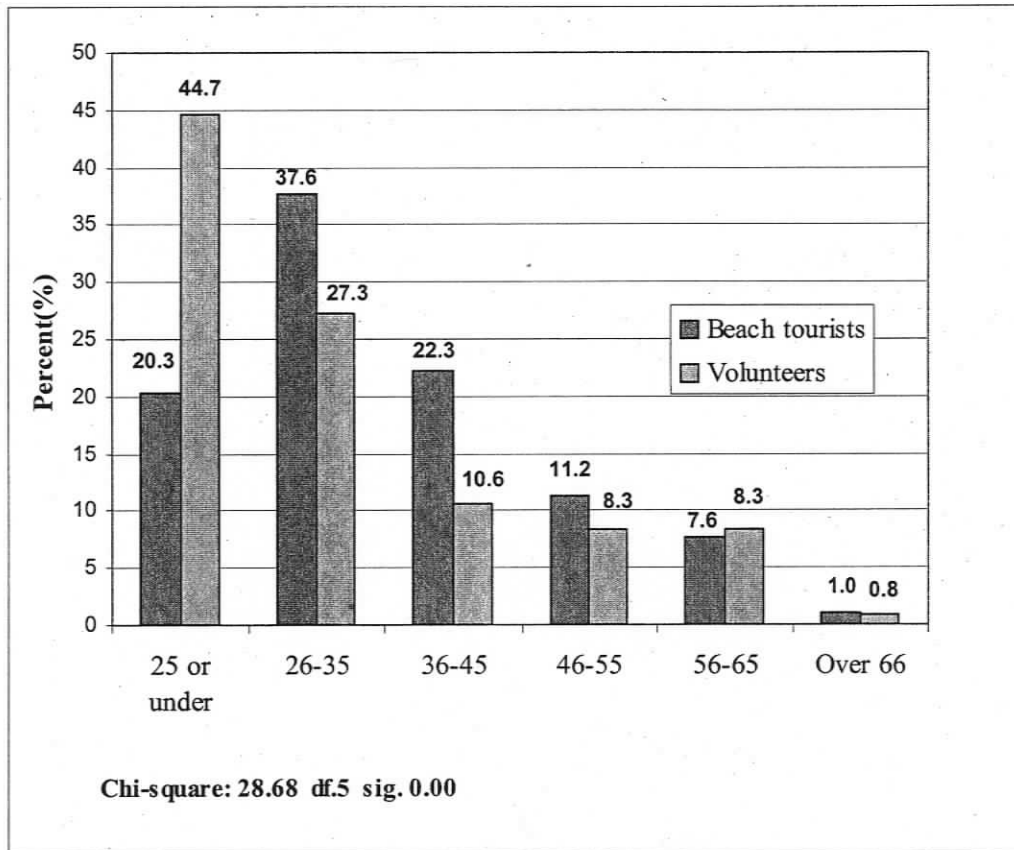


Figure 4.5 - Age distribution of beach and volunteer tourists

Volunteers are mostly formally educated with university degrees. Over half of volunteers (55.3%) have completed a college or university program, and 10.6% have Masters or Doctorate degree. While a similar percentage of beach tourists (9.3%) have an advanced academic degree, only a quarter (25.4%) have a university degree. Beach tourists have greater representation among lower educational levels including trades, secondary school, and primary school.

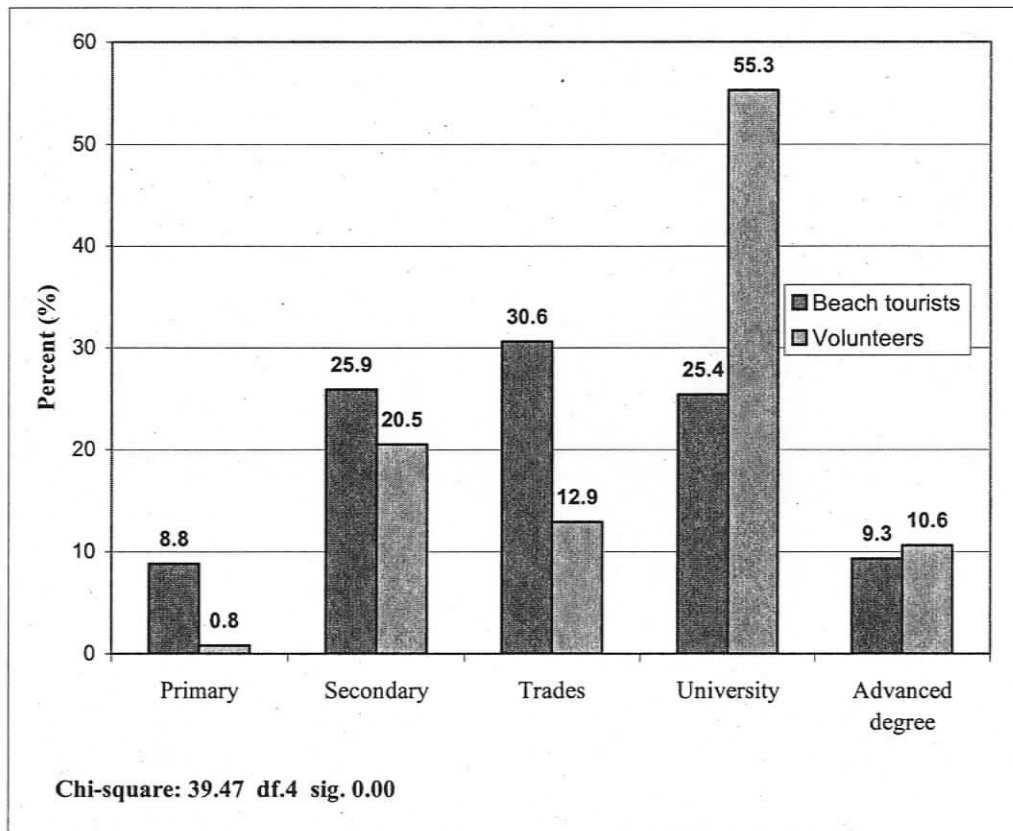
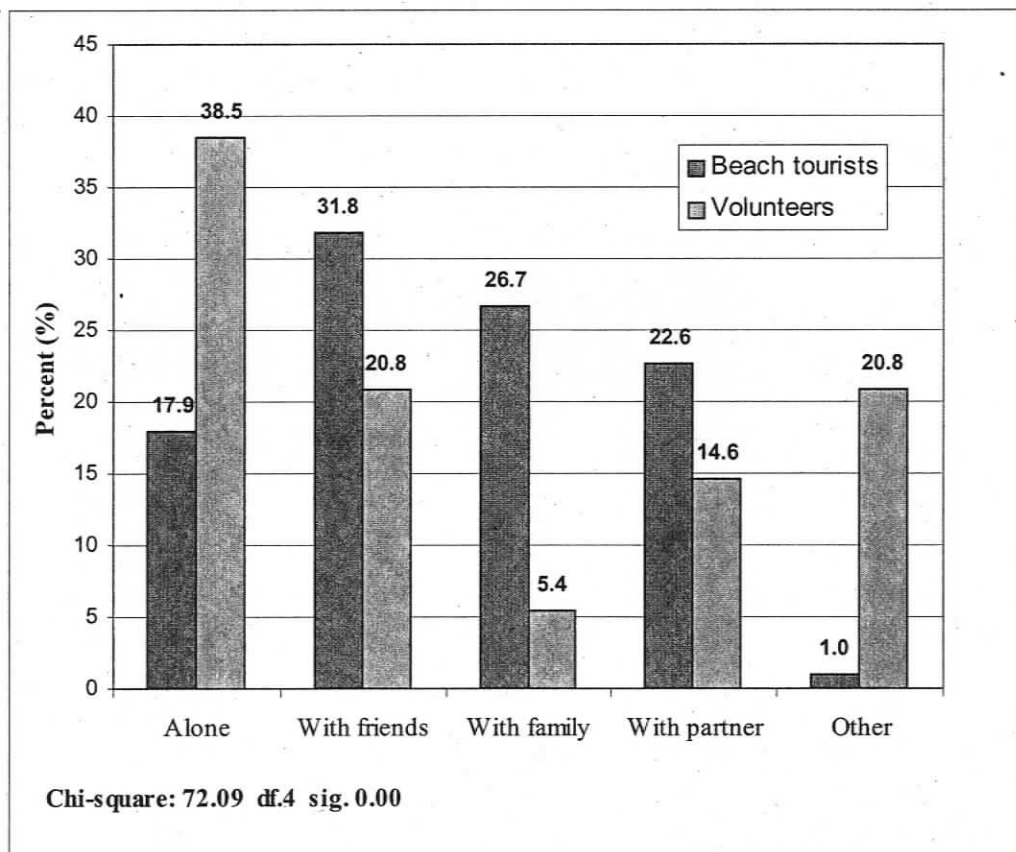


Figure 4.6 - Education level attained by beach and volunteer tourists

Volunteer tourists are more likely to travel alone compared to beach tourists- 37.7% of volunteers traveled to Khao Lak alone compared to 16.9% of beach tourists.

Beach tourists travel more often with family members, a partner, or friends than volunteers. Numerous volunteers (20.8%) responded that they traveled to Khao Lak with members of a common religious organization. These volunteer work parties gathered in Bangkok, and then traveled to Khao Lak as a group. This accounts for the large “Other” response in the volunteer sample.



**Figure 4.7 - Travel group of beach and volunteer tourists**

There are radical differences in the breakdown of nationality between samples. Nearly half (46%) of all beach tourists are from a single country, Germany. An additional 10.5% are from the United Kingdom and 8.3% are from a collection of other European nations. A tiny fraction (2%) of beach tourists are from other countries in Asia, and 7% are from Canada or the United States. In contrast, the largest contingent of volunteers (40.9%) is from North America, followed by 25.8% from the United Kingdom. Only 3.8% are from Germany, 8.3% from other European nations, and 8.3% from Asia. While there are no surveyed beach tourists from Australia or New Zealand, 12.9% of volunteers are from these two nations.

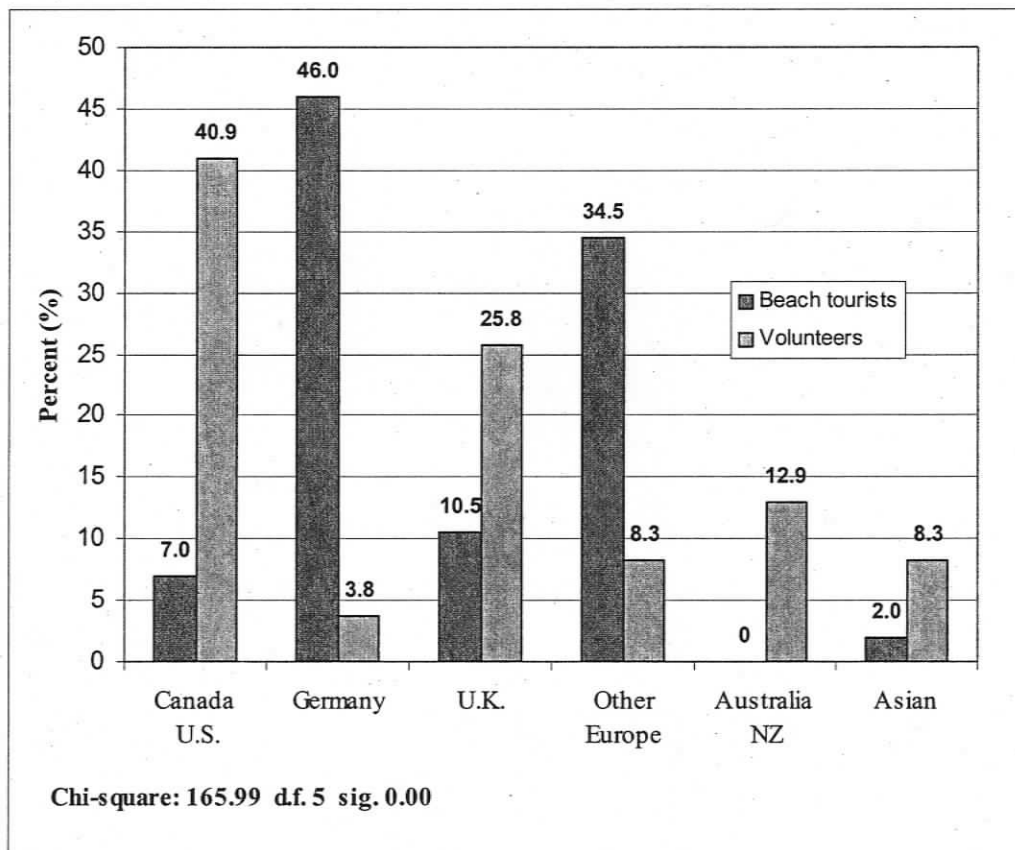


Figure 4.8 - Nationality of beach and volunteer tourists

### 4.3 Discussion of main findings

#### *Coastal and marine environments support the most important recreational activities for Khao Lak's resort tourists.*

Tourists are drawn to the sandy beaches and warm, clear waters of coastal destinations in tropical countries. Coastlines, including those in Thailand, face considerable pressure from both local populations and tourism development (Johnson & Leahy, 2004). In Khao Lak, hotels were built within meters of the high tide line, providing direct access to the beach and the sea. In ongoing reconstruction following the tsunami, hotels are being built again on the exact same sites. Despite the risks of building so close to the water, these properties remain the most lucrative real estate for tourism. Intense coastal development serves high tourist demands for sea, sand and sun tourism, which provide multiple recreational opportunities in the land-sea interface (Aguilo, Alegre, & Sard, 2005).

The most common recreational activities among tourists in Khao Lak are the traditional resort activities of sunbathing and swimming. Neither of these activities requires specialized equipment or planning, since there is easy and free access to multiple beaches in the area. Marine-based recreational activities are also important to visitors. Prior to the tsunami, Khao Lak was growing as a popular launching point for live-aboard snorkeling and scuba diving trips to the Similian islands, 60 kilometers offshore. One year after the tsunami, nearly half of the tourists surveyed participated in scuba diving and/or snorkeling. The quality of snorkeling and diving sites on the mainland coast is extremely poor, so most tourists participating in these

activities do so through trips organized by travel agencies to offshore sites. The high proportion (31.5%) of beach tourists to rank scuba diving as their most important activity suggests that Khao Lak remains an important dive destination, despite its reputation as a site of death and destruction following the tsunami.

Inland activities such as elephant trekking, birdwatching, and river rafting are offered at times by travel agencies when there is sufficient demand. Although the sites are located nearby, few tourists participate in these activities. Opportunities for independent nature study, hiking, and camping are also offered in Khao Lak-Lum Ru National Park, which is easily accessible on the main highway only 3 kilometers from the town of Khao Lak. The availability of nature-based sites and activities suggests that land-based ecotourism could be further developed and marketed in the Khao Lak area.

*Volunteering as a form of tourism is largely a planned activity.*

Most surveyed volunteer tourists plan their service work placement prior to leaving home. An overwhelming majority stated that volunteering was either the main reason of their trip (67%) or a planned component of their trip (22%). This suggests that many volunteer tourists begin their journey with a volunteer participation mind-set and include this activity as a strong motivation for their trip. It also implies awareness and demand for volunteering opportunities in combination with travel. Diversification of tourism to cater to special interests marks a shift to 'new' alternative forms of tourism. Mowforth and Munt (1998) argue that 'new' tourism

has emerged in response to broader changes in post-modern society that demand more individual, flexible, authentic, and responsible travel.

Examination of the ways that tourists found volunteering opportunities in Khao Lak support the idea that they planned to engage in this activity before leaving home.

Social networks were the most important source of information leading people to join work projects. These included membership in a church or NGO directly involved in sending groups to Khao Lak as well as personal connections through a friend or relative who volunteered in the past. A more independent approach through web-based searches also suggests premeditated and persistent investigation. These methods contrast with a small proportion of respondents that learned of volunteering through word of mouth, most likely after they started traveling in Thailand, or by chance as they were passing through Khao Lak. These latter methods reflect a more spontaneous approach.

***The volunteer sample is made up of both 'volunteer-minded' and 'vacation-minded' tourists.***

Although respondents were asked if volunteering was 'the main purpose' of their trip, this question cannot reliably differentiate 'volunteer-minded' from 'vacation-minded' tourists. Instead, a more useful indicator may be the proportion of total holiday time devoted to volunteering. While vacation-minded tourists often spend an optional afternoon volunteering, volunteer-minded tourists make this activity the central focus of their trip. This generally entails spending all or nearly all of one's time on

voluntary projects. Among respondents, 30.6% (n=37) spent their entire trip volunteering in Khao Lak.

Although individuals who spend their entire trip volunteering can be classified definitively as 'volunteer-minded', there is no established threshold to categorize those who do not devote all of their time to volunteering. Instead, Brown & Lehto (2005) suggest their volunteer dichotomy is distinguished by qualitative differences in 'mind-set'. Despite resorting to an imperfect quantitative indicator, it is still clear that many of the survey respondents cannot be considered volunteer-minded since 15% of them spend less than a quarter of their total trip volunteering. While it is fair to conclude that volunteer and vacation-minded tourists co-exist in Khao Lak, it is not possible to determine the proportion that fit into each category. To date, studies have examined case studies of either volunteer-minded tourists or vacation-minded tourists, with far less attention focused on the latter. No study has attempted to look at the two types of volunteer tourist simultaneously.

***Volunteer tasks have extended beyond those directly related to post-tsunami recovery.***

One year after the tsunami, many volunteers are assigned to tasks that relate indirectly or not at all to tsunami recovery. While English teachers were not present in Khao Lak prior to the tsunami, several dozen volunteers worked in local elementary and middle schools in February and March of 2006. Several volunteers are also used on a continuous basis to deliver children's after school programs at a new community center near Bang Niang. Meanwhile, environmental restoration projects have shifted

their focus from cleaning debris from beaches to Thai environmental education programs on waste management (TVC, 2007).

By January 2006, the Pakarang boatyard had rebuilt and delivered new longtail boats to local fishermen that had lost their equipment. At the time of this study, extra boats were being built for the local fishing fleet as well as for those who wanted to expand their work into tourism or other recreational ventures. In addition to building boats, an innovative project was initiated by the Tsunami Volunteer Center to reuse wood from battered and broken boats washed ashore by the tsunami. A workshop dubbed "Thalkea" uses volunteers to build furniture that is then sold to tourists and local businesses.

While many of these projects are laudable in their goals, they demonstrate that basic disaster recovery was largely completed by the one-year anniversary of the tsunami. Some house construction was still in progress by April of 2006. However, as these latter projects were completed, new volunteer were being assigned work with children's programming and education.

***Christian mission groups and small, locally formed NGOs represent two main types of tsunami redevelopment organizations.***

There is a marked division in Khao Lak between volunteers with religious organizations versus those with secular NGOs. This phenomenon was observed and then confirmed through informal interviews with volunteers. Although it is not the

purpose of this study to analyze the different types of volunteers, it is interesting to note several differences between the two groups.

Volunteers with secular organizations can be characterized as 'independent', while religious volunteers tend to be organized as groups. Volunteers with Christian missionary groups are organized through a specific church or religious network, and arrive in Khao Lak as a unit. In contrast, volunteers with secular organization arrive alone or with other travelers wishing to volunteer. Religious volunteers tend to have a mandated stay, whether it is a 2-week building blitz or a year long mission assignment. Volunteers with organizations such as the Tsunami Volunteer Center often register without determining how long they will stay. Although volunteers with the TVC are only required to make a 2-week commitment, it is common for individuals to stay for several months.

***There is a great deal of variation in the length of time that visitors spend in Khao Lak. Volunteers spend a significantly longer period of time in the area compared to beach tourists.***

The length of time that visitors spend in Khao Lak ranges considerably. Among beach tourists, stays range from one day to 5 months, while among volunteers they range from 7 days to 2 years. On average, volunteers stay for significantly longer periods of time than beach tourists. Only 22% of beach tourists stay for longer than 2 weeks, versus 65% of volunteers. The highest echelon of volunteers working in administration and project management are required to commit for a minimum of 6 months to one year, depending on the organization. Volunteers tend to stay in

Khao Lak for extended periods of time, ranging from 2 weeks to more than one year. Broad (2003) also reported a huge variation in volunteer term commitment in her study of volunteer tourists at a Gibbon rehabilitation centre in Phuket. The economic impact of an ever-present army of volunteers was emphasized by both voluntary organizations and small businesses in town. Through weekly meetings, directors for the Tsunami Volunteer Center actively encouraged volunteers to patronize as many businesses as possible in an effort to redistribute economic benefits (TVC, pers. comm.). Restaurant and bar owners confirmed that a significant portion of their business depended on volunteers, due especially to depressed tourism levels through the 2005-2006 high season. In contrast, beach tourists often use services, such as restaurants and scooter rentals, provided within their resort complex. This makes them less likely to frequent independent businesses in town or along the beaches away from their hotel.

***The demographic and trip characteristics of post-tsunami volunteers in Khao Lak are similar to those of other volunteer tourism studies.***

Several researchers have examined the trip and demographic characteristics of volunteer tourists. Studies by Weiler and Richins (1997), Wearing (2001), Broad (2003), Galley & Clifton (2004), and Campbell & Smith (2005) of volunteer tourists found that the majority are young (under 30 years old), female, university educated and North American or European. Findings from this study concur that volunteer tourists are well educated and from affluent Western nations. Volunteers in Khao Lak are predominantly young, however there is representation among middle-aged

groups as well. Unlike previous research, this study found an equal balance of male and female volunteers.

The length of volunteer time commitment has also been examined by some studies. Broad (2003) found that volunteers stayed at a Gibbon rehabilitation project in Phuket for an average of 4 months, with a range of 3 weeks to 17 months. Campbell & Smith (2005) identified 2 volunteer roles in a sea turtle conservation project in Costa Rica, with research assistants (RA) committed to 3-4 months, and participant researchers (PR) committed to 1-3 weeks. They found RAs to be significantly younger than PRs, and attribute this to fewer time restrictions on young people compared to older individuals with full-time employment and family commitments. The difference in cost between RAs and PRs is an added factor, as PRs must pay 1360 USD per week for their trip. The in-country expenses of RAs are covered in exchange for a longer time commitment and added responsibility.

Post-tsunami volunteer tourists may be compared with those described in the previous paragraph. Like the RAs in Costa Rica, volunteers in Khao Lak must pay for their travel airfare, but they do not have to pay exorbitant fees on site to tsunami recovery NGOs. This contrasts with PRs or Earthwatch volunteers, who must pay more than 1000 USD per week for their excursions (Weiler and Richins, 1997). Volunteers stay in Khao Lak for an average of 3 months, however, like the Gibbon rehabilitation volunteers, this ranges greatly from several weeks to over one year. Those with evangelical groups or organizations such as Habitat for Humanity are limited to a short 2-week work term. However, volunteers with the Tsunami Volunteer Centre

(TVC) are often stretching out their total trip time in Southeast Asia as much as possible for as little money as possible. The lack of hefty fees enables many to stay for several months at a time on a small budget. A handful of TVC volunteers make long-term commitments of 6 months to one year for project administration and management positions.

***There are significant differences in the demographic characteristics of beach tourists and volunteers.***

Information about gender, age, education, travel group, and nationality was collected for both beach tourists and volunteers. Comparison between the samples shows that there are significant differences (sig.<0.05) in all demographic characteristics except gender. Among respondents, volunteers are significantly younger and better educated. High levels of university education coupled with a large segment of young volunteers suggest that many travel abroad soon after finishing their post-secondary education. A significantly greater proportion of volunteers travel alone compared to beach tourists. Volunteer opportunities for single, independent travelers are encouraged and facilitated through the Tsunami Volunteer Center (TVC). The TVC readily accepts news recruits, and continuously assigns them to various on-going projects.

Nationality offers the most striking demographic difference between samples. In total, 91% of beach tourists are European. Germans are by far the most populous group. This may reflect the ease of air travel between Europe and Southeast Asia for leisure holidays. Only 7% of beach tourists are from Canada or the United States,

where travel to Thai resorts is longer and more costly compared to competing locales in Mexico or the Caribbean. A paltry 2% of resort respondents are from other Asian nations, which is somewhat surprising given that 55% of Thailand's tourist arrivals are from elsewhere in Asia (TAT, 2006).

In contrast to the beach tourist sample, Canadians and Americans are the largest segment (41%) of volunteers. North Americans dominate and lead Evangelical Christian missions engaged in voluntary work throughout the area. Although Europeans make up 38% (n=50) of the volunteer sample, only 5 Germans were captured by the survey. Alternatively, there is a very strong contingent of volunteers from the United Kingdom. Their presence was especially apparent at the TVC during survey data collection. There, British citizens filled four of 6 project management positions and 4 of the 5 administrative posts held by non-Thais at the time of the study. While not a single beach tourist from Australia or New Zealand was captured in the survey, 13% of volunteers are from these nations. A handful of volunteers from Malaysia and Singapore are the only Asian countries represented among the volunteers.

## **Chapter 5- Motivations and satisfactions of tourists**

The experiences of international visitors to Khao Lak were examined through their motivations and satisfactions. Visitor motivations drive satisfaction levels, and influences choices regarding travel destination and holiday activities. A solid understanding of motivations can also guide the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities to best cater to tourist markets. The motivations of beach tourists and volunteer tourists were examined separately. First, the importance and satisfaction of motivations among beach tourists is described. The challenge of presenting this data visually through importance-performance analysis (IPA) grids and diagonal models is discussed. The motivations of volunteer tourists are focused more specifically on motivations for volunteering, as conceptualized by Clary and others (1998). The importance of these motivations among Khao Lak volunteers is compared with other studies of volunteer tourist motivations.

### **5.1 Travel motivations**

Travel motivations are commonly divided into push and pull factors. Push motivations are linked to inner emotional drivers that feed a desire to travel. In contrast, pull motivations are linked to the concrete physical attributes of a place (Goosens, 2000). In the questionnaire design, push travel motivations related to social and psychological motivations were organized into Q-3 and Q-5. Pull travel motivations related to the natural environment and local infrastructure were collected in Q-6 and Q-8. Despite this division of push and pull factors, proper designation of

certain motivational items is not self-evident. Items such as “to see or support tsunami recovery” and “to volunteer in tsunami rebuilding” can be viewed as both push and pull factors. These more ambiguous motivations were subjectively placed in the question that best fit the statement thematically.

Motivations importance was measured in Q-3 and Q-6 on a Likert scale from 1 ‘not at all important’ to 5 ‘extremely important’. Figure 5.1 shows the percentage of respondents that ranked each push motivation as either ‘very important’ or ‘extremely important’. The strongest social/psychological reason was ‘to rest and relax’, which was of noted importance among nearly 80% of the respondents. Items aligned with novelty seeking occupy the second, third, and fourth highest combined percentages: ‘to experience another culture’ (68.7%), ‘to see and try new things’ (65.9%), and ‘to go places that I have not visited before’ (60.9%). The ego-enhancement motivations of ‘going where my friends have not been’ and ‘indulging in luxury’ do not register as important motivations.

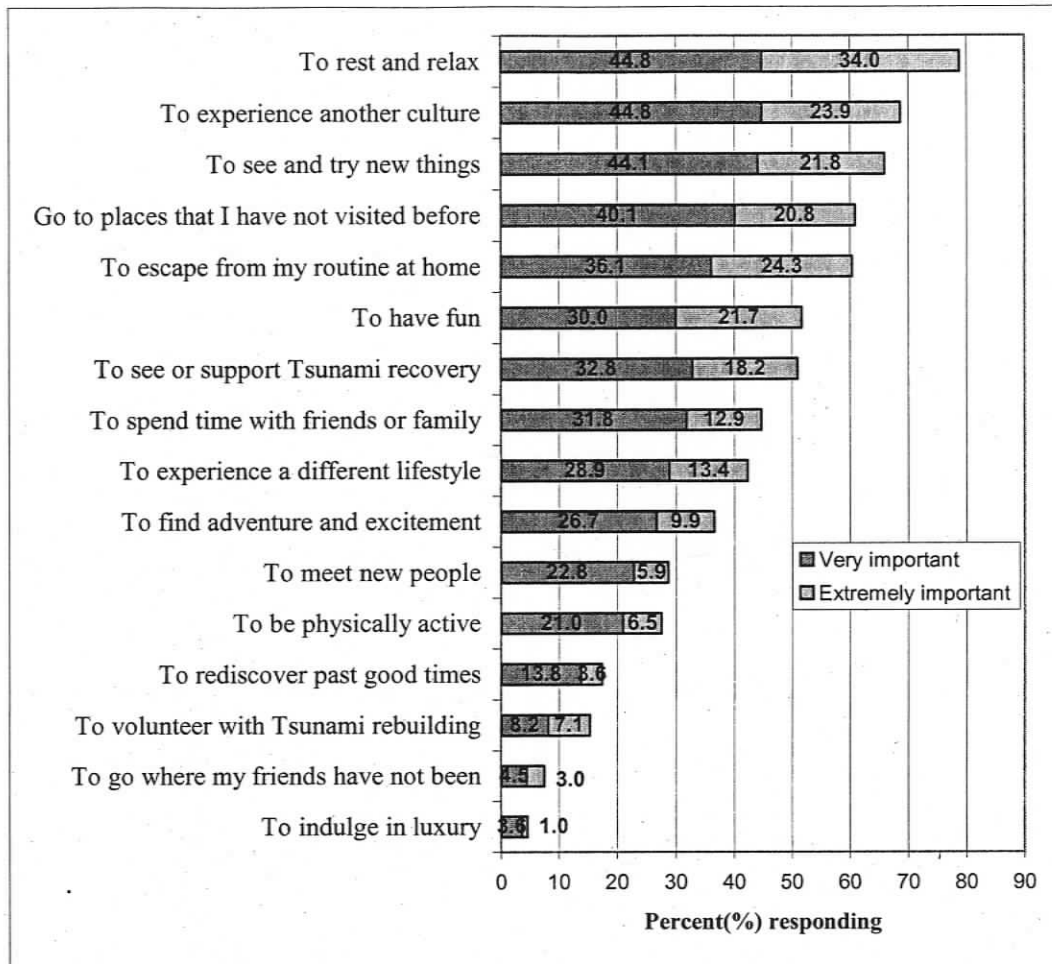


Figure 5.1 - Importance of social/psychological motivations for visiting KhaoLak

Figure 5.2 shows responses of 'very important' and 'extremely important' to a comprehensive list of pull factors for visiting Khao Lak. "Friendly local people" invoked the strongest response; 86.1% identified this motivation as highly important. Motivations related to an enriched experience in the natural environment were also top responses. These include 'beautiful natural scenery' (81.5%), 'good weather' (78.4%), and 'attractive beaches' (74.9%). The three lowest motivations are well below the 20% mark. These items are 'easy access to airport' (16.9%), 'nightlife and entertainment' (12.5%), and 'first class entertainment' (9.9%).

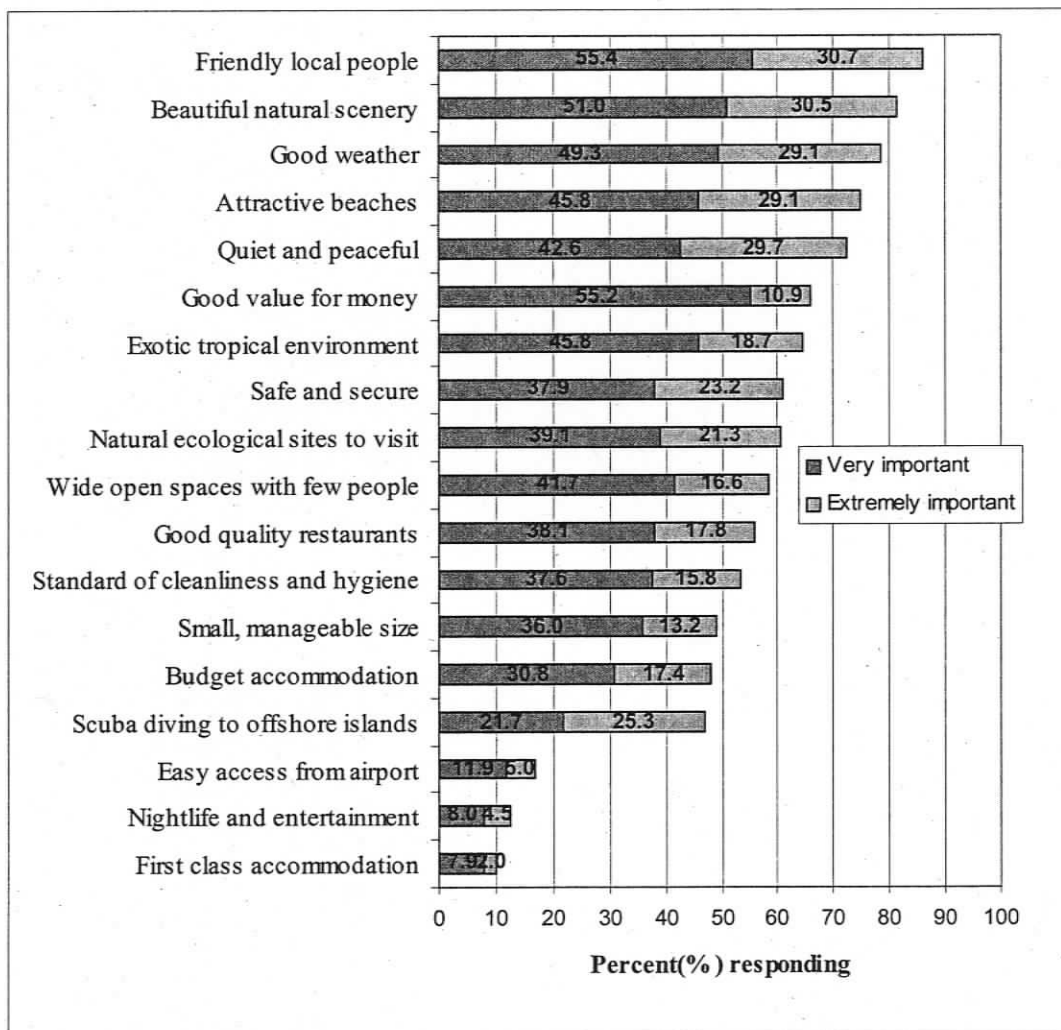
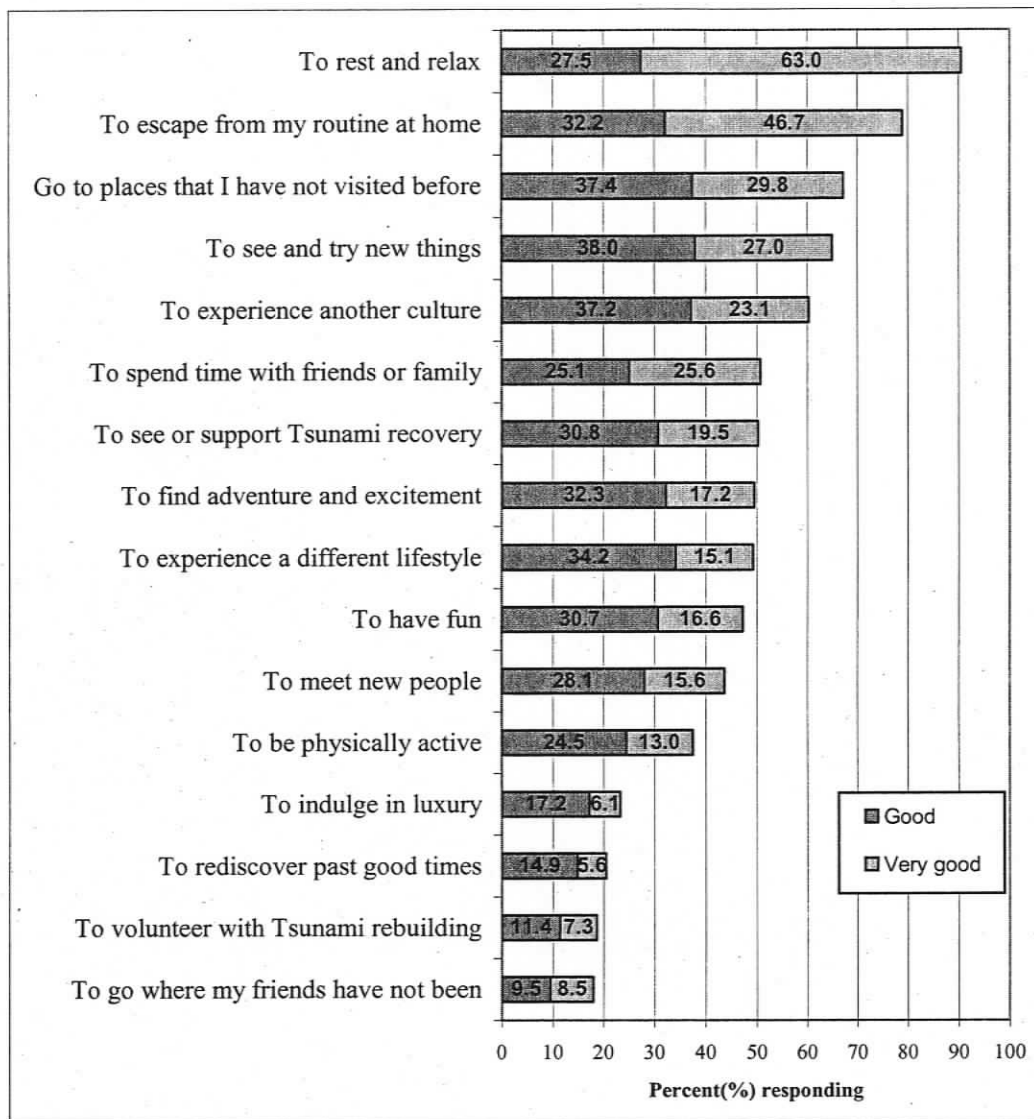


Figure 5.2 -Importance of destination/services motivations for visiting KhaoLak

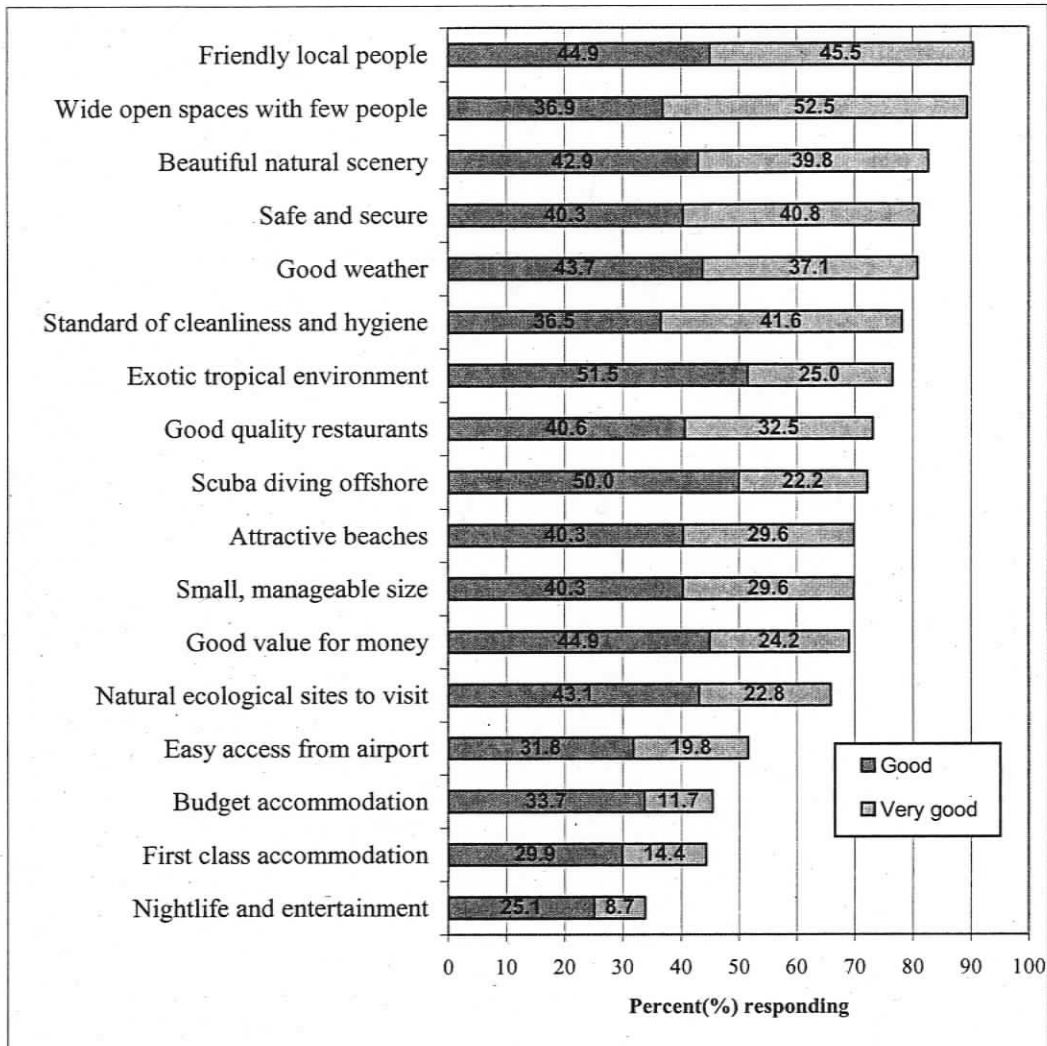
## 5.2 Travel Satisfactions



**Figure 5.3 –Satisfaction with social/psychological motivations for visiting Khao Lak**

Figure 5.3 shows satisfaction responses of ‘good’ and ‘very good’. Respondents were most satisfied with opportunities to ‘rest and relax’ (90.5%), followed by ‘escape from my routine at home’ (78.9%). Low satisfaction responses were reported in response to ‘volunteer with tsunami building’ (18.7%) and ‘to go where my friends

have not been' (18.0%). Low satisfaction levels generally correspond with items of low importance.



**Figure 5.4—Satisfaction with destination/services motivations for visiting Khao Lak**

In Figure 5.4, very high satisfaction levels were attached to 'friendly local people' (90.4%) and 'wide open spaces with few people' (89.4%). Respondents were also very satisfied with the natural scenery, safety and security, and the weather. The

lowest satisfaction levels were reported with 'budget accommodation' (45.4%), 'first class accommodation' (44.3%), and 'nightlife and entertainment' (33.8%).

### **5.3 Importance-Performance analyses**

Further examination of motivations and satisfactions was conducted via importance-performance analysis (IPA). IPA places the mean measures of importance and performance, akin to satisfaction\*, in a two-dimensional grid (Martilla & James, 1977). The plot space is divided into 4 quadrants in order to ease data interpretation. The high importance and high performance quadrant is labeled "keep up the good work", high importance and low performance is 'concentrate here', low importance and high performance is 'possible overkill', and low importance and low performance is 'low priority'. As described here, IPA is a simple graphical tool that infers priorities for management action (Huan, Beaman, & Shelby, 2002; Bacon, 2003; Wade & Eagles, 2003; Tonge & Moore, 2007).

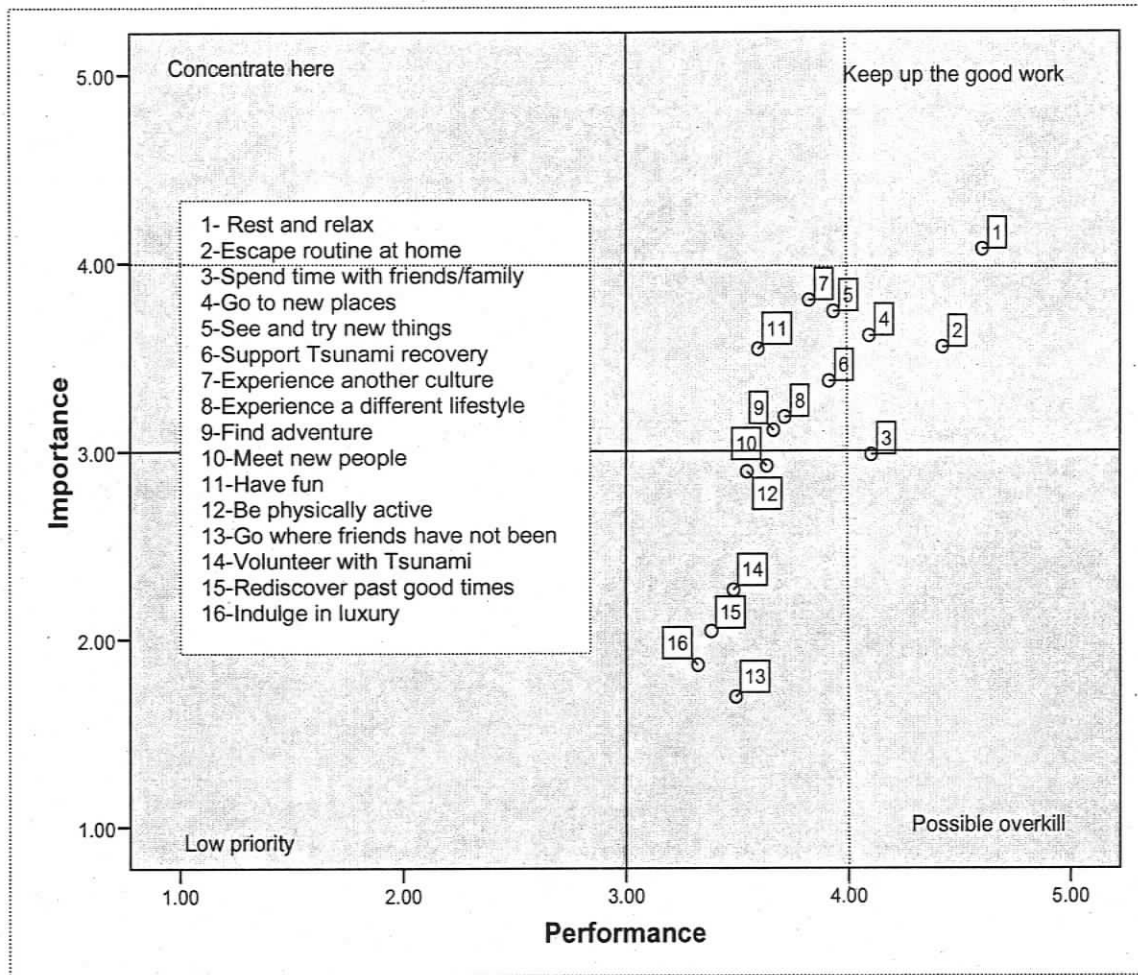
There is considerable variability in the position of crosshairs, which divide the grid into quadrants. The originators of the technique, Martilla & James (1977), emphasized that crosshair placement could vary since IPA examines relative rather than absolute levels of importance. Most commonly, gridlines are positioned at the scale mean or the data mean. However, researchers have also chosen to place crosshairs at a point that stresses high satisfaction along their scale (Bartlett & Einert,

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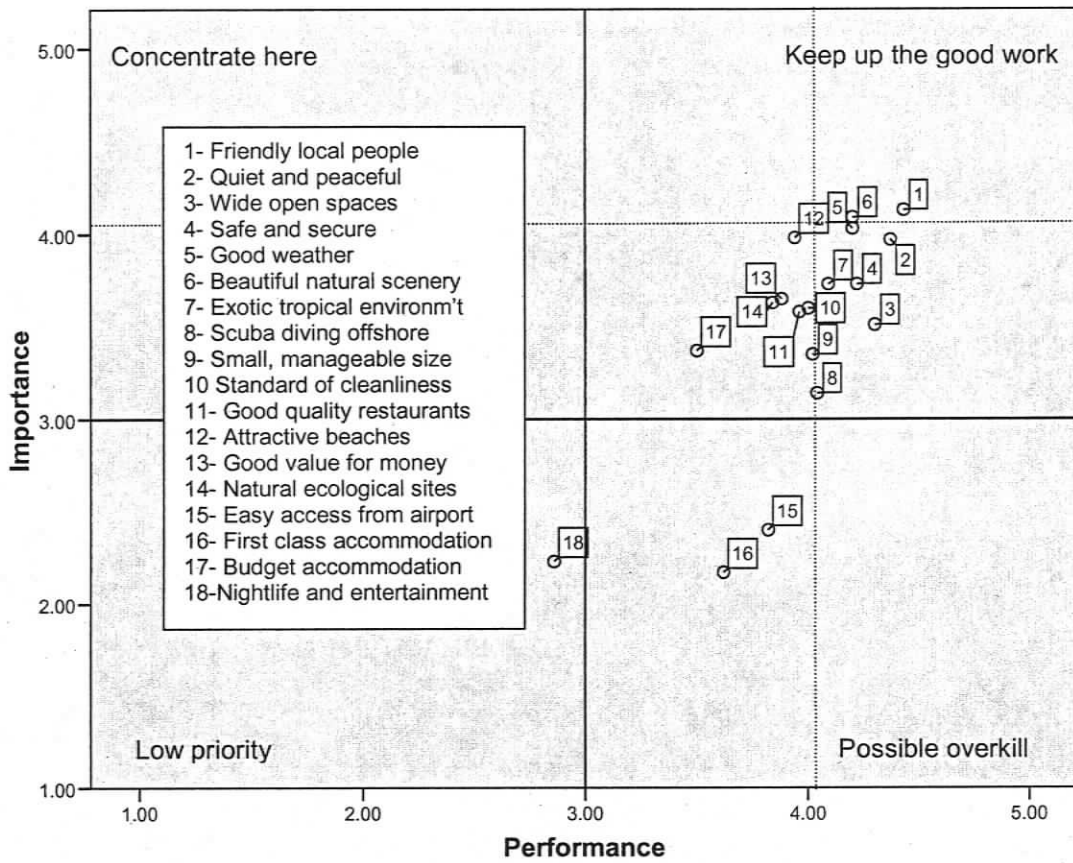
\* For the purposes of this thesis, the terms performance and satisfaction are used interchangeably. For an argument of the subtle differences between these terms, see Baker & Crompton, 2000.

1992; Bennett, 2002; Randall, 2003). For instance, crosshairs may be set at '4' to reflect 'very high' satisfaction among respondents.

In Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6, all of the performance means are over 3.00 except one. With a scale mean crosshair of '3', the attribute points are concentrated in the 'keep up the good work' or 'possible overkill' quadrants, implying that very little management action is necessary. If crosshairs were instead placed at '4' to emphasize high levels of respondent importance and satisfaction, many attribute points would be reassigned into new quadrants. This would result in dramatic differences in interpretation, as the management action assigned to any attribute changes depending on its quadrant affiliation. Although this latter placement at '4' may produce a more interesting grid for interpretation, it is not clear whether it would be any more effective in identifying those attributes that respondents feel are most in need of improvement (Tonge & Moore, 2007).

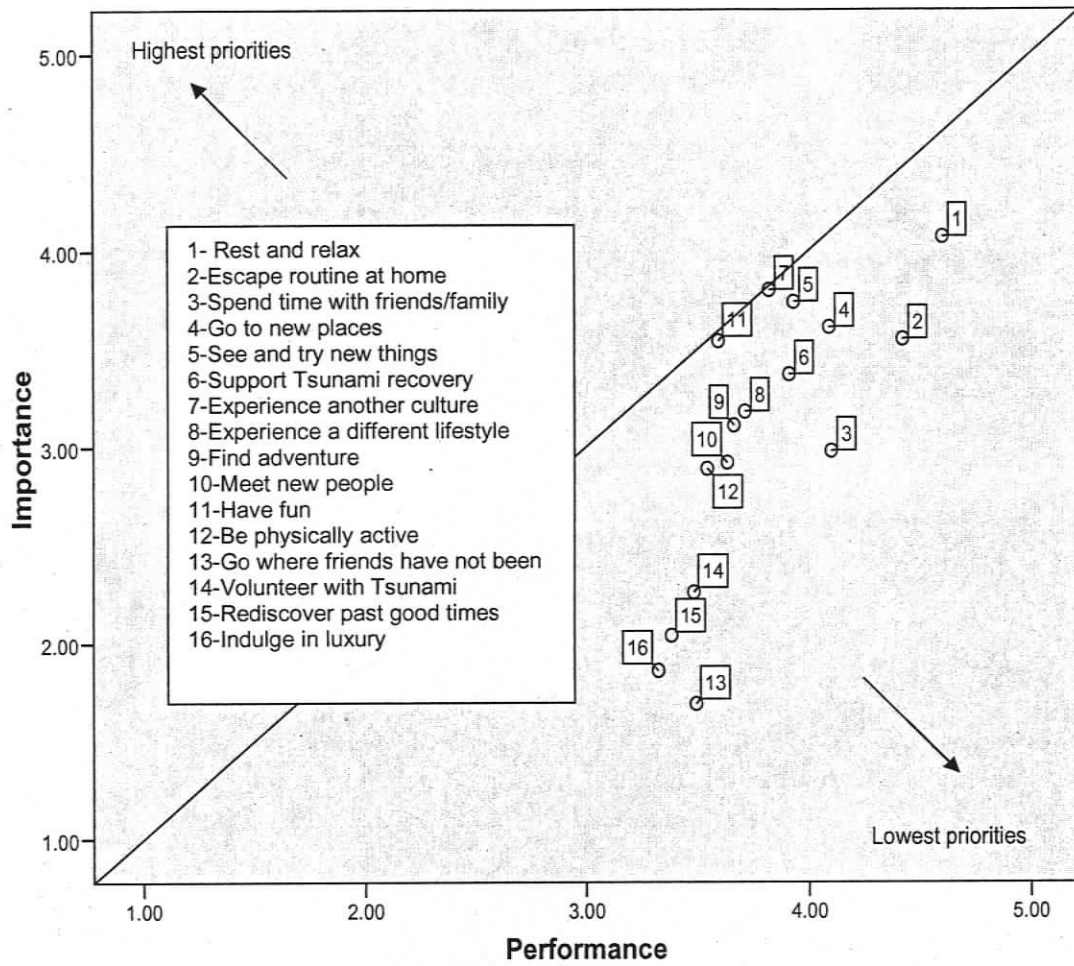


**Figure 5.5- Importance-performance analysis of social and psychological motivations for visiting Khao Lak**

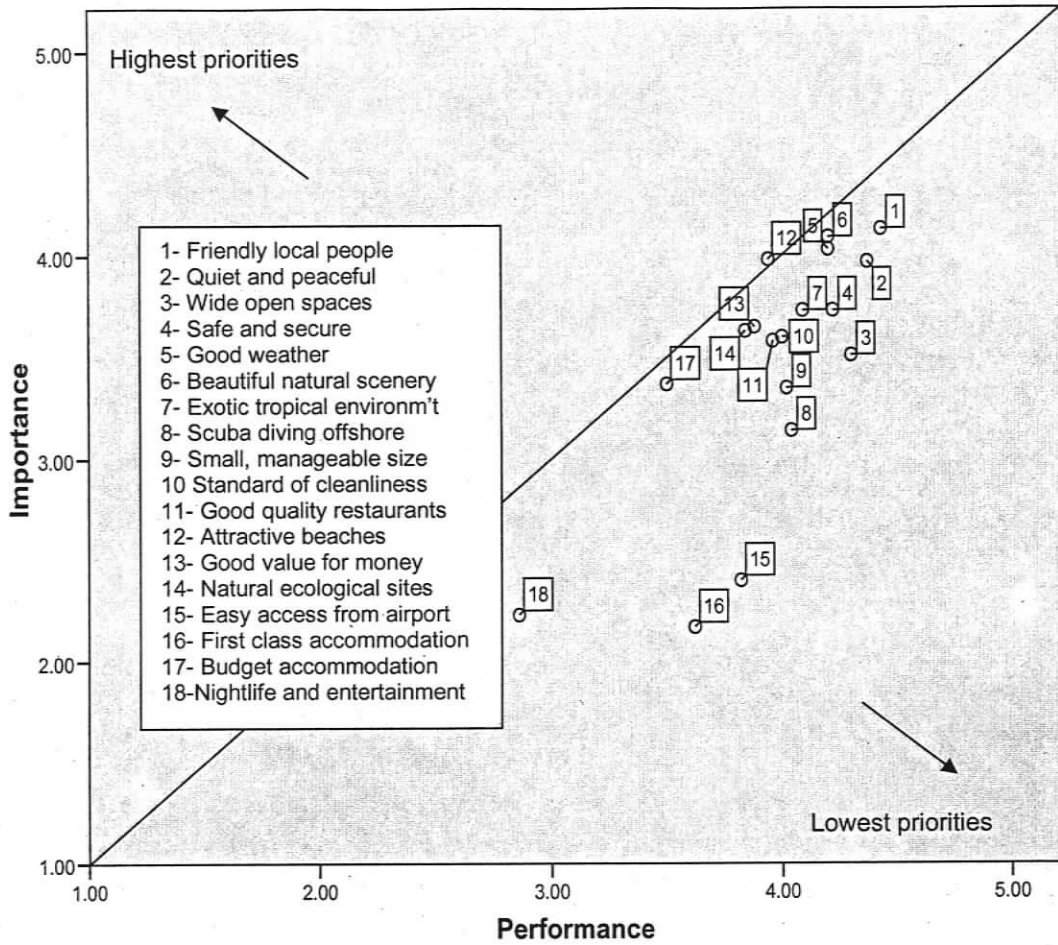


**Figure 5.6- Importance-performance analysis of destination and services motivations for visiting Khao Lak**

Some researchers have argued that a diagonal line model is a more valid method of identifying attributes in need of management action (Dearden & Harron, 1994; Bacon, 2003). The diagonal model divides the importance-performance space into 2 areas. In the space above the sloping 45-degree line, importance exceeds satisfaction. Attributes in this area are higher priorities for improvement. Attributes below the line, where satisfaction exceeds importance, are lower priorities for attention. This method may be more useful in identifying items that are most in need of improvement when importance and performance means are high (Bacon, 2003). The 'keep up the good work' quadrant of the traditional IPA grid model suggests that no management action is needed when importance and satisfaction means are above a certain threshold. In contrast, the diagonal model may identify items of relative priority when means are high, yet importance exceeds satisfaction. In this way, the diagonal model is a more sensitive and fluid method of effectively identifying priority target areas, which is a critical task for effective recreation and tourism management. Data is displayed using a diagonal chart model in Figure 5.7 and Figure 5.8.



**Figure 5.7 Diagonal model of social and psychological motivations**



**Figure 5.8- Diagonal model of destination and services motivations**

The data in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2 on the following page show that performance means exceed the importance means for every item, except 'attractive beaches', where they are nearly equal. This suggests that tourists are very satisfied with factors that may have pushed and pulled them to Khao Lak.

**Table 5.1- Importance and performance means of social/psychological reasons**

	<u>Mean Importance</u>	<u>Mean Performance</u>
To rest and relax	4.07	4.60
To escape from my routine at home	3.55	4.42
To spend time with friends or family	2.98	4.10
Go to places that I have not visited before	3.61	4.09
To see and try new things	3.74	3.93
To see or support Tsunami recovery	3.37	3.91
To experience another culture	3.80	3.82
To experience a different lifestyle	3.18	3.71
To find adventure and excitement	3.11	3.66
To meet new people	2.92	3.63
To have fun	3.54	3.59
To be physically active	2.89	3.54
To go where my friends have not been	1.69	3.49
To volunteer with Tsunami rebuilding	2.26	3.48
To rediscover past good times	2.04	3.38
To indulge in luxury	1.86	3.32

**Table 5.2- Importance and performance means of destination/services reasons**

	<u>Mean Importance</u>	<u>Mean Performance</u>
Friendly local people	4.13	4.43
Quiet and peaceful	3.97	4.37
Wide open spaces with few people	3.51	4.30
Safe and secure	3.73	4.22
Good weather	4.03	4.20
Beautiful natural scenery	4.09	4.20
Exotic tropical environment	3.73	4.09
Scuba diving offshore	3.14	4.04
Small, manageable size	3.35	4.02
Standard of cleanliness and hygiene	3.60	4.00
Good quality restaurants	3.58	3.96
Attractive beaches	3.98	3.94
Good value for money	3.65	3.88
Natural ecological sites to visit	3.63	3.84
Easy access from airport	2.40	3.82
First class accommodation	2.17	3.62
Budget accommodation	3.37	3.50
Nightlife and entertainment	2.23	2.86

Consistently high importance and satisfaction means underscore several possible weaknesses in questionnaire data used for IPA. Oh (2001) suggests that respondent bias may arise when participants are directed to rate one attribute at a time from a pre-set list. He suggests that this method of individual evaluation inflates importance ratings. Compounding this, survey questions use lists of key attributes selected by the researcher that are often highly important and relevant to begin with (Oh, 2001).

High importance scores have also been shown to have a causal effect on corresponding satisfaction ratings (Deng, 2007). According to this rationale, the more important an attribute is the individual, the more likely he/she will perceive its performance positively. In the same way, an attribute that scores low in importance is more likely to be low in satisfaction. This positive correlation results in a proliferation of attributes in the 'keep up the good work' (high importance and high performance) and 'low priority' (low importance and low performance) quadrants. A critical review of IPA studies by Oh (2001) supports this claim. Accounting for crosshair placement at both the scale and actual means, Oh found an over-representation of attributes in these latter quadrants.

#### **5.4 Volunteer motivations**

Through informal interviews with volunteers in Khao Lak, it was evident that they were not motivated by the same factors as beach tourists. Many volunteers do not think of themselves as tourists, and eschew motivations associated with rest, relaxation, and other hallmarks of sea and sun tourism. So, investigating motivations

related to volunteering was important to gain a more complete understanding of visitor experiences at the study site.

Question 10 on volunteer motivations was developed using Clary et al.'s (1998) Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI). It is organized into 6 main functions labeled *protective, values, career, social, understanding, and enhancement*. The VFI is a scale of 30 items, with 5 statements under each of the 6 functions. However, several of the items are repetitive or did not fit into the context of this research study. These statements were removed, leaving a total of 20 items, which are listed below.

**Table 5.3 Volunteer motivations based on the Volunteer Functions Inventory**

---

<b><i>Protective</i></b>	Doing volunteer work relieves me of guilt over being more fortunate Volunteering helps me work through my own personal problems Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles
<b><i>Values</i></b>	I am concerned about those less fortunate than me I feel it is important to help others I can do something for a cause that is important to me
<b><i>Career</i></b>	I can make new contacts that might help my career I can explore different career options Volunteer experience looks good on my resume Volunteering will help me to succeed in my chosen profession
<b><i>Social</i></b>	My friends volunteer My family/friends place a high value on volunteering People I'm close to want me to volunteer
<b><i>Understanding</i></b>	Volunteering gives me a new perspective on things I can learn through direct, hands-on experience I can test my own limits and strengths
<b><i>Enhancement</i></b>	Volunteering makes me feel important Volunteering makes me feel needed Volunteering makes me feel good about myself Volunteering is a way to make new friends

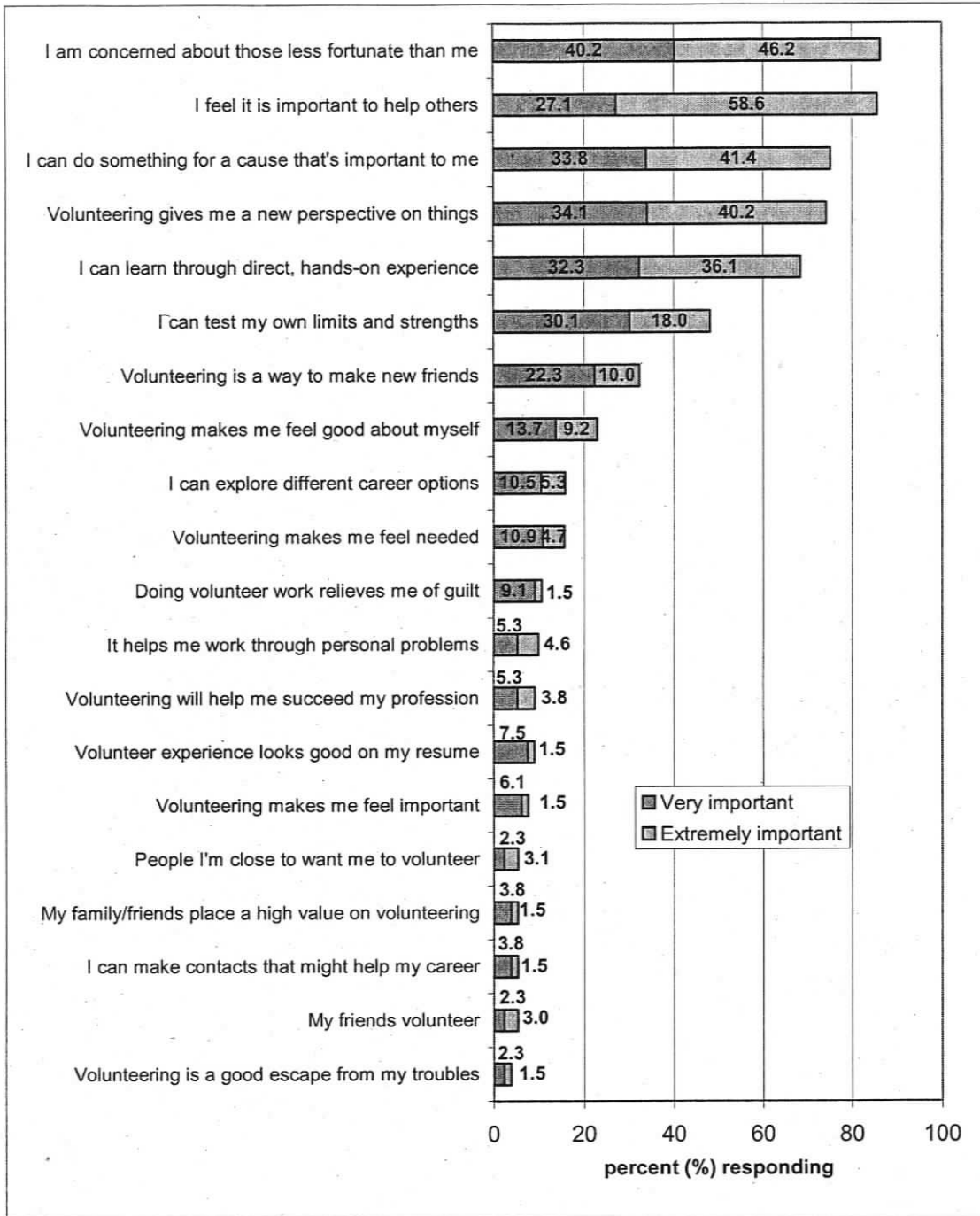
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A balance of 3 to 4 statements was retained under each motivational function. These were listed randomly in Q-10 so that they would not be grouped thematically.

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of each one on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 'not at all important' to 5 'extremely important'. Figure 4.17 show the percentage of respondents to rank each volunteer motivation as either 'very important' or 'extremely important'.

Values function items occupy the 3 motivations of highest importance. This includes 'I am concerned about those less fortunate than me' (86.4%), 'I feel that it is important to help others' (85.7%), and 'I can do something for a cause that is important to me' (75.2%). These preceding motivations encompass values of altruism, compassion, and duty to help a cause that the volunteer relates to.

The motivation with the lowest cumulative importance is the protective item of 'volunteering is a good escape from my troubles' (3.8%). Several items hover just above the 5% mark, including the remaining social function items of 'my friends volunteer' (5.3%), 'my family/friends place a high value on volunteering (5.3%), and 'people I'm close to want me to volunteer (5.4%), and finally the career function item of 'I can make contacts that might help my career' (5.3%).



**Figure 5.9- Importance of VFI motivations to volunteers in Khao Lak**

## 5.5 Discussion of main findings

### *Volunteer tourists are motivated by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.*

Like other studies of volunteer tourists, tsunami volunteers in Khao Lak exhibit a combination of intrinsic motivations related to altruism and extrinsic motivations tied to personal development. In concurrence with social exchange theory, volunteers want to help a worthy cause, but they also want to gain personal rewards (Campbell & Smith, 2005). Among volunteers in Phuket, Broad (2003) identified altruistic motivations as well as self-directed motives related to career development, opportunities for travel, and personal interest. In their study of a sea turtle conservation program, Campbell and Smith (2005) found that few volunteers were motivated solely by a fascination with turtles. Rather, volunteers were interested in a comprehensive experience whereby they could participate in fieldwork, support a meaningful cause, and help to protect an endangered species. Like volunteers with environmental conservation projects, Stoddart and Rogerson (2004) found that Habitat for Humanity volunteers in South Africa held multiple intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Volunteers expressed a desire to help those living in poverty and at the same time build their own work skills and relationships with others.

This combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors also appears among tsunami volunteers in Khao Lak. Volunteers are strongly motivated by a desire to help those impacted by the tsunami and assist those in need. However, motivations related to personal development were also very important. Tsunami volunteers want to gain

new perspectives and learn through hands-on experience. Volunteers also travel long distances from other countries in order participate in tsunami rebuilding. This suggests that they are also motivated by a keen interest to experience novel cultures and places.

## **Chapter 6- Ecotourism Scaling**

### **6.1 Introduction**

A major objective of this research was to assess the potential of developing ecotourism in Khao Lak based on the importance of ecotourism principles among tourists. Demand side interest in ecotourism was measured using a Likert style question with 16 key ecotourism principles drawn from supporting literature. The 16 principles encompass a broad interpretation of ecotourism, which includes active and passive elements, and the idea that ecotourism should be nature-based, educational, and sustainably managed. Factor analysis was performed to divide ecotourism principles into categories, which produced a 3-factor solution of: 1) nature, 2) local culture, and 3) stewardship. Respondents were then segmented based the importance that they attributed to each of the 3 factors. Demographic and trip characteristics were compared among segmented ecotourist groups to explore if these differed significantly.

Two samples, beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists, are compared throughout the analysis. Through observation and informal interviews, these groups were identified as the dominant tourist types in Khao Lak, and distinct in their motivations, geographical space, activities, and demographic composition. A two-sample approach presents a fascinating opportunity to compare and contrast tourists active in Khao Lak in the intermediary rebuilding stages one year following the tsunami.

## 6.2 Theoretical dimensions of ecotourism

Ecotourism has been defined as satisfying numerous ‘principles’, ‘criteria’, ‘characteristics’ or ‘themes’ (Buckley, 1994; Wallace & Pierce, 1996; Sirakaya et al., 1999; Eagles, 2001; Fennell, 2001; Newsome et al., 2002). Although these attributes vary in number and wording, they may be reduced to 3 main dimensions, which capture “the main essence of the concept” (Blamey, 2001, p.6). According to this view ecotourism is (1) nature-based, (2) offers opportunities for education, and (3) strives for environmental and socio-cultural sustainability.

Sixteen statements were designed to assess the importance of ecotourism principles to the travel ideology of tourists. Each statement was drawn from a review of academic literature, as demonstrated by supporting references (see Table 6.1). Statements were designed to capture a broad interpretive range along the passive-active ecotourism continuum. According to this idea, passive ecotourism implies a low degree of human responsibility to minimize environmental damage, while active ecotourism necessitates greater engagement, and strives to enhance environmental and social conditions (Orams, 1995).

Passive and active ecotourism elements are most strongly reflected under the *education* and *sustainable management* dimensions. For example, learning about various environmental and social features for personal interest is a more passive form of participation, while raising environmental awareness in others implies high personal responsibility to enhance pro-conservation attitudes. Minimizing

environmental impacts and disturbances to local people through unobtrusive behaviour reflects a passive approach to ecotourism, while donating time or money to local protected areas and supporting NGOs implies an active role in environmental conservation. Supporting businesses and services that are owned by and employ local people suggests initiative to consciously boost the local economic benefits of nature-based tourism. Finally, choosing tour operators with progressive environmental and social practices may be a combination of minimizing negative impacts and supporting ventures that actively contribute to environmental and social welfare.

**Table 6.1 Ecotourism principles design with guiding references**

<i>Ecotourism Dimensions</i>	<i>Reference*</i>
<b><u>Nature</u></b>	
Participate in outdoor nature activities	(Ryan <i>et al.</i> 2000, Weinberg <i>et al.</i> 2002)
See plants/animals in their natural environment	(Boo 1990, Shelhas <i>et al.</i> 2002)
Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	(Ceballos-Lascurain 1987, Stone & Wall, 2003)
Visit nature areas such as National Parks	(Hvenegaard & Dearden 1998, Shelhas <i>et al.</i> , 2002)
<b><u>Education</u></b>	
Learn about local customs and culture	(Mvula 2001, Honey 1999a)
Learn about local environmental issues	(Fennell 1999, Weaver & Lawton, 2002)
Learn about animals and other natural features	(Boo 1990, Honey 1999a)
Raise environmental awareness in others	(Epler-Wood 2002, Stem <i>et al.</i> , 2003)
<b><u>Sustainable Management</u></b>	
Minimize my own impact on the environment	(Wood 2002, Fennell 1999)
Use site sensitive accommodation	(Carrier & Macleod 2005, Langholz, 1999)
Donate money or volunteer time to conservation	(Honey 1999a, Ross & Wall 1999)
Interact with locals in a culturally sensitive way	(Borrini-Feyerabend <i>et al.</i> 2004 & West & Carrier 2004)
Support shops/services owned by local people	(Adams & Infield 2002, Foucat 2002)
Support businesses that employ local people	(Garrod 2003, Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005)
Choose companies with best env/social practice	(Carrier & Macleod 2005, Young 1999)
Donate money/volunteer time to local charities	(Honey 1999a, Ross & Wall 1999)

\* The references for each item are not an exhaustive representation of the supporting literature. Rather, each reference presents excellent support for the corresponding item.

### 6.3 Importance of ecotourism principles

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each ecotourism statement on a five-point scale, from 1 'not at all important' to 5 'extremely important'. Ecotourism items were ordered by highest to lowest mean of the beach sample, along with the standard deviation. Table 6.2 displays the results of both beach resort and volunteer participants.

The highest mean response in the beach tourist sample is 'visiting places of beautiful natural scenery'. This is followed closely in mean importance by 'supporting locally owned businesses' and 'learning about local culture'. In comparison, 'learning about local culture' is the highest mean response in the volunteer sample. 'Interacting with locals in a culturally sensitive manner' also scores high in importance among volunteers. The principles that beach tourists relate the least to include donating time or money to charities and to conservation causes. In contrast, volunteers do not identify strongly with 'choosing tour companies with good environmental and social practices' or 'raising environmental awareness' in others. No single theoretical dimension dominates the highest means or the lowest means in either sample.

There are significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) differences in the mean scores of most items in Table 6.2. Volunteers have higher mean scores in items related to donating money/volunteer time to conservation or local charities and learning about local environmental issues. They also have higher means in two items related to community, 'learn about local customs and culture' and 'interact with locals in a culturally sensitive manner'. Beach tourists have a significantly higher mean across a

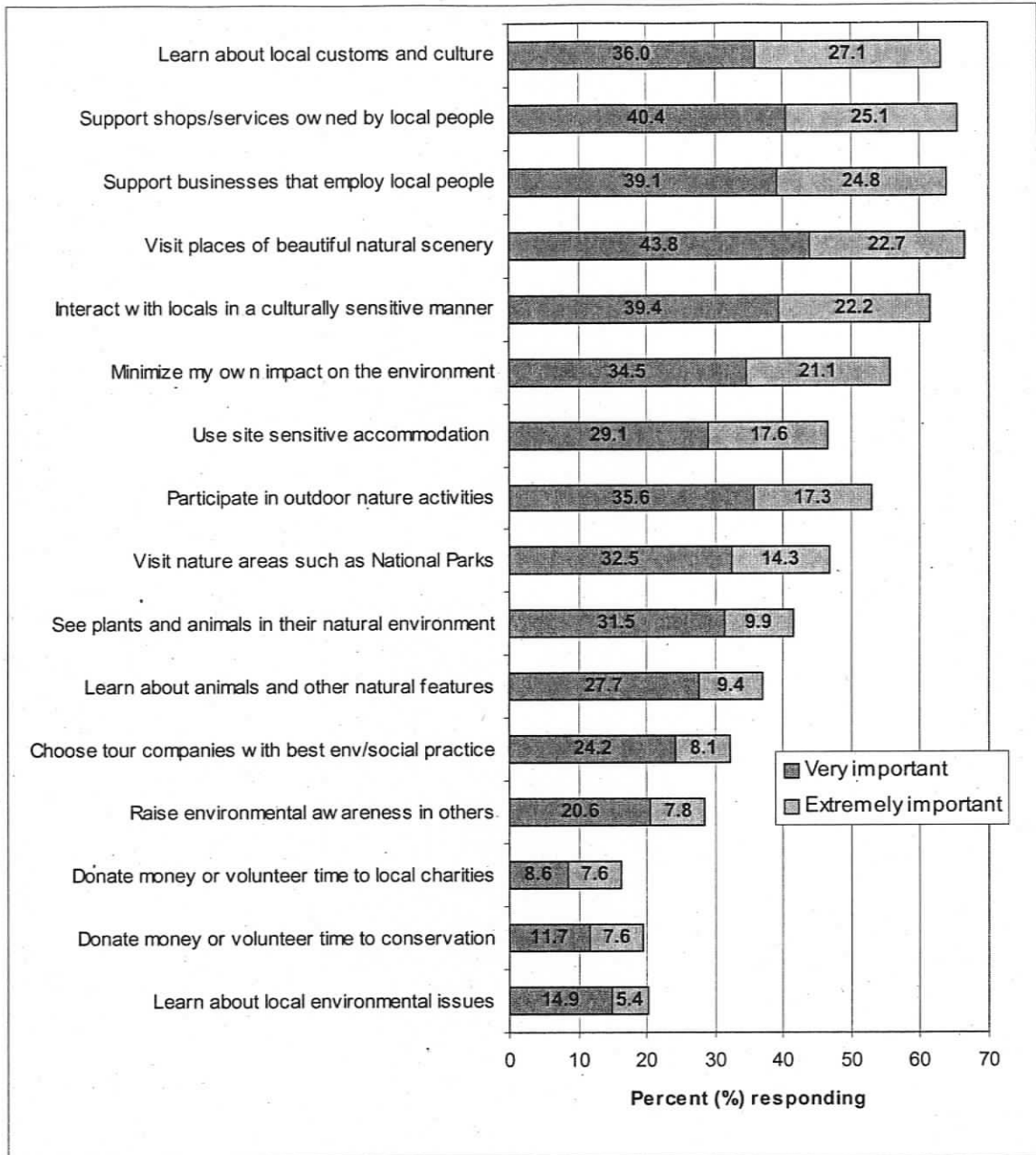
greater number of items associated with nature and sustainable management. The variance expressed by the standard deviation is high in both samples. With means based on a 5-point Likert scale, a standard deviation above 1.0 denotes a high degree of variance (Sclove, 2001). Variance is more pronounced in the volunteer sample, which suggests that volunteers are more polarized in the importance that they attribute to ecotourism principles.

**Table 6.2 Importance of ecotourism principles among visitors (Q-12)**

<b>Eco-tourism item</b>	<b><i>Beach tourists</i></b>		<b><i>Volunteers</i></b>		<b>t-test</b>	<b>df.</b>	<b>sig*</b>
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>			
Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	3.84	0.84	3.50	1.18	3.14	334	<b>0.00*</b>
Support shops/services owned by local people	3.83	0.90	3.63	1.19	1.76	334	0.08
Learn about local customs and culture	3.81	0.95	4.17	0.95	3.37	334	<b>0.00*</b>
Support businesses that employ local people	3.74	1.01	3.62	1.14	1.03	334	0.30
Interact with locals in a culturally sensitive manner	3.72	0.93	4.15	1.02	3.94	334	<b>0.00*</b>
Minimize my own impact on the environment	3.52	1.10	3.12	1.39	2.91	334	<b>0.00*</b>
Visit nature areas such as National Parks	3.44	0.96	3.02	1.26	3.48	334	<b>0.00*</b>
Use site sensitive accommodation	3.42	1.06	2.92	1.23	3.98	334	<b>0.00*</b>
Participate in outdoor nature activities	3.40	1.16	3.03	1.28	2.74	334	<b>0.01*</b>
See plants and animals in their natural environment	3.18	1.06	3.01	1.15	1.43	334	0.16
Learn about animals and other natural features	3.16	1.01	2.83	1.19	2.67	334	<b>0.01*</b>
Choose tour companies with best env/social practice	2.99	1.09	2.68	1.26	2.33	334	<b>0.02*</b>
Raise environmental awareness in others	2.91	0.91	2.50	1.15	3.60	334	<b>0.00*</b>
Learn about local environmental issues	2.74	1.01	2.99	1.19	2.10	334	<b>0.04*</b>
Donate money or volunteer time to conservation	2.63	1.11	2.92	1.27	2.22	334	<b>0.03*</b>
Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	2.49	1.15	3.33	1.26	6.28	334	<b>0.00*</b>

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Figures 6.1 and 6.2 below show the relative importance of each ecotourism item based on the proportion of respondents to rank it as 'very important' and 'extremely important'. These response categories reflect high values of importance by the respondent. In the beach sample, highest importance is attributed to 'visiting places of beautiful scenery' and supporting businesses that involve local people. To compare, the top two items in the volunteer sample are 'interacting with locals in a culturally sensitive manner' and 'learning about local customs and culture' are slightly different, which also tie in with local community issues. Beach tourists relate least to donating to local charities, while few volunteers place lowest importance in the raising environmental awareness of others. Like the sequence of ecotourism item means, there is no pattern of any theoretical dimension dominating in the highest importance categories.



**Figure 6.1 - Beach tourists- Most important ecotourism statements (Q-12)**

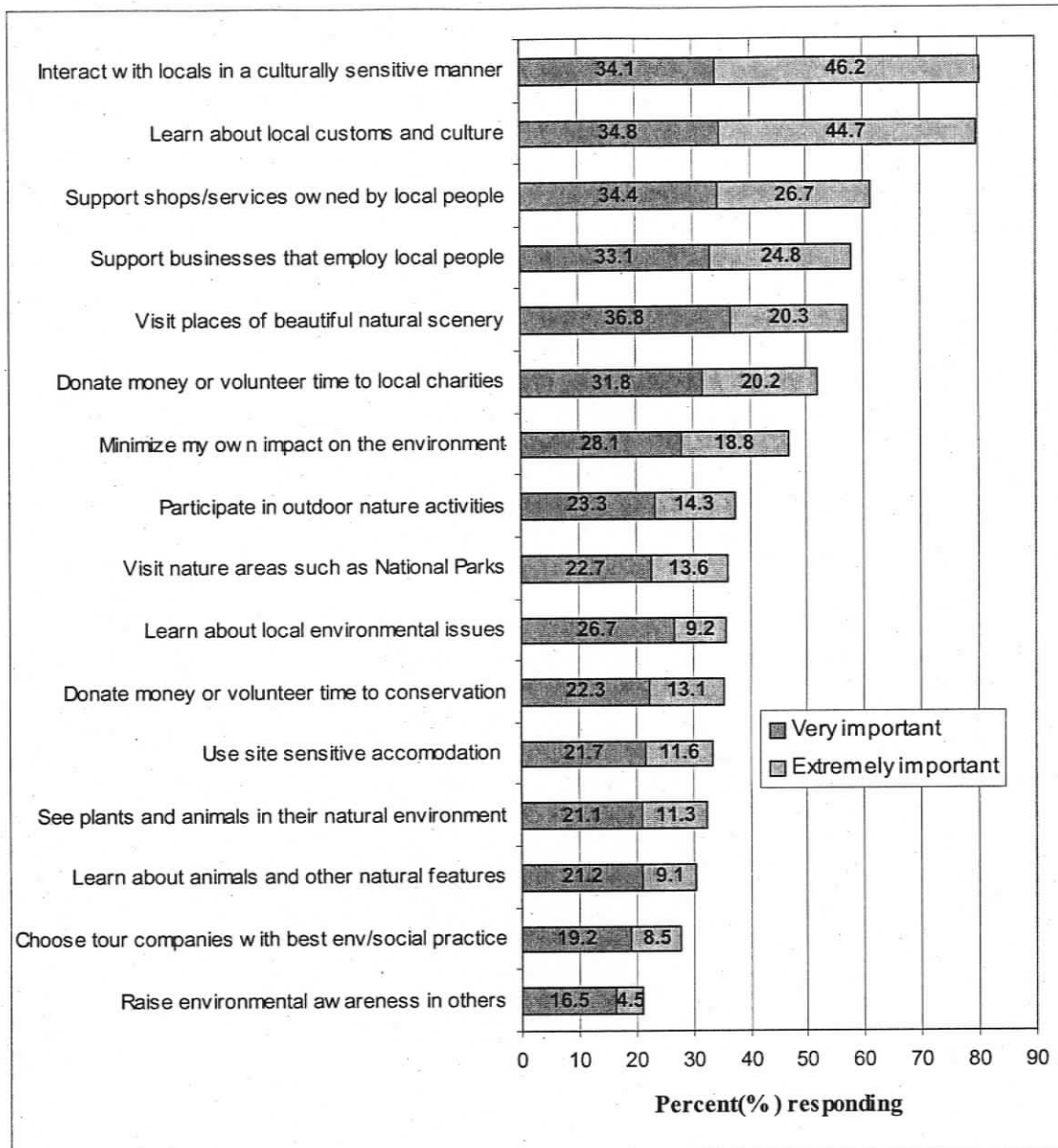


Figure 6.2– Volunteer tourists- Most important ecotourism statements (Q-12)

## **6.4 Ecotourism principles- Factor Analysis**

The previous section describes the development of a series of ecotourism principles based on 3 dimensions outlined in the literature. Factor analysis was chosen as an analytical method of classifying variables to produce new independent variables for further exploration. Furthermore, it was used to test whether the theoretical dimensions that guided the question design would emerge as distinct factors.

Factor analysis is a quantitative method of finding hidden structure in a data set through correlations among variables. In effect, factor analysis tests whether a large number of variables can be explained by fewer 'factors' (Neuman, 2000). Factor analysis is performed in advance of cluster analysis, which can then segment respondents into different subsets. Segmentation can be useful for tourism management by defining groups that are more homogeneous in relation to characteristics such as values or motivations (Smith, 1995).

Ultimately, the researcher decides on the number of factors that are produced based on several statistical guidelines. First, the percent of variance explained by each factor is examined. The first factor explains the highest percent of variance, with each subsequent factor explaining less variance. A common guideline states that the percent of variance of each new factor should be at least 5% (Garson, 2007). Next, the Kaiser Criterion dictates that the eigenvalue for each factor should be above 1. An eigenvalue greater than 1 means that the factor explains more overall variance than the original variable and is more meaningful for analysis (Smith, 1995). Finally,

alpha reliability is a measure of consistency within each factor. High average inter-item correlation is reflected in a high alpha value. A value of .70 or higher is considered an acceptable indicator of reliability (Garson, 2007).

**Table 6.3 Beach Tourists- Factor Analysis**

<i>Ecotourism Item</i>	<b>Factor 1 Nature</b>	<b>Factor 2 Stewardship</b>	<b>Factor 3 Local culture</b>
(A) Participate in outdoor nature recreation activities	.631	-.134	.087
(B) See plants and animals in their natural environment	.837	.211	.028
(C) Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	.799	.037	.193
(D) Visit nature areas such as National Parks	.760	.155	-.031
(E) Minimize my own impact on the environment	.568	.193	.301
(O) Learn about animals and plants	.602	.480	-.069
(F) Use site sensitive accommodation	.406	.391	.350
(G) Donate money or volunteer time for conservation	.029	.667	.237
(L) Choose tour companies with best env/social practice	.198	.591	.266
(M) Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	-.137	.722	.288
(N) Learn about environmental issues and problems	.130	.777	.225
(P) Raise environmental awareness in others	.297	.689	.048
(H) Interact with local people in a culturally sensitive way	.192	.168	.746
(I) Learn about local customs, traditions and culture	.210	.252	.695
(J) Support shops and services owned by local people	-.004	.216	.841
(K) Support businesses that employ local people	-.002	.193	.781
Alpha reliability	.82	.80	.83
Eigenvalue	5.52	2.44	1.41
% variance explained	34.51%	15.23%	8.84%
Total variance explained by 3 factor solution= 58.58%			

**Table 6.4 Volunteer tourists- Factor Analysis**

<i>Ecotourism Item</i>	<b>Factor 1 Nature</b>	<b>Factor 2 Stewardship</b>	<b>Factor 3 Local culture</b>
(A) Participate in outdoor nature recreation activities	<b>.833</b>	.171	.207
(B) See plants and animals in their natural environment	<b>.886</b>	.226	.121
(C) Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	<b>.845</b>	.075	.260
(D) Visit nature areas such as National Parks	<b>.872</b>	.183	.162
(E) Minimize my own impact on the environment	<b>.484</b>	.543	.283
(O) Learn about animals and plants	<b>.554</b>	.568	.098
(F) Use site sensitive accommodation	.340	<b>.558</b>	.367
(G) Donate money or volunteer time for conservation	.171	<b>.764</b>	.190
(L) Choose tour companies with best env/social practice	.375	<b>.569</b>	.236
(M) Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	-.154	<b>.653</b>	.298
(N) Learn about environmental issues and problems	.149	<b>.786</b>	.137
(P) Raise environmental awareness in others	.254	<b>.732</b>	.168
(H) Interact with local people in a culturally sensitive way	.108	.226	<b>.810</b>
(I) Learn about local customs, traditions and culture	.221	.125	<b>.870</b>
(J) Support shops and services owned by local people	.274	.295	<b>.754</b>
(K) Support businesses that employ local people	.204	.342	<b>.773</b>
Alpha reliability	.90	.84	.88
Eigenvalues	7.61	1.99	1.46
% variance explained	47.53%	12.44%	9.12%
<b>Total variance explained by 3 factor solution= 69.09%</b>			

Using Principal Component Analysis with varimax rotation, a 3-factor solution provided the best explanation of the data. Separate factor analyses were performed on the beach tourist sample and the volunteer sample. Factor loadings between samples are very similar, which adds validity to a 3-factor solution. Scores that loaded evenly on more than one factor were assigned based on theoretical considerations. In the beach tourist sample, the Alpha reliability values are .82, .80, and .83 respectively. All factors have an eigenvalue over one, at 5.52, 2.44, and 1.41. The total variance explained by 3 factors is 58.58%. In the volunteer sample, Alpha reliability is .90, .84, and .88. The eigenvalues are 7.61, 1.99, and 1.46, and total variance is 69.09%.

The factor analysis did not result in segmentation identical to the 3 theoretical dimensions of nature, education, and sustainable management. Rather, an exploratory structuring of the data presents an alternative classification of Factor 1-nature, Factor 2-stewardship, and Factor 3-local culture. Descriptive labels were chosen to reflect the content of each factor, and reflect a subjective interpretation that is useful for further description and identification.

Factor 1 is labeled *nature*, and includes items that link ecotourism to the natural environment. Ecotourism as a nature-based activity is evoked through ‘visiting places of beautiful natural scenery’ and ‘visiting natural areas such National Parks’. What ecotourists do is represented by ‘outdoor nature recreation activities’ and ‘see plants and animals in their natural habitat’. The idea that ecotourism includes the educational elements of raising personal consciousness and nature study is reflected in ‘minimizing my own impacts on the environment’ and ‘learning about animals and plants’. Conceptually, the former item of ‘minimizing my own impacts on the environment’ may be better positioned in the *stewardship* factor. This item loads nearly equally with *nature* and *stewardship* in the volunteer sample, but more strongly with *nature* in the beach tourist sample.

The second factor is labeled *stewardship*, and includes items that reflect both environmental and social components of ecotourism. Concern for supporting sustainability through ‘choosing tour companies’ and ‘site sensitive accommodations with the best environmental and social practice’ demonstrates a high degree of

participant responsibility. 'Learning about environmental problems' and especially 'raising environmental awareness in others' suggests a greater engagement in education than merely learning about specific iconic plants or animals. Donating time or money to local charities or conservation projects also implies a desire to improve conditions in the local community. Although 'donate money or time to local charities' could also fit conceptually with the *local culture* factor, it also belongs within a broad interpretation of stewardship, which includes both environmental and social elements.

Factor 3 is labeled *local culture*, and includes elements related to interactions with people in the local community. Inevitable encounters with local residents are linked with 'interacting with local people in a culturally sensitive manner'. A more conscious and active role is suggested through 'supporting shops and services owned by or employing local people'. The educational element found in other factors is also present here through 'learning about local customs, traditions, and culture'.

**Table 6.5 Mean importance scores of ecotourism principle items and factors**

<b>Nature</b>	<b>Mean Importance</b>	
	<b>Beach</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>
Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	3.84	3.50
Minimize my own impact on the environment	3.50	3.20
Visit nature areas such as National Parks	3.44	3.03
Participate in outdoor nature activities	3.41	3.03
See plants and animals in their natural environment	3.18	3.01
Learn about animals and other natural features	3.17	2.85
<b>Nature mean importance</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>3.10</b>
<b>Stewardship</b>		
Use site sensitive accommodation	3.40	2.98
Choose tour companies with best env/social practice	3.04	2.72
Raise environmental awareness in others	2.89	2.50
Learn about environmental issues and problems	2.70	3.02
Donate money or volunteer time to conservation	2.60	2.96
Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	2.54	3.40
<b>Active mean importance</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>2.93</b>
<b>Local culture</b>		
Support shops/services owned by local people	3.83	3.67
Learn about local customs and culture	3.81	4.19
Support businesses that employ local people	3.70	3.61
Interact with locals in a culturally sensitive manner	3.72	4.17
<b>Local Culture mean importance</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>3.91</b>

**Table 6.6 Mean importance of factor dimensions by sample**

	<i>Beach tourists</i>		<i>Volunteer tourists</i>		t-test	df	sig*
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
<b>Nature</b>	3.42	1.02	3.10	1.23	2.59	334	<b>0.01*</b>
<b>Stewardship</b>	2.86	1.06	2.93	1.21	0.56	334	0.57
<b>Local culture</b>	3.77	0.95	3.91	1.05	1.27	334	0.21

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table 6.5 shows the mean importance of each item and collected dimension identified in the factor analysis. Table 6.6 compares the means of the 2 samples through the t-test and related significance. Beach and volunteer tourists have the same pattern of dimension importance. Overall, principles related to local culture are most important,

followed by nature, and finally stewardship. The nature dimension is significantly more important among volunteers. In the beach tourist sample, all four local culture items are among the top 5 in highest means (see Table 6.5). In the volunteer sample, local culture items sweep the top 4 means.

Items related to nature and stewardship are mixed in order of mean importance.

Aside from 'visit places of beautiful natural scenery', which is of first rated importance among beach tourists, nature and stewardship items are ranked lower than local culture items. Items related to stewardship have the lowest importance in both the beach tourist and volunteer samples. In the beach sample, all 4 items with a mean of less than 3 are in the stewardship dimension. Based on the wording of categories in the questionnaires, a mean below 3 suggests that most people feel that the item is slightly or not at all important. Of the 5 items in the volunteer sample that fall below this benchmark, 4 are classified in the stewardship dimension. Due to the prominence of these items in the lowest places, the stewardship dimension as a whole has the lowest overall mean.

## **6.5 Scaling respondents- Segmentation Analysis**

Segmentation is a technique that divides a large, potentially heterogeneous number of subjects into smaller and more homogeneous groups based on shared characteristics (Palacio & McCool, 1997). If there is a high degree of variability in the data, different combinations of groups may be possible. Segments can give insight into the dynamics of a population, including variations in motivations, behaviours,

demographics, and other characteristics (Beh & Bruyere, 2007). In tourism management, it is widely argued that there is no prototype of the typical 'tourist', or even the more specialized 'ecotourist' (Wade & Eagles, 2003). Rather, segmentation is a technique to identify groups that may differ significantly in numerous respects. Awareness and understanding of diverse segments is extremely useful in devising effective management strategies to meet tourist satisfaction as well as social and environmental conservation goals (Beh & Bruyere, 2007).

Segmentation analysis may be performed analytically via a computer program such as SPSS, or in a more deliberate theoretical manner using *a priori* categories. In the former approach, SPSS generates groupings based on a number of clusters set by the researcher. Numerous trials can be performed quickly and easily, producing results that are objective and mathematically correct. However, this does not guarantee that SPSS clusters are logical or useful for interpretation. An *a priori* segmentation technique was chosen to group ecotourists in this study after SPSS generated trials failed to produce clusters that were meaningful for data interpretation. Since this research aims to segment tourists by ecotourism importance responses, an *a priori* approach based on this variable was an effective approach.

A segmentation analysis was performed in order to group individuals according to the importance that each attaches to the ecotourism principles listed in Q-12. Individuals who relate strongly to an item were expected to respond (4) 'very important' or (5) 'extremely important', based on a five point Likert scale. Those that

do not feel that the item is significant are expected to answer with (1) 'not at all important' or (2) 'slightly important'. A middle ground response is captured by (3) 'moderately important'.

Based on responses to Q-12, the 'scores' for each of the 16 items, from 1 to 5, were added together. For reference, the total score is referred to as the 'ecoscore'.

Supplementary scores were calculated by factor in order to produce a *nature* score, a *stewardship* score, and a *local culture* score for each respondent. A score is high if it is over the midpoint of the factor's numerical range, and low if it is below the midpoint. Six items load with the nature factor, giving it a range from 6 to 30. A high score for 'nature' is over the midpoint of 18. The same midpoint is applied to the stewardship factor with 6 items. The local culture factor has only 4 items, a range of 4-20, and a midpoint of 13.

The midpoint was favored as the best criteria for separating high and low scores. A score over the midpoint indicates that most ecotourism items were judged to be 'very important' or 'extremely important'. Unlike the mean, the midpoint is identical in the beach and volunteer tourist samples, facilitating comparison between the two groups.

**Table 6.7 Aggregate tourist segmentation**

	<i>Beach tourists</i>		<i>Volunteer tourists</i>	
	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
High in all 3 factors	61	30.0	37	27.8
High in 2 factors	49	24.1	39	29.3
High in 1 factor	67	33.0	35	26.4
Low in all 3 factors	26	12.8	22	16.5

Chi-square: 2.93, df.3, sig. 0.40

There are significant differences in the ecoscore distribution among segments.

Respondents responding low in all factors predominate in the lowest ecoscore quartile of 0 to 25%. Those high in only 1 factor have the strongest representation in the 26-50% quartile, while those high in 2 factors are strongest in the 51-75% quartile. The 76-100% quartile corresponds greatly with visitors scoring high in all 3 factors. The lowest ecoscores are correlated with respondents low in all 3 factors, medium ecoscores with those high in one or two factors, and the highest ecoscores with those high in all three factors. This pattern is consistent between the beach and volunteer tourist samples.

**Table 6.8 Beach tourists- Distribution of ecoscore by segment**

<b>Ecoscore Quartile</b>	<b>Low All</b>	<b>High 1 factor</b>	<b>High 2 factors</b>	<b>High All</b>
0-25%	50.0	47.8	2.2	0.0
26-50%	6.3	72.9	20.8	0.0
51-75%	0.0	16.7	53.3	30.0
76-100%	0.0	0.0	12.2	87.8

Chi-square: 228.52, df.9, sig.0.00

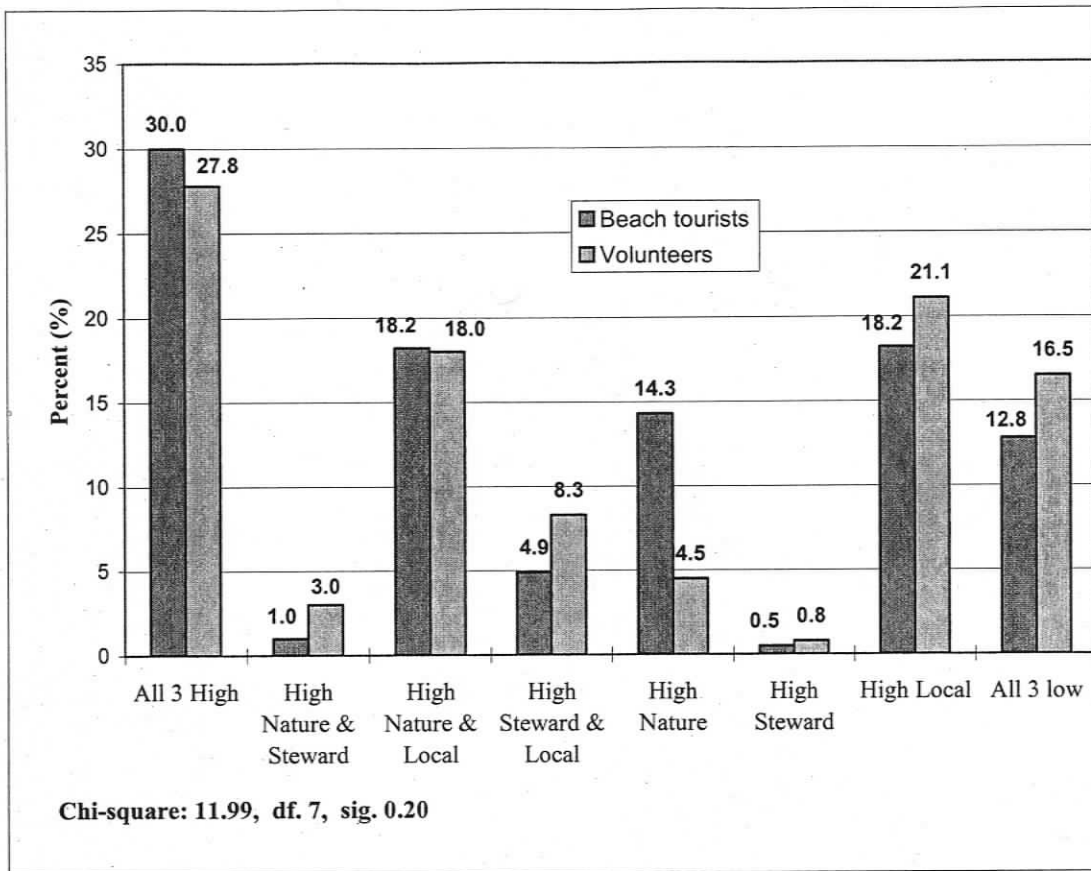
**Table 6.9 Volunteer tourists- Distribution of ecoscore by segment**

<b>Ecoscore Quartile</b>	<b>Low All</b>	<b>High 1 factor</b>	<b>High 2 factors</b>	<b>High All</b>
0-25%	65.6	34.4	0.0	0.0
26-50%	2.9	61.8	35.3	0.0
51-75%	0.0	10.3	65.5	24.1
76-100%	0.0	0.0	21.1	78.9

Chi-square: 169.18, df.9, sig.0.00

Respondents were classified as high or low on each factor of nature, stewardship, and local culture. Aggregate classification of segments is shown in Table 6.7. Those scoring high on all three factors make up 30% of the beach tourist sample and 27.8% of the volunteer sample. Only 12.8% and 16.5% score low on all three factors in the beach and volunteer samples respectively. In the beach sample, those scoring high on 2 factors make up 24.1% of the respondents, while 33.0% are high in 1 factor. In comparison, 29.3% of volunteers score high in 2 factors and 26.4% are high in 1 factor.

Figure 6.3 shows a more detailed view of how scores are distributed by each factor in combination. Among respondents that scored high in only one factor, the 'stewardship' dimension has markedly low representation. Only one person in each sample responded that items related to stewardship were of high importance, versus lower importance of nature and local culture items. Nature as a single factor was high in 14.3% of the beach tourist sample, and 4.5% of the volunteer sample. For local culture, these figures are 18.2% and 21.1%, respectively.



**Figure 6.3 – High/low score by factor for beach and volunteer sample**

High scores in a pair of factors reflect an affinity with two of the three dimensions identified through factor analysis. The pairing of stewardship with nature was identified in only 1.0% of the beach sample and 3.0% of the volunteer sample. 4.9% of beach tourists had high scores pairing stewardship with local, compared with 8.3% of the volunteer sample. The pairing of nature with local culture is the strongest combination, present in 18.2% of the beach sample and 18.0% of the volunteer sample. Corresponding statistical tests show that the beach tourist and volunteer samples do not differ significantly in the frequency of respondents in each category.

## 6.6 Motivational factors by ecotourist segment

Frequencies within each ecotourist segment by motivations and by demographic and trip characteristics were examined to explore relationships between variables. Cross-tabulations with chi-square tests were performed to test for significance. Ecotourist groups were divided into *non-ecotourist*, *semi-ecotourist*, and *ecotourist*. Non-ecotourists are those that do not identify strongly with ecotourism principles, and score low in all three factors of nature, stewardship, and local culture. Semi-ecotourists are those that respond high to one or two ecotourism dimensions. These respondents identify strongly with certain elements of ecotourism, but do not embrace the concept as a whole. Finally, ecotourists are those that respond high to all three factors, and tie high importance to a comprehensive meaning of ecotourism, which is outlined in supporting literature. This definition incorporates elements of sustainable environmental conservation and social development.

**Table 6.10 Summary table of tourist segments**

	<i>Beach tourists</i>		<i>Volunteer tourists</i>	
	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
Ecotourists- High in all 3 factors	61	30.0	37	27.8
Semi-ecotourists- High 1 or 2 factors	116	57.1	74	55.7
Non-ecotourists- Low in all 3 factors	26	12.8	22	16.5

Chi-square: 0.953, df.2, sig. 0.62

There are several travel motivations that differ significantly among tourist segments. Of the social and psychological motivations in Table 6.11, ecotourists attribute significantly higher importance to 'experience a different lifestyle' and 'experience a different culture' compared to non-ecotourists. Of the destination and services motivations, ecotourists attach higher importance than other segments to destination factors of 'friendly local people', 'safe and secure', and 'standard of cleanliness and hygiene' (see Table 6.12). Several elements related to the natural setting are also significant. These include 'exotic tropical environment', 'beautiful natural scenery', 'natural ecological sites to visit', and 'scuba diving offshore'.

**Table 6.11 Mean importance scores of social and psychological motivations by tourist segment**

Motivations	Mean Importance score				F score	F sig.	df betw/n	df within	pair-wise sig.
	Non-ecotourist	Semi-ecotourist	Ecotourist	Ecotourist					
To rest and relax	4.15	4.02	4.13	4.75	.622	2	200	ns	
To escape from my routine at home	3.54	3.41	3.83	2.319	.101	2	199	ns	
To find adventure and excitement	2.96	3.05	3.28	1.151	.319	2	199	ns	
To have fun	3.27	3.55	3.62	.991	.373	2	200	ns	
To be physically active	2.65	2.93	2.90	.728	.484	2	197	ns	
To indulge in luxury	1.73	1.89	1.85	.334	.716	2	194	ns	
To experience a different lifestyle	2.80	3.10	3.50	4.006	.020	2	198	NE<E	
To rediscover past good times	1.96	1.98	2.20	.610	.544	2	193	ns	
To go to places I have not visited before	3.35	3.65	3.64	.871	.420	2	199	ns	
To go where my friends have not been	1.73	1.60	1.83	1.123	.327	2	197	ns	
To experience another culture	3.35	3.74	4.10	6.066	.003	2	198	NE<E	
To see and try new things	3.38	3.77	3.84	2.121	.123	2	199	ns	
To spend time with friends or family	2.62	3.05	2.98	1.042	.355	2	198	ns	
To meet new people	2.81	2.97	2.87	.321	.726	2	199	ns	
To volunteer with tsunami rebuilding	2.20	2.17	2.46	1.109	.332	2	179	ns	
To see or support tsunami recovery	3.16	3.34	3.52	.855	.427	2	195	ns	

ns= no significance, NE= non-ecotourist, SE=semi-ecotourist, E=ecotourist

**Table 6.12 Mean importance scores of destination and services motivations by tourist segment**

Motivations	Mean Importance score					F sig.	df betw/n	df within	pair-wise sig.
	Non-ecotourist	Semi-ecotourist	Ecotourist	F score	F sig.				
Wide open spaces with few people	3.50	3.45	3.62	.450	.638	2	196	ns	
Friendly/local people	3.81	4.09	4.36	5.934	.003	2	199	NE<E	
Quiet and peaceful	3.81	3.94	4.10	1.230	.294	2	199	ns	
Small, manageable size	3.27	3.27	3.53	1.193	.306	2	194	ns	
Safe and secure	3.42	3.65	4.03	4.948	.008	2	200	NE<E, SE<E	
Standard of cleanliness and hygiene	3.15	3.52	3.95	8.325	.000	2	199	NE<E, SE<E	
Easy access from airport	2.38	2.25	2.68	2.784	.064	2	198	ns	
Good value for money	3.80	3.58	3.72	.944	.391	2	198	ns	
First class accommodation	2.12	2.11	2.32	.776	.462	2	199	ns	
Budget accommodation	3.23	3.30	3.58	1.478	.231	2	198	ns	
Exotic tropical environment	3.58	3.58	4.08	6.820	.001	2	200	SE<E	
Good weather	3.88	4.01	4.13	.925	.398	2	200	ns	
Beautiful natural scenery	3.92	3.97	4.39	7.014	.001	2	197	NE<E, SE<E	
Natural ecological sites to visit	3.15	3.50	4.08	9.895	.000	2	199	NE<E, SE<E	
Attractive beaches	3.85	3.91	4.16	2.041	.133	2	200	ns	
Scuba diving offshore	2.69	3.01	3.58	4.341	.014	2	195	NE<E, SE<E	
Good quality restaurants	3.44	3.49	3.80	2.269	.106	2	199	ns	
Nightlife and entertainment	2.00	2.13	2.51	3.066	.055	2	197	ns	

ns= no significance, NE= non-ecotourist, SE=semi-ecotourist, E=ecotourist

## **6.7 Demographic and trip characteristics by ecotourist segment**

Ecotourist segments were also compared with demographic and trip characteristics. Categories for each characteristic were agglomerated from the response options presented in the questionnaire. This was done to facilitate the comparison of variables. The 2 youngest age categories of under-25 and 26-35 were combined, versus the older categories of 36-45, 46-55, 56-65 and over 66. Education was divided into secondary and university. Secondary includes primary, high school and apprenticeship training, while university includes all post-secondary degrees. For travel group, those traveling alone were separated from those traveling with friends, family, a spouse or other companions. In the beach tourist sample, nationality was divided into Europeans and North Americans. Four Asian respondents were excluded due to their small number. The volunteer sample was divided into Europeans and non-Europeans. The non-European group includes North Americans plus Australians/New Zealanders. Asians are included as a separate group. For length of stay in Khao Lak, the mean value for each sample was used. The length of stay of beach tourists and volunteers differs dramatically, which is reflected in the mean .

In the beach sample, there is only one significant finding (see Table 6.13). In regards to education, a significantly greater proportion of non-ecotourists do not pursue post-secondary studies. Non-ecotourists are more likely to have a secondary or technical trade education. In the volunteer sample, age is the only significant factor (see Table 6.14). Here, volunteers younger than 35 are more likely to be ecotourists than those older than 35.

**Table 6.13- Beach tourists- Demographic and trip characteristics by tourist segment**

	<b>Tourist segment group (%)</b>			<b>Sig. Tests*</b>
	<b>Non-ecotourist</b>	<b>Semi</b>	<b>Ecotourist</b>	
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	56.6	42.2	37.3	Chi-sq. 2.51
Female	43.5	57.8	62.7	df. 2 Sig. .285
<b>Age</b>				
Under 35	58.3	58.4	56.7	Chi-sq. .051
36 and over	41.7	41.6	43.4	df. 2 Sig. .975
<b>Education</b>				
Secondary and trades	84.6	66.7	54.2	Chi-sq. 7.56
University educated	15.4	33.3	45.8	df. 2 <b>Sig .023*</b>
<b>Travel group</b>				
Alone	8.0	18.2	22.4	Chi-sq. 2.45
With friends/family	92.0	81.8	77.6	df. 2 Sig .294
<b>Nationality</b>				
European	100	92.0	91.5	Chi-sq. 2.22
North America	0	8.0	8.5	df. 2 Sig .330
<b>Stay in Khao Lak</b>				
Up to 16 days	66.7	85.0	23.0	Chi-sq. 4.78
More than 16 days	33.3	15.0	77.0	df. 2 Sig .092

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

**Table 6.14- Volunteers- Demographic and trip characteristics by tourist segment**

	<b>Tourist segment group (%)</b>			<b>Sig. Tests</b>
	<i>Non-ecotourist</i>	<i>Semi</i>	<i>Ecotourist</i>	
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	61.9	43.2	54.1	Chi-sq. 2.76
Female	38.1	56.8	45.9	df. 2 sig .252
<b>Age</b>				
Under 35	50.0	69.9	89.2	Chi-sq. 10.86
36 and over	50.0	30.1	10.8	10.8 <b>Sig .004*</b>
<b>Education</b>				
Secondary and trades	54.5	27.0	36.1	Chi-sq. 5.81
University educated	45.5	73.0	63.9	df. 2 Sig .055
<b>Travel group</b>				
Alone	22.7	38.0	48.1	Chi-sq. 3.93
With friends/family	77.3	62.0	51.4	df. 2 Sig .140
<b>Nationality</b>				
European	28.6	41.9	35.1	Chi-sq. 5.56
North America	66.7	52.7	48.6	df. 4
Asian	4.8	5.4	16.2	Sig .235
<b>Stay in Khao Lak</b>				
Up to 90 days	72.7	85.7	67.6	Chi-sq. 2.61
More than 90 days	27.3	14.3	32.4	df. 2 Sig .271

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

## 6.8 Discussion of main findings

*Themes identified by factor analysis offer an alternative interpretation to the theoretical dimensions prevalent in ecotourism literature.*

Factor analysis of the ecotourism principles importance data produced a 3-factor solution of nature, stewardship, and local culture. Three dimensions are also identified by Blamey (2001) in the theoretical discourse, and can be summarized as nature, education, and sustainable management. The results of the factor analysis and existing theory represent alternative interpretations of the main tenets of ecotourism.

**Table 6.15 Theoretical and factor analysis ecotourism dimensions results**

<b>Ecotourism Principles</b>	<b>Theoretical</b>	<b>Factor Analysis</b>
Participate in outdoor nature activities	Nature	Nature
See plants/animals in their natural environment	Nature	Nature
Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	Nature	Nature
Visit nature areas such as National Parks	Nature	Nature
Minimize my own impact on the environment	Sustainability	Nature
Use site sensitive accommodation	Sustainability	Stewardship
Donate money or volunteer time to conservation	Sustainability	Stewardship
Choose companies with best env/social practice	Sustainability	Stewardship
Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	Sustainability	Stewardship
Interact with locals in a culturally sensitive manner	Sustainability	Local culture
Support shops/services owned by local people	Sustainability	Local culture
Support businesses that employ local people	Sustainability	Local culture
Learn about animals and other natural features	Education	Nature
Raise environmental awareness in others	Education	Stewardship
Learn about local environmental issues	Education	Stewardship
Learn about local customs and culture	Education	Local culture

Both factor analysis and theory identify 'nature' as a distinct theme. Nature is implicitly present in the eco- prefix, linking it connotatively with nature and the environment. Indeed, early definitions of ecotourism focused on enjoying and

admiring natural features, thus equating it with nature tourism (Boo, 1990; Ceballos-Lascurain, 1987). These early theoretical conceptualizations of ecotourism capture the basic criteria of visiting relatively undisturbed natural areas and admiring animals and plants through outdoor recreation, also present in the *nature* factor. Two additional items in the 'Nature' factor include 'minimize my own impact on the environment' and the educational element of 'learning about animals, plants and natural features'.

The education dimension identified in the literature is not replicated as a distinct entity in the factor analysis. Rather, education related items are scattered, with at least one in each factor. For instance, 'learning about environmental issues and problems' is in the *stewardship* factor, and 'learning about local customs and culture' is in the *local culture* factor.

*Local culture* is a distinct factor. It is not as prominent in theory, where it is often identified as a subtheme of sustainable management. The *local culture* factor includes both passive and active interpretations of ecotourism (Orams 1995). Behaving in a culturally sensitive manner suggests a passive role, while supporting businesses that are owned or employ local people implies a more active and conscious role in distributing economic benefits to locals.

The theoretical dimension of 'sustainable management' is most closely in tune with the *stewardship* factor. This factor shares many of the same items as the latter

theoretical dimensions, and incorporates themes of environmental and socio-cultural stewardship. Many *stewardship* items lean towards a more active and participatory role in ecotourism. These include choosing sustainable accommodation and guiding options, as well as donating money to enhance community welfare and conservation. Raising environmental awareness in others implies a very active educational role.

In summary, both theory and factor analysis identify three main dimensions of ecotourism. However, the organization and content of these dimensions differs substantially. While theory labels dimensions as nature, education, and sustainable management, this study's factor analysis divides dimensions into the themes of nature, stewardship, and local culture. Rather than claiming that one outcome superior to the other, it is useful to compare and contrast them as interpretations of a common concept.

***Principles related to local culture and communities form the most important ecotourism dimension among respondents. Respondents that relate strong importance to this dimension only may have stronger ties to cultural tourism than ecotourism.***

The calculation of means from non-interval data is controversial in statistical analysis. In regards to Likert importance scales, categories are not unequivocally divided into uniform increments, a requirement of interval level measurement (Mitra & Lankford, 1999). However, treating Likert responses as quasi-interval data allows for complex statistical tests, and has become a more common and acceptable practice over the past 20 years (Neuman, 2000). Researchers treat Likert data as interval measurement since most statistical techniques are not affected by minor deviations in degrees of

difference (Mitra & Lankford, 1999). In this analysis, the mean importance of each factor is used to investigate whether any single dimension is especially important or unimportant.

Importance means show that local culture is the strongest factor, followed by nature and stewardship. The segmentation analysis (Figure 6.3) identifies a group of respondents that score high in the local culture factor only. It is reasonable to argue that these respondents exhibit tenuous ties to ecotourism. Indeed, they may relate more strongly to cultural tourism than ecotourism. Nevertheless, other respondent segments place high importance in local culture in combination with other factors of nature and education. Those that place high importance in all 3 dimensions can be most definitively identified as ecotourists. Indeed, the presence and interplay of cultural and natural attractions in ecotourism has long been recognized (Weaver & Lawton, 2007).

The idea that ecotourism must respect and cooperate with local communities should not be dismissed. Ecotourism has been lauded as a tool for sustainable development in less developed countries, where widespread poverty is often the biggest threat to environmental conservation (Adams & Infield, 2002; Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Dearden, 1991). Over the long term, successful ecotourism projects can seldom afford to ignore local residents, who often depend on natural resources found in and around the destination. If the main goal of ecotourism is environmental conservation,

cooperation with local communities and economic incentives for local residents is a part of the solution.

There are variable interpretations regarding ecotourism's responsibilities to local communities. Active interpretations strive for improvements in local standards of living. In contrast, a passive approach may not interact with residents directly, but continuously respect family territories and ways of life. A goal of zero impact is challenging, as inter-cultural interactions inevitably bring changes that may benefit some and hurt others (Belsky, 1999). Despite its laudable theoretical intent, there are many socio-cultural impacts attributed to ecotourism from displacement (Adams & Infield, 2002) to changes in subsistence strategies (Dearden, 1991).

In the future, a stronger focus on socio-cultural stewardship may be driven by the high importance that tourists place on the people they encounter on their trip. Beach and volunteer tourists in Khao Lak responded strongly to items that reflect a combination of passive and active integration with local people. However, good intentions do not mean that tourists are aware of what actions or inactions may harm local communities. Instead, tourism managers and operators should work with both tourists and communities to ensure that sustainable practices are implemented. Interaction with Thais in respectful and meaningful ways is very important to many visitors to Khao Lak, and tied to tourist satisfaction. This dimension should not be overlooked in the design and delivery of ecotourism in Khao Lak.

***There is no significant difference in the segment groups of volunteers and beach tourists based on the importance of ecotourism principles.***

Respondents were assigned to segments based on the importance that each related to 16 ecotourism principles drawn from the literature. These principles were designed to reflect the full theoretical definition of ecotourism with passive to active orientations. Those that did not relate high importance to any dimension of ecotourism scored low on all three factors. These respondents were labeled as *non-ecotourists*. This finding is similar to segmentation analyses by Palacio & McCool (1997) and Pearce & Moscardo (1994). Both studies sampled broad tourist populations and identified non-ecotourist segments. Palacio & McCool identified this group as 'passive players', while Pearce & Moscardo labeled their group 'novelty sun-seekers'.

Respondents that scored high on one or two factors place high importance on certain elements of ecotourism. Those that are strongly attracted exclusively to items in the nature factor may be identified as nature tourists, while those that relate strongly to the local culture factor may be classified cultural tourists. More comprehensive questions would be needed to definitively classify such respondents into other alternative tourist categories. Arguably, those that do not place high importance in all 3 ecotourism dimensions should not be labeled as ecotourists, even if they identify themselves as such. Following this logic, respondents that respond high in one or two of the three factors are labeled as *semi-ecotourists*. Only those that respond high in all 3 factors are labeled as *ecotourists*. Palacio & McCool (1997) accord with this approach. They identify 'ecotourists' as the segment of respondents that place

highest importance in the collected factors of *escape*, *learn about nature*, *healthy activity*, and *cohesive*.

There is no significant difference in the frequency of non-ecotourists, semi-ecotourists, and ecotourists in the beach sample versus the volunteer samples. This finding is somewhat surprising since volunteer tourists are often motivated by a desire to improve social or environmental conditions and experience local culture (Rehberg 2005). In this way, volunteers would be expected to have significantly higher responses in the *nature* and *local culture* factors. However, there are no significant differences between beach and volunteer tourists in this respect. At the study site of Khao Lak, volunteers are not engaged in environmental conservation projects and do not work in nature-based settings. With a focus on social development, volunteers in Khao Lak are not connected to *nature* principles, and do not place higher importance in this factor. Both volunteer tourists and beach visitors relate high importance to principles related to *local culture*.

***A comparison of motivations among beach tourist segments sheds insight into characteristics of each segment.***

An examination of motivations that are significantly different among beach resort tourist segments, versus those that are not, gives insight into the composition of each group. Several motivations related to the natural environment are more important to *ecotourists* than to other segments. A greater desire to visit protected areas and participate in scuba diving among *ecotourists* supports the premise that nature experiences are more important to this segment. In contrast, the environment-based

motives of attractive beaches and good weather are equally important to all tourists, from those that remain in lounge chairs on the beach to those that participate in hikes to more remote coastal areas. It is not surprising that there are no differences among segments in respect to these latter two items.

In reference to push motivations for traveling, opportunities to experience a different lifestyle or a different culture are more important to *ecotourists*. Both of these items reflect an interest in cultural elements of tourism, whereby tourists can experience local ways of life and learn about local customs and traditions. Higher importance of these motivations among *ecotourists* indicates that in addition to nature-based activities and destinations, they are more interested than other segments in a more experiential interaction and incorporation of cultural elements into their experience.

***Overall, demographics and trip characteristics are not significant in profiling ecotourists. A comparison of past studies suggests that there is no universal profile of the 'ecotourist'.***

Past studies have published mixed results regarding the demographic and trip characteristics of ecotourists. Some studies have found that more females participate in ecotourism than males (Eagles & Cascagnette, 1994), while others have concluded the opposite (Diamantis, 1999). Conflicting results have also been published regarding the age. Some studies find that ecotourists are older (Ballantine & Eagles, 1994), while other find younger participants (Galley & Clifton, 2004). Travel group composition also varies, with either a dominant segment that travels alone or with a group (Backman & Potts, 1993). Wight (1996) suggests that interest in ecotourism is

fairly evenly divided by gender and age, but demographic characteristics differ significantly by recreational activity. Trip characteristics such as party composition and trip length also vary significantly with the activity and the type of destination (Wight, 1996).

In this study, education was the only significant factor among beach tourists. Those without a university education were less likely to identify with ecotourism principles compared to those with a post-secondary education. In the volunteer sample, the only significant factor was age. Younger volunteers were more likely to be segmented as ecotourists than older volunteers. This finding is similar to other ecotourist segmentation studies, where few demographic or trip characteristics have been found to be significant in profiling the 'classic' ecotourist.

Palacio & McCool's (1997) work in Belize found significant differences in two characteristics, group size and age. Hvenegaard and Dearden (1998) and Weaver (2002) found age and education to be significant factors in distinguishing tourist types. Both studies found that ecotourists were older and more educated. While this study also found that university educated beach tourists were significantly more likely to identify positively with ecotourism principles, conclusions regarding age among volunteer tourists were the opposite from the 3 aforementioned studies. Younger volunteers were more likely to be segmented as ecotourists than older volunteers. The paucity and inconsistency of findings in regards to trip characteristics and demographics in this study and others suggests that profiling ecotourists by these variables alone is not very meaningful.

## Chapter 7- Conclusion

The main goal of this research is to enhance understanding of tourism redevelopment in Khao Lak, Thailand one year after the Sumatra-Andaman tsunami of December 26, 2004. This study is unique in several respects. First, it examines tourism in the context of rebuilding after a natural disaster, which has not been thoroughly investigated in previous studies. Secondly, it focuses on two main visitor segments, beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists; very little study has been devoted to this latter group. Volunteer tourists in Khao Lak are an especially interesting case since they arrived in the wake of a tragic event and have remained in the area long after the administration of emergency aid.

A list of principles used to measure the importance of ecotourism among respondents was drawn from a broad survey of ecotourism literature. This included theoretical discussions (Blamey, 2001; Carrier & Macleod, 2005; Fennell, 1999; Stone & Wall, 2004) as well as case studies from developing countries (Foucat, 2002; Shelhas et al., 2002; Stem et al., 2003; Stone & Wall, 2004; E. Young, 1999b). Ecotourist typologies by Chapman (1995), Palacio & McCool (1997), Dearden & Hvenegaard (1998), and Weaver (2002) were compared with the segmentation results produced by this study. A summary of the main findings is presented in the following section. This is followed by a discussion of the study's strengths and limitations, and finally suggestions for future research.

## 7.1 Summary of major findings

Beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists were identified as the main visitor groups in Khao Lak through a period of reconnaissance and informal interviews. These two groups are distinct in geographical space, and focus on separate activities. Beach resort tourists stay in hotels along the coastline, while volunteer tourists rent accommodation inland near town amenities. Beach tourists devote most of their time to coastal activities including sunbathing, swimming, and walking on the beach. Nearly half of resort tourists also participate in snorkeling and/or scuba diving. In contrast, volunteers in Khao Lak commit 40 hours per week to voluntary work and generally spend their leisure time with co-workers (TVC, 2007). Volunteering is most often a planned activity and figures as an important part of the trip as a whole. Significant differences in trip characteristics and demographics further support the division of beach and volunteer tourists into separate samples.

Volunteers are significantly younger and more educated than beach tourists. Beach tourists are more likely to travel with friends, family, or a partner, while volunteers more often travel alone. There are dramatic differences in nationality between samples. Nearly half (46.0%) of beach tourists are German, compared with only 3.8% of volunteers. North Americans are the largest group of volunteers (41%), but make up a very small proportion of beach tourists (7%). There was no significant difference in gender, males and females were evenly represented in both samples.

The unmistakable presence of volunteers in Khao Lak more than one year after the Sumatra-Andaman tsunami of 2004 was a surprising finding. Rather than paring back volunteering opportunities, the Tsunami Volunteer Centre (TVC) is devising new programs to respond to heavy demand. While the TVC and other organizations were still involved in reconstruction projects through January to April 2006, volunteer programs were expanding into English education, community art projects, and after school children's activities.

Factor and segmentation analyses were performed on the importance of ecotourism principles data. A 3-factor solution was produced, which reorganized 16 ecotourism principles into categories labeled as nature, stewardship, and local culture. Principles collected in the local culture factor had the highest total mean, followed by nature, and then stewardship.

Respondents were segmented into ecotourists, semi-ecotourists, and non-ecotourists based on their importance scores in each of the 3 factors. Ecotourists are those high in all three factors, semi-ecotourists score high in one or two factors, and non-ecotourists do not score high in any factor. Interestingly, there was no significant difference in the segmentation of the beach resort sample versus the volunteer sample. Furthermore, few trip characteristics and demographic variables were significant in differentiating tourist segments.

## 7.2 Conclusions

While the tsunami that struck Thailand's Andaman coast caused unprecedented damage, this study's findings point to possibilities for more sustainable tourism development in the rebuilding process. Several hotels in Khao Lak were already rebuilt and open for business by the one-year anniversary of the tsunami. During the field research period, January to April 2006, several large resort complexes were under construction or nearing completion. In some respects, the rapid repossession of beachfront real estate and the subsequent rebuilding is encouraging. Evidence of the tsunami's destruction was swept out of sight to make way for determined efforts to resurrect Khao Lak's tourism industry as quickly as possible. The speedy reconstruction hints at tourism's enormous importance and value locally and nationally. However, the rush to rebuild also highlights missed opportunities. After the sudden collapse of Khao Lak's tourism industry, there was great potential to diversify tourism and include more sustainable options such as ecotourism. Daily site visits in early 2006 suggest that these opportunities have been overlooked as developers build even bigger resort complexes to reconstitute Khao Lak as a prime beach holiday destination.

Although there is no evidence of a shift towards more sustainable tourism development, this study's results show that there is strong demand for such opportunities. Beach resort and volunteer tourists followed a similar pattern of segmentation based on a series of principles related to various aspects of ecotourism. About one third of respondents in each sample felt that all factors of nature,

stewardship, and local culture were highly important. This suggests that there is strong demand for ecotourism among international visitors to Khao Lak. A large proportion responded that a combination of one or two factors were highly important. High importance in one or two dimensions of ecotourism could signal an initial interest or initiation into ecotourism, which may grow into a more comprehensive embrace of the concept over time. Although a response of high importance does not always translate into participation in a particular activity, it does point to greater potential for engagement.

Despite existing interest among visitors, there are no land-based ecotourism opportunities in the Khao Lak area. Potential ecotourism sites are readily found in nearby protected areas such as Khao Lak-Lum Ru National Park. Although this park covers 125 square kilometers, only a small fraction of its coastline area is developed for recreational use (DNP Thailand, 2007). With its proximity 4 kilometers from the resort complexes along Bang Niang and Nang Thong beaches, Khao Lak-Lum Ru National Park could attract more international tourists if it offered ecotourism opportunities such as guided hikes, snorkeling equipment, or interpretive signs about local flora and fauna.

The volunteer tourism component was not initially included in the study design. However, after several weeks in Khao Lak it was evident that volunteers were a significant presence in both numbers and economic impact. The majority of volunteers are individually responsible for their own room and board, which

redistributes economic benefits to many local boarding houses and restaurants (TVC, 2007). Several small business owners commented that volunteer tourists were their main clientele in the difficult year following the tsunami. From the initial stages of field research, it was evident that volunteer tourists played an integral role in post-tsunami tourism redevelopment. As a distinct tourist type, it was pertinent to include them in the study and compare them with the traditional visitor group, beach resort tourists.

The bustle of volunteer activities around Khao Lak months after emergency aid and beach restoration had been completed implies strong demand for volunteer travel opportunities. Despite the lack of relief work directly tied to tsunami, independent travelers and organized groups were continuously arriving in Khao Lak to begin volunteer projects. Numerous local NGOs created in the wake of the tsunami plan to operate for 5 years or more (D-TRAC, 2007). In order to place new volunteers the leading Tsunami Volunteer Centre (TVC) has launched new programs including English teaching in schools, community services for Burmese migrants, and after-school art classes. With Khao Lak's growing reputation as a prime volunteer tourism destination, NGOs should have no problem recruiting new volunteers to operate their programs on a long-term basis.

## **7.3 Strengths and limitations of the study**

### **7.3.1 Strengths**

This study builds on the work of other researchers who have explored motivations, ecotourism, and volunteer tourism. The questionnaires' construction was guided by a lengthy literature review, and answer choices were drawn from a collection of past studies. A list of push and pull travel motivations was drawn from the work of Yuan & McDonald (1990), Cha et al. (1995), Turnbull & Uysal (1995), Jang & Cai (2002), and Jang & Wu (2006). The Volunteer Functions Inventory of volunteer motivations by Clary and others (1998) was applied. Ecotourism principles were a synthesis of works by Fennell (1999), Blamey (2001), Stone & Wall (2004), and Carrier & Macleod (2005).

This thesis is innovative in its approach, and provides several contributions to research literature. These are listed briefly here and then discussed.

1. The research design compares 2 distinct samples, beach resort tourists and volunteer tourists.
2. The research focuses on social science aspects of tourism redevelopment during a dynamic period of rebuilding.
3. A new tool to assess interest in ecotourism participation was designed based on literature review.
4. This study is one of a few that relate specifically to volunteer tourism, and builds knowledge on this type of alternative tourism.

First, two tourist types were sampled separately, with questionnaires tailored for each group. Identical questions on trip characteristics, demographics, and importance of ecotourism principles facilitated comparison between the samples. Each sample produced a 3-factor solution with similar loadings, which increases the validity of the results. Although beach resort and volunteer tourists differ significantly in demographic and trip characteristics, there is no difference in their segmentation into ecotourist types based on their ecoscore. This means that compared to beach tourists, volunteer tourists do not relate higher importance to the collective of ecotourist principles. This is an important contribution to the literature, since connections between volunteer tourists and other types of tourists, and amongst volunteer groups themselves, has not been thoroughly explored.

While there are numerous studies that focus on the psychological trauma of disasters, there is little work that touches on social science aspects of tourism redevelopment (Freedy, Saladin, Kilpatrick, Resnick, & Saunders, 1994). This research focused on the motivations, experiences, and importance of ecotourism principles among beach resort and volunteer tourists. Field research was conducted during a limited time period, from January to April 2006. This time period was selected because it is high tourist season, and serves as a bellwether for the recovery of local tourism industry. This research is also unique in that it was conducted in the intermediate stages of natural disaster recovery, rather than looking at immediate after effects.

A third contribution to the literature is the instrument designed to measure the importance of ecotourism principles. Sixteen statements were formulated to represent natural, educational, and sustainability aspects of ecotourism. Ecotourism is an extremely challenging concept to capture due to extreme variability in definitional discourses and individual interpretations. Although Question 12 in the surveys may not perfectly encompass all principles that are accrued to ecotourism, it succeeds in capturing the essence of the concept.

Despite the growing popularity of volunteer travel, there is little academic work in this field (Brown & Lehto, 2005). Most published works to date are case studies that present basic descriptive data. This study adds to this knowledge base by examining the unique context of volunteers engaged in long-term disaster relief. Few authors have presented any theoretical ideas or arguments in this area. One exception is the distinction between volunteer-minded and vacation-minded tourists (Brown & Morrison, 2003). Based on the proportion of trip time devoted to volunteering, research results found that there is a combination of volunteer-minded and vacation-minded tourists among service workers in Khao Lak. This is notable because past studies have generally focused only on volunteer-minded tourists engaged in intense short-term projects. Brown & Lehto (2005) are the only researchers to specifically examine vacation-minded tourists and attempt to draw links between volunteer tourist types.

### 7.3.2 Limitations

Despite concerted efforts to minimize faults in the study design and implementation, there are numerous limitations. First, the Likert scale used to measure satisfaction with reasons for visiting Khao Lak (Q-5, Q-8) includes a 'not applicable' option. This answer choice was added after the pilot study, as several respondents noted that they could not comment on satisfaction with items such as 'scuba diving' or 'volunteering with tsunami rebuilding' because they did not partake in these activities. However, in the data analysis it was apparent that many respondents used the 'not applicable' category as a default for items of low importance. Six items of low overall importance had 'not applicable' responses of over 40%. A selection of 'not applicable' is treated as a blank response in the data entry and analysis. Thus, satisfaction means are inflated, and likely inaccurate in describing true visitor satisfaction levels.

Incorporating volunteer tourism mid-way through the research process enriched the study, but it also introduced numerous complications. Initial preparation of this study focused entirely on the experiences of beach tourists. The decision to design a questionnaire tailored to volunteer experiences was made after the beach resort questionnaire was written and piloted. Since volunteer tourism was not incorporated in the proposed research questions, literature review, and research design, the study is not as cohesive as it could be. Every effort was made to cut and copy questions from the beach tourist questionnaire to the volunteer questionnaire in order to facilitate analytical comparison. However, it was evident from informal interviews with

volunteers that questions regarding participation in recreational activities and motivations to travel were not viable. Many volunteers expressed the idea that their energy was focused on work, not leisure activities. Plus, motivations to volunteer factored very strongly in discussions about why they joined post-tsunami recovery projects. In retrospect, qualitative methods such as focus groups or interviews would have been an effective supplement to compare the motivations and leisure time of resort and volunteer tourists.

The Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) was used in the questionnaire to assess motivations among volunteer tourists. However, research literature concurs that volunteer tourists have a unique set of motivations that are a combination of volunteer and travel motivations. To date, volunteer tourist motivations have been studied qualitatively (Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004; Rehberg, 2005). The survey question on motivations for volunteering in Khao Lak could have drawn on these qualitative works to capture a more complete understanding of volunteer tourist motivations.

### 7.3.3 Suggestions for future research

- The research outlined in this thesis is based on a limited time frame and gives a snapshot of tourism in Khao Lak at a specific stage of redevelopment. Additional insights would be gained by tracking how the tourism industry develops over subsequent tourist seasons. Does the composition of tourists change over time? Do volunteer tourists continue to visit Khao Lak?
- Future research could be conducted on the Thai community's interest in ecotourism as both participants and leaders. This may involve National Park officials, tour operators, and local residents. Strategies to engage local people in nature-based education in National Parks and other sites warrant study.
- Additional research is needed to better understand vacation-minded volunteer tourists. Numerous case studies have examined volunteer-minded tourists, but little work has been devoted to those that volunteer as a short component of their trip. What motivates vacation-minded volunteers? How do the motivations of vacation-minded and volunteer-minded tourists differ? Substantially more research is needed in this area.
- Studies are warranted to examine the interconnections between ecotourism and NGO driven aid and development work. Research may examine how aid initiatives could be broadened to include environmental awareness and education components.

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VISITOR EXPERIENCES IN KHAO LAK



February-March, 2006



**YOUR INTERESTS**

Thank-you for visiting Khao Lak! The purpose of this study is to learn about visitor experiences in the Khao Lak area. Your opinions will help to direct future tourism development in this region. Please return the completed questionnaire to the research attendant. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Q-1. While staying in the Khao Lak area, which of the following activities will you be participating in?  
(circle all that apply)

- 1 BEACH SUNTANNING
- 2 SCUBA DIVING TO OFFSHORE ISLANDS
- 3 BOATING
- 4 SWIMMING
- 5 SNORKELING
- 6 HIKING/WALKING
- 7 BIRDWATCHING OR OTHER NATURE STUDY
- 8 ELEPHANT TREKKING
- 9 CAMPING
- 10 RIVER RAFTING
- 11 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

Q-2. Of the activities listed above in Q-1, which 2 are you most interested in?  
(write the number from Q-1 on the line, for example '1' for beach suntanning)

\_\_\_\_\_ MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITY

\_\_\_\_\_ SECOND MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITY

REASONS FOR VISITING KHAO LAK

Q-3. In order to provide a high quality experience, it is important to know why people choose to visit Khao Lak. Listed below are a number of personal and social reasons why people visit our area. Please indicate how **important/ unimportant** each reason is to you in your decision to come to Khao Lak. (circle a number beside each statement)

POSSIBLE REASONS FOR VISITING KHAO LAK	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
(A) To rest and relax . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(B) To escape from my routine at home . .	1	2	3	4	5
(C) To find adventure and excitement . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(D) To have fun . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(E) To be physically active . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(F) To indulge in luxury . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(G) To experience a different lifestyle . .	1	2	3	4	5
(H) To rediscover past good times . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(I) To go to places I have not visited before	1	2	3	4	5
(J) To go where my friends have not been	1	2	3	4	5
(K) To experience another culture . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(L) To see and try new things . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(M) To spend time with friends or family . .	1	2	3	4	5
(N) To meet new people . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(O) To volunteer with Tsunami rebuilding . .	1	2	3	4	5
(P) To see or support Tsunami recovery . .	1	2	3	4	5
(Q) Other _____ (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5

Q-4. Of the reasons listed above in Q-3, which 3 are the **most important** reasons motivating you to visit Khao Lak? (write the corresponding letter from Q-4)

- \_\_\_\_\_ MOST IMPORTANT REASON
- \_\_\_\_\_ SECOND MOST IMPORTANT REASON
- \_\_\_\_\_ THIRD MOST IMPORTANT REASON

SATISFACTION WITH YOUR EXPERIENCE

Q-5. Now, thinking about the quality of your experiences so far, please indicate how satisfied you are with the personal and social reasons that may have influenced you to visit Khao Lak. If the reason does not apply to you, use the "NOT APPLICABLE" column on the far right side. (circle a number beside each statement).

POSSIBLE REASONS FOR VISITING KHAO LAK	VERY POOR	POOR	NEUTRAL	GOOD	VERY GOOD	NOT APPLICABLE
(A) To rest and relax . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(B) To escape from my regular routine at home . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(C) To find adventure and excitement . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(D) To have fun . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(E) To be physically active . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(F) To indulge in luxury . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(G) To experience a different lifestyle . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(H) To rediscover past good times . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(I) To go to places I have not visited before . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(J) To go where my friends have not been . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(K) To experience another culture . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(L) To see and try new things . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(M) To spend time with friends or family . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(N) To meet new people . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(O) To volunteer with Tsunami rebuilding . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(P) To see or support Tsunami recovery . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(Q) Other _____ (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

ABOUT FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN KHAO LAK

Q-6. Now, we would like to ask you about other reasons that may have attracted you to Khao Lak. Listed below are a number of reasons that may be significant to you. Please indicate how **important/unimportant** each one is to you in your decision to come to Khao Lak. *(circle a number beside each statement)*

POSSIBLE REASONS FOR VISITING KHAO LAK	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
(A) Wide open spaces with few people.	1	2	3	4	5
(B) Friendly local people . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(C) Quiet and peaceful . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(D) Small, manageable size . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(E) Safe and secure . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(F) Standard of cleanliness and hygiene	1	2	3	4	5
(G) Easy access from airport . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(H) Good value for money . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(I) First class accommodation . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(J) Budget accommodation . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(K) Exotic tropical environment . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(L) Good weather . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(M) Beautiful natural scenery . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(N) Natural ecological sites to visit . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(O) Attractive beaches . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(P) Scuba diving to offshore islands . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(Q) Good quality restaurants . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(R) Nightlife and entertainment . . . .	1	2	3	4	5

Q-7. Of the reasons listed above in Q-6, which 3 are the **most important** reasons motivating you to visit Khao Lak? *(write the corresponding letter from Q-6)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ MOST IMPORTANT REASON
- \_\_\_\_\_ SECOND MOST IMPORTANT REASON
- \_\_\_\_\_ THIRD MOST IMPORTANT REASON

## SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Q-8. Now, thinking about the quality of your experiences so far, please indicate how satisfied you are with the things that may have attracted you to Khao Lak. If the reason does not apply to you, use the "NOT APPLICABLE" column on the far right side. (circle a number beside each statement)

POSSIBLE REASONS FOR VISITING KHAO LAK	VERY POOR	POOR	NEUTRAL	GOOD	VERY GOOD	NOT APPLICABLE
(A) Wide open spaces with few people . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(B) Friendly local people . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(C) Quiet and peaceful . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(D) Small, manageable size . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(E) Safe and secure . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(F) Standard of cleanliness and hygiene .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(G) Easy to access from airport . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(H) Good value for money . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(I) First class accommodation . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(J) Budget accommodation . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(K) Exotic tropical environment . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(L) Good weather . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(M) Beautiful natural scenery . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(N) Natural ecological sites to visit . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(O) Attractive beaches . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(P) Scuba diving to offshore islands	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(Q) Good quality restaurants . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
(R) Nightlife and entertainment . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

## ABOUT YOUR TRIP

Q-9. About how long are you staying in the Khao Lak area?

\_\_\_\_\_ DAYS

Q-10. About how long are you staying in Thailand?

\_\_\_\_\_ DAYS

Q-11. How many times have you visited Khao Lak?

- 1 0- THIS IS MY FIRST TIME
- 2 1-5 TIMES BEFORE THIS VISIT
- 3 6-10 TIMES BEFORE THIS VISIT
- 4 MORE THAN 10 TIMES THIS VISIT

**YOUR STYLE OF TRAVELLING**

Q-12. In order to know more about what is important to you on your trip, please respond to the following statements. State how important/unimportant each one is to you in your holiday traveling experience. (circle a number beside each statement).

TRAVEL STATEMENTS	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
(A) Participate in outdoor nature recreation activities such as walking or snorkelling .....	1	2	3	4	5
(B) See plants and animals in their natural environment .....	1	2	3	4	5
(C) Visit places of beautiful natural scenery .....	1	2	3	4	5
(D) Visit nature areas such a National Parks .....	1	2	3	4	5
(E) Minimize my own impact on the environment .....	1	2	3	4	5
(F) Use site sensitive accommodation that is not wasteful of local resources. ....	1	2	3	4	5
(G) Donate money or volunteer time to support conservation .....	1	2	3	4	5
(H) Interact with local people in a culturally sensitive manner. ....	1	2	3	4	5
(I) Learn about local customs, traditions, and culture .....	1	2	3	4	5
(J) Support shops/services owned by local people ...	1	2	3	4	5
(K) Support businesses that employ local people .....	1	2	3	4	5
(L) Investigate and then choose the tour companies that have the best environmental and social practices	1	2	3	4	5
(M) Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	1	2	3	4	5
(N) Learn about local environmental issues & problems	1	2	3	4	5
(O) Learn about animals, plants and natural features	1	2	3	4	5
(P) Raise environmental awareness in others	1	2	3	4	5

ABOUT YOU

Q-13. What is your gender?

- 1 MALE
- 2 FEMALE

Q-14. How old are you?

- 1 UNDER 25
- 2 26-35
- 3 36-45
- 4 46-55
- 5 56-65
- 6 OVER 70

Q-15. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- 1 GRADE/PRIMARY SCHOOL
- 2 HIGH SCHOOL
- 3 TRADE OR APPRENTICESHIP
- 4 COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
- 5 ADVANCED ACADEMIC DEGREE

Q-16. Who did you visit Khao Lak with?

- 1 ALONE
- 2 WITH YOUR FRIENDS
- 3 WITH YOUR FAMILY
- 4 OTHER (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q-17. What is your country of residence? \_\_\_\_\_

If there is anything else you would like say about your experience in the Khao Lak area, please write it on the back cover. This study is a partnership between Khao Lak National Park, Kasetsart University, Thailand and the University of Victoria, Canada. For more information, please contact: Kirsten van der Meer at [kirstenv@uvic.ca](mailto:kirstenv@uvic.ca)

UNDERSTANDING VOLUNTEER MOTIVATIONS IN  
POST-TSUNAMI REBUILDING



March, 2006



**ABOUT YOUR TRIP**

Q-1. Volunteering in Khao Lak is the . . . .

- 1 THE MAIN REASON FOR MY TRIP
- 2 A PLANNED ACTIVITY OF MY TRIP
- 3 AN UNPLANNED ACTIVITY DURING MY TRIP

Q-2. How did you **first** find out about volunteer opportunities in Khao Lak?

- 1 INTERNET SEARCH
- 2 WORD OF MOUTH FROM OTHER TRAVELERS
- 3 FROM A FRIEND OR RELATIVE WHO VOLUNTEERED
- 4 FROM A PREVIOUS VISIT TO KHAO LAK
- 5 NEWSPAPER OR OTHER MEDIA ARTICLE
- 6 BY CHANCE WHEN I ARRIVED IN KHAO LAK
- 7 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ (*please specify*)

Q-3 How many times have you been to Khao Lak?

- 1 0- THIS IS MY FIRST TIME
- 2 1-5 TIMES BEFORE THIS VISIT
- 3 6-10 TIMES BEFORE THIS VISIT
- 4 MORE THAN 10 TIMES THIS VISIT

Q-4. About how long are you volunteering in the Khao Lak area?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q-5. About how long is your trip in total?

\_\_\_\_\_

**ABOUT YOUR VOLUNTEERING**

Q-6. Did you come to Khao Lak with an organization such as a church group, youth group, university or NGO?

- 1 YES *(please specify organization)* \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 NO

Q-7. Now that you are volunteering in Khao Lak, which Tsunami recovery organization are you working with?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q-8. What kind of volunteer work are you doing?

- 1 ENGLISH TEACHER/ASSISTANT
- 2 BOAT BUILDING
- 3 HOUSE CONSTRUCTION
- 4 FURNITURE MAKING
- 5 ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION
- 6 COMMUNITY ART PROJECTS
- 7 ADMINISTRATION
- 8 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ *(please specify)*

Q-9. Do you have previous experience with **international** volunteer work?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

## Appendix B: Volunteer tourist survey

### YOUR REASONS FOR VOLUNTEERING

Q-10. There are a number of reasons why people choose to volunteer. Please indicate how accurate or important the following reasons were for **you** in your decision to volunteer in Khao Lak. *(circle a number beside each statement)*.

REASONS FOR VOLUNTEERING	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY MPORTANT	MODERATE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
(A) I am concerned about those less fortunate than me . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(B) My friends volunteer . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(C) People I'm close to want me to volunteer . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(D) Volunteering makes me feel important . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(E) I can make contacts that might help my career . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(F) Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(G) Volunteering gives me new perspectives on things . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(H) I can explore different career options . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(I) My family/friends place a high value on volunteering . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(J) Volunteering lets me learn things through direct, hands on experience . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(K) I feel it is important to help others . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(L) Volunteering helps me work through my own personal problems . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(M) Volunteering will help me to succeed in my chosen profession . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(N) I can do something for a cause that is important to me . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(O) Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(P) Volunteering makes me feel needed . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(Q) Volunteering makes me feel good about myself . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(R) Volunteer experience looks good on my resume . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(S) Volunteering is a way to make new friends . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(T) I can test my own limits and strengths . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5

REASONS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU

Q-11. Of ALL the motivations listed on the previous page, which 3 reasons are the most important to you?  
(write the corresponding letter from Q-9)

\_\_\_\_\_ MOST IMPORTANT REASON

\_\_\_\_\_ SECOND MOST IMPORTANT REASON

\_\_\_\_\_ THIRD MOST IMPORTANT REASON

*If you wish to write more about your motivations for volunteering please use the space on the back cover*

## Appendix B: Volunteer tourist survey

### YOUR STYLE OF TRAVELLING

Q-12. In order to know more about what is important to you on your trip, please respond to the following statements. State how important/unimportant each one is to **you** in your holiday traveling experience. (circle a number beside each statement).

TRAVEL STATEMENTS	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
(A) Participate in outdoor nature recreation activities such as walking or snorkelling . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(B) See plants and animals in their natural environment	1	2	3	4	5
(C) Visit places of beautiful natural scenery . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(D) Visit nature areas such a National Parks . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(E) Minimize my own impact on the environment . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(F) Use site sensitive accommodation that is not wasteful of local resources. . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(G) Donate money or volunteer time to support conservation . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(H) Interact with local people in a culturally sensitive manner	1	2	3	4	5
(I) Learn about local customs and culture	1	2	3	4	5
(J) Support shops/services owned by local people	1	2	3	4	5
(K) Support businesses that employ local people . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5
(L) Investigate and choose tour companies that have the best environmental and social practices	1	2	3	4	5
(M) Donate money/volunteer time to local charities	1	2	3	4	5
(N) Learn about local environmental issues & problems	1	2	3	4	5
(O) Learn about animals and other natural features	1	2	3	4	5
(P) Raise environmental awareness in others . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5

ABOUT YOU

Q-13. What is your gender?

- 1 MALE
- 2 FEMALE

Q-14. How old are you?

- 1 25 or UNDER
- 2 26-35
- 3 36-45
- 4 46-55
- 5 56-65
- 6 OVER 66

Q-15. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- 1 GRADE/PRIMARY SCHOOL
- 2 HIGH SCHOOL
- 3 TRADE OR APPRENTICESHIP
- 4 COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
- 5 ADVANCED ACADEMIC DEGREE

Q-16. Who did you visit Khao Lak with?

- 1 ALONE
- 2 WITH YOUR FRIENDS
- 3 WITH BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND OR SPOUSE
- 4 WITH FAMILY MEMBERS
- 5 OTHER (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q-17. What is your nationality? \_\_\_\_\_

Q-18. While staying in Khao Lak, estimate how much money you spend on average *per week* in the following categories.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Baht *per week* on accommodation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Baht *per week* on restaurant food and groceries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Baht *per week* on alcoholic drinks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Baht *per week* on transportation and gas
- \_\_\_\_\_ Baht *per week* on internet and telephone

If there is anything else that you would like to say about your motivations for volunteering or your volunteering experience please write in the space below. This study is a partnership between Kasetsart University, Thailand and the University of Victoria, Canada. For more information please contact Kirsten at [kirstenv@uvic.ca](mailto:kirstenv@uvic.ca)

## Appendix C- Summary Data Tables

### Beach resort questionnaire

#### Participation in Recreational Activities (Q1)

Activity	Response (%)		
	Yes	No	Missing
Beach suntanning	84.7	11.3	3.9
Swimming	72.9	23.2	3.9
Scuba diving	48.3	47.8	3.9
Snorkeling	45.8	50.2	3.9
Hiking/walking	29.6	66.5	3.9
Boating	21.7	74.4	3.9
Elephant trekking	12.8	83.3	3.9
Birdwatching or nature study	10.8	85.2	3.9
River rafting	6.4	89.7	3.9
Camping	1.0	95.1	3.9
Other	22.7	73.4	3.9

#### Importance of Recreational Activities (Q2)

Activity	Response (%)		
	Most important	Second Important	Total Importance
Beach suntanning	33.0	30.0	63.0
Scuba diving	31.5	8.9	40.4
Swimming	9.4	22.2	31.6
Snorkeling	6.4	6.9	13.3
Hiking/walking	4.4	7.9	12.3
River rafting	0.0	4.9	4.9
Boating	0.5	3.9	4.4
Birdwatching/nature study	0.5	3.4	3.9
Elephant trekking	0.0	2.0	2
Camping	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	9.4	4.9	14.3
Missing	4.9	9.4	14.3

**Reasons for visiting Khao Lak- Social and Psychological (Q3)**

	Response (%)					Mean	Standard Deviation
	Not at all important 1	Slightly Important 2	Moderately Important 3	Very Important 4	Extremely Important 5		
<b>Social and psychological reasons</b>							
To rest and relax	2.0	2.0	17.2	44.8	34.0	4.1	0.9
To experience another culture	3.5	6.0	21.9	44.8	23.9	3.8	1.0
To see and try new things	2.5	8.4	23.3	44.1	21.8	3.7	1.0
Go to places that I have not visited	5.4	9.9	23.8	40.1	20.8	3.6	1.1
To escape from my routine at home	9.9	9.4	20.3	36.1	24.3	3.6	1.2
To have fun	4.9	9.9	33.5	30.0	21.7	3.5	1.1
To see or support Tsunami recovery	11.1	10.1	27.8	32.8	18.2	3.4	1.2
To experience a different lifestyle	8.5	20.4	28.9	28.9	13.4	3.2	1.2
To find adventure and excitement	7.9	19.8	35.6	26.7	9.9	3.1	1.1
To spend time with friends or family	24.9	10.4	19.9	31.8	12.9	3.0	1.4
To meet new people	10.9	21.3	39.1	22.8	5.9	2.9	1.1
To be physically active	10.0	25.5	37.0	21.0	6.5	2.9	1.1
To volunteer with Tsunami rebuilding	34.1	28.0	22.5	8.2	7.1	2.3	1.2
To rediscover past good times	51.0	14.8	16.8	13.8	3.6	2.0	1.2
To indulge in luxury	43.1	33.5	18.8	3.6	1.0	1.9	0.9
To go where my friends have not been	57.5	27.0	8.0	4.5	3.0	1.7	1.0
Other	4.2	0.0	0.0	29.2	66.7	4.5	0.9

**Satisfaction with reasons for visiting Khao Lak- Social and Psychological (Q5)**

	Response (%)							Mean	Standard Deviation
	Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very good	Not Applicable			
<b>Social and psychological reasons</b>									
To rest and relax	0.0	0.0	5.5	27.5	63.0	4.0	4.7	0.6	
To escape from my routine at home	0.5	0.0	8.5	32.2	46.7	12.1	4.6	0.8	
Go to places that I have not visited before	0.0	1.5	18.7	37.4	29.8	12.6	4.3	1.0	
To see and try new things	0.5	4.0	24.0	38.0	27.0	6.5	4.1	1.0	
To spend time with friends or family	1.0	1.0	14.1	25.1	25.6	33.2	4.7	1.2	
To experience another culture	1.0	6.0	25.1	37.2	23.1	7.5	4.0	1.1	
To see or support Tsunami recovery	1.0	1.5	19.5	30.8	19.5	27.7	4.5	1.2	
To find adventure and excitement	1.5	6.6	28.3	32.3	17.2	14.1	4.0	1.2	
To have fun	1.5	7.5	34.2	30.7	16.6	9.5	3.8	1.1	
To meet new people	1.0	6.5	29.6	28.1	15.6	19.1	4.1	1.3	
To experience a different lifestyle	1.0	5.5	24.1	34.2	15.1	20.1	4.2	1.2	
To be physically active	0.5	7.0	34.0	24.5	13.0	21.0	4.1	1.3	
To go where my friends have not been	1.5	4.5	14.6	9.5	8.5	61.3	5.0	1.4	
To volunteer with Tsunami rebuilding	2.6	2.6	14.0	11.4	7.3	62.2	5.1	1.4	
To indulge in luxury	3.5	5.6	19.2	17.2	6.1	48.5	4.6	1.5	
To rediscover past good times	2.6	4.6	15.4	14.9	5.6	56.9	4.9	1.5	

**Most important reasons for visiting Khao Lak- Social and Psychological (Q4)**

	Response (%)				Total Importance
	Most important	Second Important	Third Important	Total Importance	
<b>Social and psychological reasons</b>					
To rest and relax	37.4	16.7	9.4	63.5	
To see or support Tsunami recovery	9.4	12.3	14.8	36.5	
To experience another culture	3.0	7.9	14.8	25.7	
To escape from my routine at home	7.9	11.3	5.9	25.1	
To go to places that I have not visited	6.9	7.9	6.9	21.7	
To have fun	3.0	6.4	8.4	17.8	
To find adventure and excitement	4.9	6.9	4.9	16.7	
To see and try new things	1.0	4.4	7.4	12.8	
To be physically active	3.9	3.9	4.4	12.2	
To spend time with friends or family	4.4	0.5	5.4	10.3	
To experience a different lifestyle	2.5	3.0	4.4	9.9	
To go where my friends have not been	0.0	6.9	1.0	7.9	
To meet new people	0.0	2.0	5.9	7.9	
To volunteer with Tsunami rebuilding	4.9	1.5	0.5	6.9	
To rediscover past good times	0.0	1.5	0.5	2.0	
To indulge in luxury	0.0	0.5	1.0	1.5	
Other	7.9	3.4	0.5	9.9	
Missing	3.0	3.0	3.9	0.0	

**Satisfaction with reasons for visiting Khao Lak- Destination and services (Q6)**

Motivation	Response (%)					Mean	Standard Deviation
	Not at all important 1	Slightly important 2	Moderately important 3	Very important 4	Extremely important 5		
Friendly local people	0.5	2.5	10.9	55.4	30.7	4.1	0.7
Beautiful natural scenery	0.0	3.5	15.0	51.0	30.5	4.1	0.8
Good weather	1.0	2.5	18.2	49.3	29.1	4.0	0.8
Attractive beaches	1.5	3.0	20.7	45.8	29.1	4.0	0.9
Quiet and peaceful	0.5	4.0	23.3	42.6	29.7	4.0	0.9
Safe and secure	2.5	5.9	30.5	37.9	23.2	3.7	1.0
Exotic tropical environment	3.0	4.4	28.1	45.8	18.7	3.7	0.9
Good value for money	2.5	7.0	24.4	55.2	10.9	3.7	0.9
Natural ecological sites to visit	3.5	11.9	24.3	39.1	21.3	3.6	1.1
Standard of cleanliness & hygiene	2.5	5.9	37.9	37.6	15.8	3.6	0.9
Good quality restaurants	3.5	8.9	31.7	38.1	17.8	3.6	1.0
Wide open spaces with few people	7.0	10.1	24.6	41.7	16.6	3.5	1.1
Budget accommodation	8.0	12.4	31.3	30.8	17.4	3.4	1.1
Small, manageable size	9.1	9.6	32.0	36.0	13.2	3.4	1.1
Scuba diving to offshore islands	22.7	12.6	17.7	21.7	25.3	3.1	1.5
Easy access from airport	27.9	26.4	28.9	11.9	5.0	2.4	1.2
Nightlife and entertainment	28.5	37.5	21.5	8.0	4.5	2.2	1.1
First class accommodation	35.1	24.3	30.7	7.9	2.0	2.2	1.1

**Most Important Reasons for Visiting Khao Lak- Destination and services (Q8)**

	Response (%)						Mean	Standard deviation
	Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very good	Not Applicable		
<b>Social and psychological reasons</b>								
Friendly local people	0.0	0.0	10.1	36.9	52.5	0.5	4.4	0.7
Quiet and peaceful	0	0.5	7.6	44.9	45.5	1.5	4.4	0.7
Good weather	0.0	4.1	14.2	36.5	41.6	3.6	4.3	0.9
Beautiful natural scenery	1.0	2.0	13.8	40.3	40.8	2.0	4.2	0.9
Wide open spaces with few people	0.5	0.5	9.2	42.9	39.8	7.1	4.4	0.8
Safe and secure	0.0	0.5	14.7	43.7	37.1	4.1	4.3	0.9
Exotic tropical environment	0.5	2.5	17.8	40.6	32.5	6.1	4.2	0.9
Attractive beaches	1.5	4.6	21.4	40.3	29.6	2.6	4.0	1.0
Scuba diving offshore	1.5	4.6	21.4	40.3	29.6	2.6	4.9	1.2
Standard of cleanliness & hygiene	0.5	3.1	17.3	51.5	25.0	2.6	4.1	0.8
Small, manageable size	0.0	1.5	19.2	44.9	24.2	10.1	4.2	0.9
Good value for money	0.0	4.1	26.4	43.1	22.8	3.6	4.0	0.9
Good quality restaurants	0.5	2.0	20.2	50.0	22.2	5.1	4.1	0.9
Natural ecological sites to visit	1.0	3.1	23.4	31.8	19.8	20.8	4.3	1.2
Budget accommodation	3.6	9.3	26.8	29.9	14.4	16.0	3.9	1.3
Easy access from airport	0.5	2.0	18.4	33.7	11.7	33.7	4.6	1.2
First class accommodation	2.6	2.1	18.5	25.1	8.7	43.1	4.7	1.4
Nightlife and entertainment	5.6	12.1	24.2	9.6	3.0	45.5	4.3	1.7

**Most important reasons for visiting Khao Lak- destination and services (Q7)**

Motivation	Response (%)			
	Most Important	Second Important	Third Important	Total Importance
Quiet and peaceful	12.8	22.2	4.9	39.9
Friendly local people	13.8	11.8	6.9	32.5
Scuba diving to offshore islands	21.7	2.5	4.4	28.6
Beautiful natural scenery	9.9	8.4	7.4	25.7
Wide open spaces with few people	13.3	5.9	4.9	24.1
Attractive beaches	4.4	8.9	10.8	24.1
Good weather	4.4	7.4	11.3	23.1
Exotic tropical environment	5.4	5.9	6.9	18.2
Good value for money	1.5	5.9	9.4	16.8
Natural ecological sites to visit	1.5	2.5	5.4	9.4
Good quality restaurants	0.5	1.5	7.4	9.4
Safe and secure	1.5	3.4	3.4	8.3
Budget accommodation	1.0	2.0	4.9	7.9
Small, manageable size	0.5	3.0	2.0	5.5
Standard of cleanliness & hygiene	0.5	2.5	2.5	5.5
Easy access from airport	0.0	0.5	1.0	1.5
Nightlife and entertainment	0.5	0.0	1.0	1.5
First class accommodation	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5

**Importance of ecotourism principles (Q12)**

Principles	Importance (%)					Mean	Standard Deviation
	Not at all important 1	Slightly important 2	Moderately important 3	Very important 4	Extremely important 5		
Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	0.5	3.9	29.1	43.8	22.7	3.84	0.84
Support shops/services owned by local people	0.5	6.4	27.6	40.4	25.1	3.83	0.90
Learn about local customs and culture	1.0	7.4	28.6	36.0	27.1	3.81	0.95
Support businesses that employ local people	2.0	9.4	24.8	39.1	24.8	3.75	1.00
Interact with locals in a culturally sensitive manner	0.0	11.3	27.1	39.4	22.2	3.72	0.94
Minimize my own impact on the environment	1.5	10.3	32.5	34.5	21.1	3.63	0.98
Use site sensitive accommodation	3.5	10.6	39.2	29.1	17.6	3.47	1.01
Visit nature areas such as National Parks	2.5	12.3	38.4	32.5	14.3	3.44	0.97
Participate in outdoor nature activities	6.9	15.3	24.8	35.6	17.3	3.41	1.15
See plants and animals in their natural environment	5.9	21.2	31.5	31.5	9.9	3.18	1.06
Learn about animals and other natural features	4.0	21.8	37.1	27.7	9.4	3.17	1.00
Choose tour companies with best env/social practice	8.6	19.7	39.4	24.2	8.1	3.04	1.05
Raise environmental awareness in others	9.2	29.1	33.3	20.6	7.8	2.89	1.08
Learn about local environmental issues	9.4	32.2	38.1	14.9	5.4	2.75	1.00
Donate money or volunteer time to conservation	13.2	33.0	34.5	11.7	7.6	2.68	1.09
Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	20.8	28.4	34.5	8.6	7.6	2.54	1.14

**Thailand trip characteristics (Q9, Q10, Q11)**

<b>Trip Characteristics</b>	<b>Response</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
<b>Days spent in Thailand</b>		
Under 14 days	17.9	36
14-21 days	34.9	70
More than 21days	47.2	95
<b>Previous visits to Thailand</b>		
First visit	67.2	135
1-5 previous visits	24.9	50
6-10 previous visits	6.0	12
More than 10 previous visits	2.0	4.0

**Demographical characteristics  
(Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19)**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Response</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
Female	57.6	110
Male	42.4	81
<b>Age</b>		
25 or under	20.3	40
26-35	37.6	74
36-45	22.3	44
46-55	11.2	33
56-65	7.6	15
Over 66	1.0	2
<b>Education</b>		
Primacy school	8.8	17
High school	25.9	50
Trade or apprenticeship	30.6	59
College or university	25.4	49
Advanced degree	9.3	18
<b>Travel group</b>		
With friends	31.8	62
With family	26.7	52
Alone	16.9	33
Other	24.6	48
<b>Nationality</b>		
German	46.0	92
Other European	45.0	90
North American	7.0	14
Asian	2.0	4

## Volunteer Questionnaire

### Importance of volunteering in trip (Q1)

Response	Response	
	%	(n)
Main reason for trip	67.2	88
Planned activity of trip	22.1	29
Unplanned activity of trip	10.7	14

### Method of discovering volunteering opportunities in Khao Lak (Q2)

Method	Response	
	%	(n)
Internet search	29.4	37
Word of mouth	23.8	30
A friend/relative who volunteered	15.9	20
A church or NGO that I belong to	11.9	15
A previous visit to Khao Lak	8.7	11
By chance when I arrived	4.8	6
A newspaper or media article	3.2	4
Other	2.4	3

**Trip characteristics (Q3, Q4, Q5)**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Response</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
First visit to Khao Lak	86.3	113
1-5 previous visits	13.0	17
6-10 previous visits	0.8	1
More than 10 previous visits	0.0	0

**Days volunteering**

14 days or under	32.3	43
15 to 30 days	18.0	24
31 to 90 days	15.8	21
More than 91 days	25.6	34

**Days of trip in total**

14 days or under	19.5	26
15 to 60 days	21.1	28
61 to 180 days	26.3	35
More than 181 days	22.6	30

**Type of volunteer work (Q8)**

<b>Work activity</b>	<b>Response (%)</b>			
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>(n)</b>	<b>(n)</b>
House construction	69.9	30.1	93	40
English teacher	20.3	79.7	27	106
Boat building	10.5	89.5	14	119
Furniture making	9.0	91.0	12	121
Environmental restoration	4.5	95.5	6	127
Administration	4.5	95.5	6	127
Community art projects	2.3	97.7	3	130
Other	11.3	88.7	15	118

**Motivations for volunteering in Khao Lak (Q10)**

Motivation	Importance (%)					Mean	Standard Deviation
	Not at all important 1	Slightly important 2	Moderately important 3	Very important 4	Extremely important 5		
I feel it is important to help others	1.5	3.0	9.8	27.1	58.6	4.4	0.9
I am concerned about those less fortunate than me	0.0	2.3	11.4	40.2	46.2	4.3	0.8
I can do something for a cause that is important to me	3.0	6.8	15.0	33.8	41.4	4.0	1.1
Volunteering gives me a new perspective on things	0.8	3.0	22.0	34.1	40.2	4.1	0.9
I can learn through direct, hands-on experience	3.8	7.5	20.3	32.3	36.1	3.9	1.1
I can test my own limits and strengths	13.5	13.5	24.8	30.1	18.0	3.3	1.3
Volunteering is a way to make new friends	16.2	25.4	26.2	22.3	10.0	2.8	1.2
Volunteering makes me feel good about myself	22.1	26.0	29.0	13.7	9.2	2.6	1.2
I can explore different career options	45.1	21.1	18.0	10.5	5.3	2.1	1.2
Volunteering makes me feel needed	43.4	25.6	15.5	10.9	4.7	2.1	1.2
It helps me work through personal problems	60.3	19.1	10.7	5.3	4.6	1.8	1.1
Volunteering will help me succeed my profession	61.7	15.8	13.5	5.3	3.8	1.7	1.1
People I'm close to want me to volunteer	71.0	17.6	6.1	2.3	3.1	1.5	0.9
My friends volunteer	63.6	17.4	13.6	2.3	3.0	1.6	1.0
I can make contacts that might help my career	62.3	16.9	15.4	3.8	1.5	1.7	1.0
Volunteering makes me feel important	54.5	21.2	16.7	6.1	1.5	1.8	1.0
Doing volunteer work relieves me of guilt	56.8	20.5	12.1	9.1	1.5	1.8	1.1
My family/friends place a high value on volunteering	54.2	26.7	13.7	3.8	1.5	1.7	0.9
Volunteering is a god escape from my own troubles	76.5	12.9	6.8	2.3	1.5	1.4	0.8
Volunteer experience looks good on my resume	55.6	18.8	16.5	7.5	1.5	1.8	1.1

**Most important motivations for volunteering (Q11)**

Motivation	Response (%)				Total Importance
	Most important	Second important	Third important	Total	
I feel it is important to help others	32.3	22.6	9.4	46.9	
I can do something for a cause that is important to me	17.3	15.4	14.2	36.7	
Volunteering gives me a new perspective on things	12.3	0.8	23.6	34.8	
I can learn through direct, hands-on experience	4.5	18.5	11.8	29.6	
I am concerned about those less fortunate than me	0.8	16.2	12.6	13.3	
I can test my own limits and strengths	2.3	0.8	10.2	7.8	
Volunteering makes me feel good about myself	1.5	0.0	6.3	7.1	
Volunteering is a way to make new friends	0.0	0.8	6.3	3.9	
I can explore different career options	0.8	1.5	1.6	3.1	
It helps me work through personal problems	0.0	2.3	0.8	1.6	
My friends volunteer	0.0	0.8	0.8	1.6	
Volunteering is a god escape from my own troubles	0.8	0.0	0.8	1.6	
My family/friends place a high value on volunteering	0.8	0.8	0.0	1.6	
Volunteering will help me succeed my profession	0.8	0.8	0.0	0.8	
Volunteer experience looks good on my resume	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.8	
Doing volunteer work relieves me of guilt	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.8	
Volunteering makes me feel needed	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.8	
People I'm close to want me to volunteer	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.8	
I can make contacts that might help my career	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Volunteering makes me feel important	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	

### Importance of ecotourism principles (Q12)

Principles	Importance (%)							Standard Deviation
	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important	Mean		
Interact with locals in a culturally sensitive manner	3.0	3.0	13.6	34.1	46.2	4.2	1.0	
Learn about local customs and culture	2.3	0.8	17.4	34.8	44.7	4.2	0.9	
Support shops/services owned by local people	7.6	5.3	26.0	34.4	26.7	3.7	1.2	
Support businesses that employ local people	6.8	7.5	27.8	33.1	24.8	3.6	1.1	
Visit places of beautiful natural scenery	9.0	9.8	24.1	36.8	20.3	3.5	1.2	
Donate money or volunteer time to local charities	8.5	14.7	24.8	31.8	20.2	3.4	1.2	
Minimize my own impact on the environment	18.8	7.8	26.6	28.1	18.8	3.2	1.4	
Participate in outdoor nature activities	16.5	15.8	30.1	23.3	14.3	3.0	1.3	
Visit nature areas such as National Parks	15.9	15.2	32.6	22.7	13.6	3.0	1.3	
Donate money or volunteer time to conservation	14.6	23.1	26.9	22.3	13.1	3.0	1.3	
Use site sensitive accommodation	13.2	20.9	32.6	21.7	11.6	3.0	1.2	
See plants and animals in their natural environment	11.3	20.3	36.1	21.1	11.3	3.0	1.2	
Learn about local environmental issues	15.3	12.2	36.6	26.7	9.2	3.0	1.2	
Learn about animals and other natural features	14.4	25.8	29.5	21.2	9.1	2.9	1.2	
Choose tour companies with best env/social practice	22.3	19.2	30.8	19.2	8.5	2.7	1.2	
Raise environmental awareness in others	23.9	28.6	27.1	16.5	4.5	2.5	1.2	

**Demographical characteristics  
(Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16, Q17)**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Response</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
Female	50.8	67
Male	49.2	65

<b>Age</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
25 or under	44.7	59
26-35	27.3	36
36-45	10.6	14
46-55	8.3	11
56-65	8.3	11
Over 66	0.8	1

<b>Education</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
Primacy school	0.8	1
High school	20.5	27
Trade or apprenticeship	12.9	17
College or university	55.3	73
Advanced degree	10.6	14

<b>Travel group</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
Alone	37.7	49
Other	23.1	30
With friends	19.2	25
With partner or spouse	14.6	19
With family	5.4	7

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>(n)</b>
North American	40.9	54
United Kingdom	25.8	34
Oceania	12.9	17
Other European	12.1	16
Asian	8.3	11

## Appendix D- Open-ended comments

Space was included at the end of the questionnaires for additional comments. Responses are listed below.

### Beach Resort Questionnaire-English

Q12. Still a paradise after the tsunami!

Q25. The people here are extremely friendly and helpful towards tourists; they obviously need our support. We could have gone to the Similan Islands from Phuket, but we wanted to come to Khao Lak, as we were aware the recovery after the tsunami was slower than other areas.

Q36. The saddest thing that we have seen in is the unnecessary destruction of the once beautiful National Park in order to make a memorial site. Why ruin a pristine park when huge tracts of land along Khao Lak beach were destroyed and would have made more suitable sites for a memorial.

Q38. Please don't fill the beach with huge hotels and resorts! Keep it simple. We love this place.

Q46. Beautiful, quiet and good value for money. Keeping the area as it is today will definitely make me come back

Q49. An area of concern is the nature of the rebuilding. It appears that much larger internationally owned hotels are replacing smaller, Thai-owned and operated businesses on the shore. This provides jobs for Thais, but will not ensure a fair distribution of profits. Much of the Thai experience will be replaced by generic 'western style' hospitality- a huge shame.

Q50. It is a pity that the press does not keep up to date about Khao Lak. Sometimes one can even read false and negative reports. I'm sure that's the main reason why there are not many tourists. Khao Lak is a very nice area for different reasons to visit.

Q55. Beautiful! Too many German tourists.

Q95. We are on a backpack tour in Thailand and decided very spontaneously to visit Khao Lak to support the people- even if it is just for a few days.

Q114. I think it's a nice and quiet place. I like to come back and visit soon. The locals are very nice and I really enjoyed my stay here.

Q.121. We think that it is important that when tourist develops again in Khao Lak that it is kept in line with the natural beauty- no high rises please! It is also very important that tourism comes back as quickly as possible to support the local people and help them get back on their feet, as they are the single biggest attraction of the area.

Q127. I did a live tour for 2 days to the Similan Islands. This was very good diving; boat and food were great as well.

Q130. I'm pregnant, so that's why I am less active than normal and more keen on luxury. I hope it stays low key here, no big tour groups or nightlife development.

Q131. The Thai people are very kind to the visitors to their country. I feel very safe and at home here. We dove in the Similan Islands on a dive boat. Hope that the Thai people realize what a wonderful place they have and hope it is never spoiled or damaged. I also hope that plastic bottles don't litter the beach. A clean beach attracts more people.

Q132. People told us that before the tsunami hit the area the beach was full with houses and hotels. It is a good idea not to give licenses for building in that way over again, not only cause of the fear of another tsunami, but also cause it completely destroys the scenery and beauty of this place. More emphasis on physical activities should be given. The whole place is packed with older people that come to revive old memories. That is unattractive for the younger generation.

Q141. Khao Lak is a nice little place. I would hate to see it become too commercialized as so many places in Thailand are already. I'd like to see more Thai people not afraid to protect their culture- i.e. telling firings not to sunbathe naked, act.

Q155. I missed the neutral tourist information in Khao Lak. So many places were just travel agencies. Khao Lak should be publicized by tourist information.

Q173. One thing that I have noticed post tsunami is the construction of large luxury facilities. Prior to the tsunami the beaches were lined with Thai-owned and run bungalows. Now I feel the construction of large resorts, perhaps foreign owned, creates a luxury style environment where Thais become the contractors, construction workers, and employees instead of owners. It's fantastic that so much international aid is helping to rebuild Khao Lak, but I wish more would go to restoring the culture and the people that created this area in the first place.

Q175. I visited Khao Lak specially to help the local people. When we go on vacation we help them most.

Q181. Our reason for coming to Khao Lak was to dive. Ecotourism is theoretically high on my agenda, but unfortunately budget is higher.

Q185. Your questionnaire has helped prompt me to think more than I have about local ecological and employment practices.

Q194. How do we tell the world's people that it is safe to return to Khao Lak?

Q198. I am not a person who plans out a whole trip, and I do not generally research the area much at all, but I basically came to Khao Lak to see the natural scenery and see the park.

Q199. I only arrived yesterday but have been impressed so far. Other than loss of infrastructure I can't say this beach looks any different than others in Thailand. It appears they could be building for the first time. Have yet to go diving, but that's why I'm here. Very nice and quiet, lonely beaches.

Q202. I think it's too touristy. The real culture isn't anywhere to find here and they could have rooms for backpackers here that are cheaper.

*Beach Resort Questionnaire-responses translated from German*

Q3. Very clean everywhere.

Q7. I find it important to help the local people. If they can earn money, they will rebuild their houses and shops and have a chance to help themselves.

Q8. I am astonished at the amount of recovery and rebuilding that has taken place. I would like to pay tribute to the Thai government, external organizations, and the many volunteers who have made this possible. Without these wonderful efforts, I think life would be very different for the local populace.

Q27. I recommend snorkeling or going to Phang-nga region with a boat. It is also really interesting to see all the cities that were rebuilt after the Tsunami.

Q52. I visited Khao Lak 3 years ago. I fear that this place, in a short time, will develop into another Phuket. At the moment I enjoy the few tourists and the empty beaches.

Q67. Highlights:

- still friendly people;
- impressive fast reconstruction;
- lots of restaurants and shops with relatively good prices.

Bad Things:

- reconstructed bungalows are more expensive;
- in general a lot of charming details are lost, a mix of cheap and luxury; family bungalows are lost. Everywhere, you can see new professional tourist companies.

Q82. We regret the building of 5 star hotels close to the beaches/sand. The massive construction is frightening us away.

Q98. Here is an example of how the people from this region, after the Tsunami and the drop in tourism, did not get sad. Thailand and this region are known as the "land of laughs".

Q104. We wish that during reconstruction, the needs of the individual tourist are also considered. Better access to all the beaches. Avoid tourism in excess. More balanced wages for Thais.

Q125. Really peaceful. With the reconstruction projects, there is fear that everything will be full and busy. Khao Lak could lose its charm.

Q105. It is sad to see that only luxurious places have been built, And no small comfortable low budget resorts.

Q108. We are disappointed that the low cost bungalows are not available anymore. We don't like the luxury resorts; they damage the nature. Other guests may like the higher prices and less contact with the local people.

Q118. I know that the area was very hard hit by the Tsunami because I know one person who died here. I would be very interested in more information about the reconstruction and how it was done. Who donated money, who helped the locals to rebuild? Maybe pictures of the development. ( Dec 2004, March 2005, July 2005, December 2005, April 2006, etc.) I think Khao Lak should use their fantastic reconstruction as a "memorial area" since the people know about the incredible devastation. It could tell the tourists a story, like something very, very bad happened but we made it. I think Americans and Europeans like this attitude.

Q127. It is the first day in town and because of that no experiences yet. But we are already really excited about the reconstruction of the place.

Q133. We loved Khao-Lak as a convenient jump-off point to nearby National Parks such as the Similan islands and Khao-Lak-Lum Ru. However, we found that local prices in hotels and shops were higher than in other Thai destinations such as Koh Tao, Krabi and Bangkok. We were staying in Poseidon Bungalows a bit south of Khao-Lak, where we unfortunately found the hotel management of little help in organizing our activities. Next time we will use a different hotel.

Q142. Information in National Parks is really poor. Is there another way it get information? Two hundred baht is too much for entrance.

Q146. I feel really sad when I think about the people that died here. But the people are really optimistic and it makes me happy when I can help them.

Q160. We decided to travel to Khao Lak. We also went to other Islands, where we stayed 2 to 3 days.

Q162. When we first got here in Khao-Lak and still we did not see much. The natural scenery is still very nice, like the National park.

Q172. I think it is too bad that there aren't enough places for travelers to stay. Lots of expensive hotels were built, this doesn't work well for young people that have less money. Less luxurious is better for the nature and for people that have a simpler way of living. I would've stayed longer in Khao-Lak but it is too expensive.

### Volunteer Questionnaire

Q4. I am interested to see if this survey would be very different if answered by people who came directly following the tsunami versus people here now. Sometimes I think the motivations have changed just by talking to people who have been here for a long time.

Q8. I would say motivations for volunteering are to be closer to the local culture and at the same time doing something good. Volunteering also allows one to learn more things.

Q9. I think also it is a much better way to experience a country, to be able to be in the community helping, seeing the people and culture directly. Then, you can mix in a little travel to round things out. I think it is important to be able to experience a country as more than just a watcher. I think my biggest complaint is staying in Khao Lak because it is so farang oriented, a fake city.

Q10. I used to live in Thailand. I have many Thai friends and family. It is my 2<sup>nd</sup> home. After the tsunami I decided to come back 'home' to help.

Q11. I came to volunteer for a plethora of reasons, some altruistic, some selfish. For the most part my experience has been overwhelming positive although the heavy drinking culture, of which I am implicitly involved in, is not what I was seeking.

Q12. I nearly went traveling in 2004 and would most likely have been in Thailand for Christmas and thus been in the tsunami. I wanted to help people who had been affected because I could have been one of them.

Q15. I heard that the Tsunami Volunteer Centre was unattached to a religious organization, which appealed to me. It also doesn't ask for a huge registration fee, which is important on a small budget. It is the philosophy of TVC that attracted me and made it possible to volunteer. I didn't want to associate myself with a religious organization.

Q25. I was looking to volunteer in South America where I will be going later this year, but I couldn't find a program that didn't cost a lot of money. The people, both volunteers and locals are great, it's fantastic to be helping and doing something so different to my office job back home.

Q27. I decided to come and volunteer because my friend was involved in the tsunami. She lost her mum and sister. She spoke of how helpful that people were to her and I wanted to help these communities. This is my first volunteering experience abroad, but it is something I would like to continue to do in the future.

Q28. Q-10R is important to me because I want to work for someone like the UN or Red Cross when I'm 25.

Q36. Q12L: The local community should determine the standard of environmental concern. It is not feasible to expect tourists to investigate and choose appropriate tour operators, particularly in a foreign language. Also unclear legal standards confuse the situation on what is to be expected.

Q43. As a Christian, my main motivation in either paid or voluntary work is to serve God. I am volunteering at this point in my life because I have prayerfully decided that this is where I should be.

Q47. As a Christian, my main motivation in coming to Khao Lak was to serve God and the people that surround me. I chose to take a year out and through prayer and trying to listen to God I felt like this is the place I should be.

Q48. This is my 2<sup>nd</sup> week volunteering and I realize that there are too many volunteers in Khao Lak. One year after the tsunami all the urgencies are over and we should now let the Thais work on their own. While working for TVC I get the impression that I take a Thai employment place up while Thais can't find jobs in Khao Lak. A lot of volunteers come here just for a party and forget about why they are here.

Q71. This is about me spending time with my mother. I left England 12 years ago and we decided to do something good together. She is here for 6 months, and I am here for 4 months.

Q77. I volunteered because these people here have gone through much since the tsunami and I want to share God's love with them. I want them to know that God loves them and dearly cares for me. God understands their pain even though no human can.

Q78. We are a Christian school, and we came to Khao Lak to provide the students with an opportunity to work and help in the reconstruction. We desire our students know the joy in serving Christ. We pray that through our time and love that the people of Khao Lak would see and understand more of the love God has for them.

Q79. I can show the love of God to others. I am very fortunate that I live in a country that finds it important to help those in need whether it is in the USA or elsewhere- I'm grateful that I can be a part of that.

Q93. I want to show the love of Jesus Christ to those in need and hurting. We witness by both our words and actions.

Q95. God has led me to follow his teaching and that is to help people in need and spread the word of God throughout all the world.

Q96. The Thai people are great people to know. They have become my friends and I will miss them.

Q97. Helping those in need is a call from our Savior. When we help others we are serving Him.

Q101. Reaching out to people and bringing the gospel to the people.

Q102. To share with the locals about Jesus and who he really is as their personal Lord.

Q103. I volunteer because I want serve Jesus Christ first and then my fellow man.

Q109. What motivated me is knowing I'm meeting a need that God has put in my heart.

Q113. Beautiful people with incredible hearts, spirits and smiles. Jesus loves them a ton!

Q118. I am a Christian and I want to see the world changed for Jesus.