Häärä Meri

Phenomenological study on student teachers’ volunteer experiences at a refugee center

Kasvatustieteen Pro-gradu tutkielma/Master's thesis
KASVATUSTIETEIDEN TIEDEKUNTA
Intercultural Teacher Education
2018


Tämä pro-gradu tutkielma on fenomenologinen tutkimus opettajaopiskelijoiden vapaaehtoistyökokemuksista turvapaikanhakijanuorten kanssa Suomessa. Tutkimus käsittelee erityisesti opettajaopiskelijoiden motivaatiota vapaaehtoistyön tekemiseen sekä työnsä aikana kohtaamiaan haasteita. Tutkimuksessa myös pohditaan ja analysoidaan vapaaehtoistyön merkitystä opettajaopiskelijoihelle. Teoreettinen kehys liittyy vapaaehtoistyömotivaation sekä lyhyesti myös kriittiseen pedagogiikkaan, joka tutkii opettajia yhteiskunnallisina toimijoina.


Avainsanat: fenomenologia, vapaaehtoistyöntekijän motivaatio, turvapaikanhakija, opettajaopiskelijat, kriittinen pedagogiikka
Phenomenological study on student teachers' volunteer experiences at a refugee center

March 2018

Thesis Abstract

This thesis is an exploration into student teachers' volunteer experiences at a refugee reception center in Finland, focusing specifically on what motivated student teachers to volunteer their time and energy and what types of challenges they faced along the way. The various effects that volunteer work had on participants is also discussed. Theoretical constructs related to volunteer motivation and intention along with a brief look into critical pedagogy and teachers as societal actors has been utilized. Volunteer motivation theory is extensive and this thesis explores concepts related to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is fueled by activities that are inherently enjoyable and satisfying to an individual, with motivation coming from a "deep" place. In contrast, extrinsic motivation is fueled by external influences such as rewards, merits or other incentives. The role of altruism and the ego are also explored along with a brief exploration of student teachers as volunteers using critical pedagogy as a theoretical construct.

Five participants from varying backgrounds were chosen as interview subjects, and in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted. Phenomenology was used as the appropriate tool for data analysis and has also been explored. Phenomenology is a branch of philosophy which focuses on exploring lived human experiences, making it the ideal methodology for this research. A detailed phenomenological method was designed and executed for the purpose of this study. Final findings focused on five themes that emerged from the data that were used to explore both the theoretical constructs as well as the research question. Final themes included: social connections and community, mutualism and feeling appreciated, moral and professional ideology, personal and professional learning and challenges.

Findings from this study provide an in-depth look into student teacher volunteer experiences and this data is relevant for numerous reasons. Primarily, understanding what motivated student teachers to volunteer can provide information related to the types of values and ideas held by students. This information can provide information concerning what types of professionals they will become. Additionally, exploring what kind of effect volunteer work had on participants can provide valuable information concerning the effects that specific field experiences can have on student teachers attitudes and opinions concerning societal issues.

Findings from this study indicated that student teachers' experienced a change in both knowledge and ideology along with a shift in the type of professional work they wished to pursue. Student teachers reported a significant increase in interest in work related to minorities, humanitarian work as well as work at non-governmental organizations. This research can therefore potentially be utilized when designing and executing both volunteer programs as well as teacher training programs. The findings from this study can be developed and expanded on for future research into teachers as volunteers or for examining the effects that volunteering can have on student teachers' attitudes, values and ideas. The challenges faced by the student teachers in this study can be used when designing and executing future volunteer programs for students as well. Volunteer motivation was found to be multifaceted in nature, with different individuals pursuing different goals for varying reasons, with some similarities in motivations including: values, ideology, professional goals and social aspects.

Keywords: phenomenology, volunteer motivation, student teachers, refugees, critical pedagogy
# Table of Contents

1. Introduction ................................................................. 5
2. Theoretical Framework and Overview of Related Literature ........................................... 7
   2.1 Volunteer Intention and Satisfaction .................................................. 7
   2.2 Volunteer Motivation ....................................................................... 9
      2.2.1 Altruism as motivation .................................................................. 11
      2.2.2 Volunteering and the Ego ............................................................ 16
   2.3 Agents of Change: Critical Pedagogy and Teachers as Volunteers ..................... 17
3. Methodology ........................................................................... 21
   3.1 Phenomenology: A brief introduction .................................................. 22
   3.2 Challenges and Importance of Phenomenology ...................................... 23
   3.3 Phenomenological Reduction .............................................................. 26
4. Data collection and analysis ...................................................... 30
   4.1 Data Collection .............................................................................. 30
   4.2 Data Analysis ............................................................................... 32
      4.2.1 Transcription ............................................................................ 33
      4.2.2 Bracketing and phenomenological reduction ................................ 34
      4.2.3 Capturing the sense of the whole .............................................. 36
      4.2.4 Finding and characterizing units of general meaning .................. 36
      4.2.5 Finding and characterizing units of meaning in relation to the research question ... 39
      4.2.6 Clustering units of relevant meaning ........................................ 40
      4.2.7 Completing themes from clusters of meaning ................................ 41
5. Findings .................................................................................. 42
   5.1 Social connections and community .................................................... 42
   5.2 Mutualism and Feeling appreciated .................................................. 45
   5.3 Moral and Professional Ideology ....................................................... 47
   5.4 Personal and Professional Learning ................................................... 51
   5.5 Challenges ................................................................................... 55
6 Examing the Findings from Different Theoretical Perspectives .............................. 58
7. Reliability, ethics and evaluation ................................................. 64
8. Discussion and Conclusions ....................................................... 66
References .................................................................................. 70
Appendix 1 ............................................................................... 74
1. Introduction

What does it mean to volunteer? Volunteering is a global widespread phenomenon that expands across all wakes of life from working with the elderly, to children, environmental conservation, healthcare, sporting events, schools and countless other contexts. Volunteering can take many different shapes and can be present in various different contexts but is often defined as an expression of good will “whereby people offer their services purely for the benefit of others”. (Satar & Waheed. 2014. p. 61) People all around the world dedicate their time to various activities and causes, expecting no monetary compensation in return. (Satar & Waheed. 2014. p. 61) Volunteer work is an important part of society, both globally and locally, and plays a key role in combating problems and issues worldwide. (Dwyer, Bono, Snyder, Nov & Berson. 2013. p. 182)

But what is it that motivates this behavior? Why do countless people across the globe dedicate their time and energy without seemingly expecting anything in return? The following thesis explores the reasons why student teachers at a university in Finland decided to volunteer at a refugee reception center, dedicating their time and energy to working with the underaged youth refugees, organizing events, playing sports and games, cooking and generally interacting and socializing. Why were these student teachers motivated to volunteer, and what types of challenges did they face? Interviews with volunteer participants were conducted and phenomenology has been used as an approach to explore the data collected. Volunteer motivation theory and related literature has been utilized. Phenomenology as a methodology has been explored as well. Data analysis and discussion follows, and explores the experiences of the participants.

This topic was chosen due to the researcher's personal experiences volunteering which sparked an interest in exploring the phenomena. This topic is important to explore as volunteering is a phenomena that could help the world move towards an environment of moral counterbalance. Beginning to understand the motivations that lie beneath the surface of this humanitarian collective of volunteers is imperative in moving towards a world where helping others is not seen as an act of heroism, but as self-evident, absolute, and important. Moving towards a more empathetic and compassionate global society could have a transformative influence on the world we live in today. It is especially interesting to investigate the motivation of future teachers to volunteer, as this gives insight into the type of values and ideologies they may retain. Because teachers have a significant and meaningful impact throughout their careers, it is important to know what types of values and
ideas are being passed on.

The amount of forcibly displaced people globally reached nearly 60 million at the end of 2014, (Aiyar et al. 2016, p. 7) and these effects were displayed in Finland as well, which took in approximately 35 000 refugees in 2015, a ten-fold increase from the preceding year. (Sisäministeriö. 2017) Increased diversity within a society requires new approaches from policy makers all the way to schools and teachers as well. Understanding what kinds of values and ideas future teachers retain, and how different experiences may affect these values is imperative for understanding how future teachers will execute their work and cope in an increasingly diverse society where issues of inequality and discrimination towards minority populations tends to occur. (Phillips, 2010) Additionally, understanding what kinds of work and experiences can lead teachers to develop more in-depth intercultural values and ideas, and become more aware of social injustices, inequality and issues of discrimination, can potentially be used in the design and execution of teacher education. Having teachers with more developed ideas of social injustice as well as improved intercultural competences can have a significant effect on society as a whole.

Although volunteer motivation is a phenomenon that has been extensively researched, research concerning student teachers as volunteers is sparse. The context of this thesis can provide new insight into student teachers specifically as humanitarian workers, and what ideas and principles motivated their behavior and what kinds of implications this may have. The findings can also shed light on the effects that volunteer experiences may have had on student teachers and how it may have shaped and influenced their personal and professional lives. Understanding this can provide knowledge concerning how teacher education is constructed and how useful it is for teachers to be engaged in volunteer work within society. This thesis also explores the challenges these students faced in order to gain a more accurate view concerning barriers that may inhibit motivation, as well as understand what types of things should be taken into consideration when designing or organizing volunteer work for students in the future.
2. Theoretical Framework and Overview of Related Literature

Volunteer motivation is a subject that has been extensively researched with psychologists, researchers and philosophers alike attempting to figure out why humans contribute their energy and time without the hope of being compensated. The following chapter explores ideas and theories behind volunteer motivation and attempts to investigate and understand the phenomena, looking at intention, satisfaction, altruism and the ego, as well as explores teachers roles as societal actors and volunteers.

2.1 Volunteer Intention and Satisfaction

Volunteer intentions have often been linked to satisfaction. In their 1999 study Clary and Snyder investigated this link, and volunteer satisfaction was found to be related to the benefits a volunteer may receive from their work. In one of their experiments on the subject, it was found that university students who received "relevant benefits" in their volunteer work, were found to have an increased chance of also continuing their volunteer work both in the short and long term. (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 158) The researchers also concluded that volunteer behavior does not exclusively depend on "the person or the situation" but also on the "interaction of person-based dynamics and situational opportunities". (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 159) Omoto and Snyder write that volunteers often feel higher levels of satisfaction when they feel that their work is directly related to their reasons for wanting to volunteer in the first place. (Omoto & Snyder, 1995, p. 676)

Clary and Snyder also explore the element of control in relation to volunteer work. It was found that from 40 students doing mandatory community service, students who felt that they had more control over their decisions displayed higher levels of intention for the future i.e. were more likely to continue volunteering. Students who felt they had little or no control over their decision and even felt pressure to volunteer displayed much lower levels of satisfaction and therefore intention. (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 158) This idea of control has been explored in psychology as well. Chuck Duhigg writes that motivation is often directly related to control and that the need for control is a "biological imperative". Not only is the instinct for control natural even at infancy, "when people believe they are in control, they tend to work harder and push themselves more". (Duhigg, 2016, p. 19) One way to feel in control is by making one’s own decisions, and no matter how small those decisions may seem, they can have a huge impact on motivation. (Duhigg, 2016, p. 19-21) Ryan
Wong, Chui and Kwok write about volunteer satisfaction in terms of a VSI (Volunteer Satisfaction Index) instrument, originally developed by Galindo-Kuhn and Guzley (2001). The instrument uses a 7 point scale to investigate satisfaction levels and the researchers set out to validate the scale in a Chinese cultural context. (Wong, Chui & Kwok, 2010, p. 19) The VSI instrument splits the concept of volunteer satisfaction into 4 categories: “(a) organizational support, such as performance feedback and clear goals and objectives; (b) participation efficacy, or the use of one’s own skills and abilities to make a difference; (c) a sense of empowerment and (d) group integration, or the forming of bonds with other volunteers and paid staff”. (Wong, Chui & Kwok, 2010, p. 20) Interestingly, the researchers found that relationship building was a core component in Chinese culture which differed from Western research which had personal benefits as a core component. (Wong, Chui & Kwok, 2010, p. 30)

Clerkin and Swiss (2014) investigated volunteer programs that charge fees from volunteers. The study they conducted investigated the attitudes of 4400 volunteers who paid 310 USD to take part in a week long project building and repairing housing in Appalachia. A third of the volunteers who participated stated that paying the fee “enhanced their appreciation of the program” while simultaneously an equal amount of participants disagreed. (Clerkin and Swiss, 2014, p. 487) Volunteers who were the least excited about paying the fees were also “somewhat less positive about their experience”. (Clerkin and Swiss, 2014, p. 487) The study concluded that there were many “reservations” about the fees for a big portion of the volunteers and having fees “may decrease overall satisfaction for some volunteers”. (Clerkin and Swiss, 2014, p. 499)

Satisfaction from one’s work is undoubtedly important and can contribute greatly towards staying committed, but where does the motivation for volunteer workers truly come from? The following chapter investigates this question by looking into relevant studies and literature related to volunteer motivation, with sub-chapters exploring altruism and the ego.
2.2 Volunteer Motivation

Volunteer motivation theory is extensive, and no one theory has ever explained fully why people volunteer. Motivations are complex, diverse and not always easy to explain or understand. (Ratanchandani, 2000, p. 14) Ryan and Deci write about different types of motivation. They state that a motivated person is one who is inspired and energized to move towards a certain goal while someone who feels “no impetus” can be characterized as unmotivated. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 54) However, motivation is far from a plenary or absolute concept. Different persons have different levels of motivation and also different types of motivation and orientations. Orientations refer to the “underlying attitudes and goals that give rise to that action” or in other words, the reasons why the motivation exists. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 54)

Liisa Malkki talks about volunteers “need” to help in her book ‘The Need to Help’ (2015). She writes that humanitarianism is often associated with ideas of selflessness, noble deeds and self-sacrifice, and the ideas that volunteering and humanitarian work are also associated with “self-escape, self-loss, dehumanization, self-humanization, self-transformation, the care of the self, the relation of self to others and the relation of self to the world” are often neglected. (Malkki, 2015, p. 10) Interviews Malkki conducted with aid workers from Finland revealed that most workers did not view their experiences as ones of self-sacrifice, but more as experiences of self-escape. Personal desires of workers was to get a vacation from the “safe predictability and routinization” of their personal work life in Finland and even get a break from who they were as a person and as a professional. Not to say that the workers were lacking in ideas and feelings of ethical obligation, or that their work was otherwise insignificant to them however, the work they went to do was not out of sacrificial sainthood, but out of self-loss, self transformation and professionalism. Aid workers often returning from missions claimed to feel somehow “changed” as they were exposed to “new kinds of social and affective experiences”. (Malkki, 2015, p. 10-13) Aid workers valued being a part of something “much larger than themselves, larger than Finland” and enjoyed recalling moments of successful international team work. (Malkki, 2015, p. 33)

Clary and Snyder (1991) put forth six factors that influence motivation: 1) Values: One can show altruistic values related to humanistic helping. 2) Understanding: Understanding of the world and acquisition of new skills. 3) Social: Develop social relationships by doing activities that others favor. 4) Career: Participation as career advancement. 5) Protection: The protection of the ego from negative features of self. 6) Enhancement: Mood enhancement by the development of the ego.
(Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157-158) These 6 factors all play a crucial role in influencing an individuals motivation levels. From their research Clary and Snyder found that Values, Understanding, and Enhancement were the most important functions, and that Career, Social, and Protective were less so, and these factors also varied across age groups. Their findings also concluded that volunteer motivation was multifaceted, with different volunteers pursuing different goals, with approximately two thirds of participants also having two or more goals as motivating factors. (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157-158) Some of these functions and especially altruism as well as the ego will be further looked into later on in this thesis to explore these motivators in more depth.

Another theory that looks at motivation is Self Determination Theory. SDT is a “meta-theory” used to portray humans as “active organisms motivated towards mastery and growth”, (Tumblin. 2012, p. 3-4) and classifies motivations according to the various “reasons or goals that spur them”. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 8) There are two main distinctions between motivations that researchers refer to in their work; intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the want to do something because it is “inherently interesting and enjoyable” or is something that is fun and therefore very motivating. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55) Intrinsic motivation is something that is often utilized by education and learning, and often leads to successful and creative outcomes, and comes from a “deep” place because one is doing something “inherently for one’s own satisfaction rather than its consequences”. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 8)

In comparison, extrinsic motivation is completing or doing something simply because it “leads to a separable outcome” and there are various different forms of extrinsic motivation. Some extrinsic motivation is based on doing something for a reward or incentive and doing something for an “instrumental purpose” rather than an intrinsic one. (Ratanchandani, 2000, p. 10) For example, if a person were to volunteer because it is fun and enjoyable for them they could be classified as being intrinsically motivated. In contrast, if a person were to volunteer purely for recognition or status, this person could be deemed as extrinsically motivated. (Tumblin. 2012, p. 4) Other examples of extrinsic motivation is the possibility of receiving a reward of some kind (e.g. recognition), engaging in behavior that somehow protects an individual self-worth or ego, as well as engaging in behavior one may not find enjoyable, but find to be important. (Tumblin. 2012, p. 4)

There are various sub-theories within SDT. For example, Cognitive Evaluation Theory (1985) discusses certain variables within intrinsic motivation and suggests that “interpersonal events or
incentives that make people feel competent during the task” can enhance intrinsic motivation for the task in question. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 9) CET theory also looks into aspects of personality and environment in order to see how they affect intrinsic motivation. (Tumblin, 2012, p. 4) Volunteer behavior can be seen to correlate with certain personality traits such as extraversion, self-esteem, empathy and agreeableness. These traits can affect volunteer motivation over time as well as possibly predict certain volunteer behavior. (Tumblin, 2012, p. 4) For example in terms of self-esteem, volunteers who feel themselves to be important and meaningful to a cause or organization they are working for, tend to volunteer more hours and stay committed for longer periods of time. (Tumblin, 2012, p 7)

Challenges are also an important part of intrinsic motivation, as “optimal challenges” are found to enhance and facilitate intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation includes the “inherit tendency” or desire to seek out “novelty and challenges” that provide stimulation. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70) Exploring the challenges of the participants in this study can provide insight into the motivating factors that may have overridden the barriers or obstacles that participants faced, and also provide useful information concerning the design and development of volunteer programs in the future. Optimal challenges are described by Ryan and Deci as stimuli that is “moderately assimilable” and must be understood to be related to an individuals existing structures. What this means is that an individual will have higher intrinsic motivation if she/he is able to use and modify existing qualities or skill sets to tackle a challenge. A challenge is optimal and facilitates intrinsic motivation when it contains information “relevant to structures already stored and mastered but are discrepant enough to call forth adaptive modifications”. (Ryan & Deci, 1985, p. 123-124) In contrast, a challenge hinders intrinsic motivation if it is either too repetitive or greatly exceeds an individuals capabilities, which can respectively lead to boredom or even distress. (Ryan & Deci, 1985, p. 123-124)

2.2.1 Altruism as motivation

Altruism is a fairly general concept which involves taking on the interests of another’s as your own, and is often classified as “The Golden rule”, which is present in many religions and doctrines across the globe. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 2) For example, a large part of both Christianity and Judaism emphasize the importance of promoting the interests of others expressed in the form of “love thy neighbor”. This is an important initial stand-point for moral behavior for both doctrines; “do unto
others as you would have them do unto you”, a doctrine that commands one to “treat others in a manner that secures their interests” while simultaneously relating to one’s own perception of how one would like to be treated, adding an element of reciprocity to the moral behavior. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 5-7) This morality can be seen across the globe as well. In the Hindu literature Mahabharata it states that “One should not behave towards others in a way which is disagreeable to oneself. This is the essence of morality. All other activities are due to selfish desire”. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 7) Additionally, ancient Chinese Confucianism instructs to “Try your best to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself, and you will find that this is the shortest way to benevolence”. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 7) There is a clear pattern of morality in each of these ideologies. However, certain religious doctrines can be criticized as being far removed from altruism. For example, a common criticism of Christian altruism is that actions that are performed for the reward of everlasting life, cannot be said to altruistic at all. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 7-8) Nonetheless, ideas and doctrines concerning altruism and treating others kindly have been around for centuries.

When discussing the term altruism, it is important to understand and specify what is meant. Altruism can be defined by many acts of prosocial behavior and, according to Monroe (1995), there seems to be an overall lack of consensus over the word. The word altruism is often interchanged with words such as; “giving, sharing, cooperating or helping” hence, the lack of consensus. (Monroe, 1995, p. 6). Monroe defines altruism as “behavior intended to benefit another”, even when such behavior could mean great risk and loss of welfare to the actor. She notes six important points in her discussion on defining altruism. Primarily, altruism must “entail action”, it cannot simply be “good intentions or well-meaning thoughts”. Secondly, the altruistic action must be either consciously or reflexively goal orientated. If another person’s welfare is a secondary or unintended consequence by actions designed to benefit one’s own welfare, then the action cannot be deemed altruistic. Motives and intent are important and can count more than consequences, although it is important to note that these are difficult to observe and measure objectively. Additionally, collective welfare is not altruistic, and true altruism must have an effect or “carry some possibility of diminution” on an individual’s own welfare. Finally, altruism must set “no conditions”, meaning that there must be no type of anticipation, reward or recognition to the altruist, but is purely done to benefit the welfare of another. (Monroe, 1995, p. 6-7)

Even after specifying these points, Monroe points out that her definition is quite basic and that it is easy to introduce “various conceptual subtleties”. (Monroe, 1995, p. 6-7) For example, the
definition does not distinguish between “various targets of the altruistic act, assuming that the act itself is altruistic regardless of the recipient”. Group distinction is also important and a contrary viewpoint could deem the above definition as purely altruistic and deem altruism aimed at special groups such as family, characteristics or ethnicity as particularistic altruism. Monroe also states that altruism is a fairly fluid concept, with different types of behavior filling or not filling the criteria above, placing it on a type of spectrum or continuum of altruistic behavior, with “pure self-interest and pure altruism as the two poles”. (Monroe, 1995, p. 7)

Aristotle was interested in the conception of altruistic nature in his writing about friendships. He made a distinction between “self-love that is virtuous and self-love that is contrary to virtue”, the latter being for example, self-gratification. A person can promote virtue within themselves by developing oneself altruistically to for example, benefit one’s friends, hence “a person promotes virtue in themselves and so becomes a better person”. He further points out that selfishness is often considered the attribute of a “bad” man or woman however, things cannot be classified so simply. When one is acting out of friendship one is motivated by both the interests of one’s friend as well as from an “an extension of one’s feeling, for oneself”. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 5) Aristotle does go on to explain that virtuous or altruistic action does not simply benefit one’s friends, and that the pursuit in one’s life for what is “morally fine” is a “rational moral action”. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 6)

However, if altruism has the concern for the self at its core, is it possible to be motivated purely out of concern for another’s interests? And what about altruistic behavior towards strangers? Are the objects of our behavior the self or the other, or is it both? Altruism may seem simple enough, but is actually quite a complex web of right and wrong when one begins to investigate. Abiding by “The Golden rule” can mean different things to different people, and may not always be morally right or universally agreed upon. Why do we engage in altruistic activity? What is it that motivates this behavior? Are altruistic people motivated by reasons or by emotions? These questions have been endlessly debated in moral philosophy with rationalistic and emotive positions often clashing. Scott and Seglow argue that the altruistic perspective unites reason and emotion, and is “a distinctive view of human life and of morals”, one which is essential to harvest and nurture as it is fundamental for a human future. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 5) However, not everyone shares this view.

Hobbes retains an interesting but rather pessimistic view on altruism, using intellect and reason to explain altruistic behavior in humans. Instead of a value based on religion, Hobbes argued that
human altruism was "grounded in the overriding need to secure one's own interests" and that, in order to avoid exploitation, humans would through reasoning and intellect "recognize certain common interests", regardless of self-interest or subjective preference. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 8-9) He further writes that transcendent normative order is an illusion, and human society is "structured by the individualist need for survival". (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 8-9) Survival is here the ultimate goal and motivator, and therefore morality is ultimately based on self-interest and the need/will to survive. In order for a human to maximize his/her own security, altruism would be adopted as a method through reasoning to promote one's own self-interest. Therefore, contrary to Christian ethics where "the Golden rule" was deemed as altruistic, Hobbes argues it is rather grounded in the need to secure one's own selfish interests and goals. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 8-9) Scott and Seglow criticize this view as being "thoroughly egoistic" and question whether this stand-point can be truly viewed as altruism. In Hobbes's view the emphasis of the 'T' is on how "T" would want to be treated, not on how "I" treat others, making it very self-centered and reciprocal agreement or obligation. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 8-9) Hobbes also put forth the theory that a person behaves altruistically not because of "genuine concern" but from the "altruists personal discomfort" of seeing another person in pain or distress. (Monroe, 1996, p. 7) When compared to the Biblical verse for altruism set as "do unto others as you would have them do unto you", Hobbes writes his own view as; "Do not that to another, which thou thinketh unreasonable to be done by another to thy selfe". (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 8-9)

One of the main proponents for reason as motive for moral behavior is the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. Kant’s categorical imperative is a principal he uses to explain a person’s motivation. The moral philosophy states; “Act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law”. What this means is that the “maxim”, a principle of action, is tested by the imperative to see whether or not is “rationally binding on all human beings”. If it is found to be so, one has a reason for accepting the maxim as “a moral duty for all to perform”. The categorical imperative rationally binds them to a course of action hence, providing the source of their motivation. (Scott and Seglow, 2007, p. 22)

Kant also distinguishes between two terms; benevolence and beneficence. Benevolence is explained as merely wishing good, and beneficence is the act of doing good, relating directly to action, and is “benevolence manifest in the practical love of humans”. (Scott and Seglow, 2007, p. 22) Beneficence is, according to Kant, “the maxim of making other’s happiness one’s end” while a benevolent person merely takes satisfaction from the happiness of others. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p.
Kant's work is extensive however, the main idea relates to choice. Humans are seen to have "a capacity to set goals, arrive at principles to reach those goals and freely choose to act on those principles". (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 24) Reasoning in Kant's view is about the practical, not just the theoretical, and in order to choose we must be able to reason. While a state of emotion may prevent someone from acting altruistically, reason can "in principle, motivate us to act" and these reasons as motives can nullify desires or emotions, leading to a sense of duty to act, which can be a very powerful motivator. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 25)

Kant's view that humans have a "duty" to behave altruistically which stems from reason does seem to ignore some core features that are often linked to altruism for example; compassion, sympathy, fellow feeling etc. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 26) These are very common emotions that arise when responding altruistically to a situation however, according to Kant in situations where altruism stems more from feelings is not genuine morality or altruistic behavior at all. This view seems to restrict altruism to only include situations where a person acts altruistically out of reason and duty, and as Scott & Seglow write; "Altruism, for Kant, seems a rather demanding virtue". (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 26)

Many more contemporary philosophers have followed Kant's lead on these ideas. For example, Nagel (1970) views altruism not as any type of self-sacrifice but merely as "a willingness to act in the interests of other persons, without any ulterior motives" i.e. behavior that is motivated simply by the notion that another will benefit or avoid harm because of it. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 26) Hence, Nagel's view maintains that "altruistic reasons themselves motivate action", rejecting the idea that altruism has anything to do with desire. (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 26) Gewirth (1978) in turn argues that there is a relationship between "the reasons a person accepts and their pursuit of their own purposes". There is a deeper level of reason for doing something entailed by a desire of judgement, and therefore it is reason and not desire that completes the "motivational work". (Scott & Seglow, 2007, p. 26) However, this approach faces a conundrum, as people most frequently have compelling reasons for behaving altruistically which they unfortunately do not act on. What could this mean?

Monroe states that it is perspective itself that "constitutes the heart of altruism", and that in order to understand it we need to investigate an individual's perspective and ask how it "delineates that range of options the individual finds available, both empirically and morally". Only then we can begin to gain some insight into the altruistic behavior of the individual. (Monroe, 1996, p. 3)
Ratanchandani writes about how volunteering can by nature be deemed altruistic, and how “contributing and helping” very often outweighs a volunteer’s self-interest, with volunteers often retaining a very “strong sense of mission”, contributing countless hours of uncompensated work to a cause. So in a sense, could it be said all volunteers are altruistic by nature and are motivated by altruistic goals and values? Volunteering can become an active outlet for a person to execute their own set of values into action through e.g. humanitarian work. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 15) However, can altruism be considered to be the main motivator for volunteer workers, or is there something else at play?

2.2.2 Volunteering and the Ego

An opposing viewpoint to altruism, volunteer motivation has also been researched through an ego centered lens, with focus on personal gain and self-interests. Personal interest and benefits can also be a core motivator for volunteer workers. The ego is argued to be central to a person’s activities concerning decision making. Personal accomplishments, experiences or competences can all be rewards that volunteers gain from their work, which benefit them either personally or professionally and serve as a source of motivation. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 16) Intrinsic reward and personal satisfaction are also motivators related to egoism where helping is “focused on an individual’s self-improvement”. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 16)

In their study concerning volunteer intention and the components of volunteer motivation, Lee, Alexander and Kim (2013) found that ego enhancement had a positive effect on volunteer intention, i.e. volunteers were more likely to continue their work when their ego got a kick out of it. (Lee, Alexander & Kim, 2013.) Volunteers also often feel motivated in groups that are aiming for something “larger than them” and they are able to see their “contribution, efforts and membership as worthwhile”. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 14) Chapman (2008) also writes that a volunteer may engage in volunteer work as a type of escape using the work as an “instrument to relieve one’s own negative state” which corresponds with Malkki’s findings of self-escape as well. (Chapman, 2008, As cited by Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 16)

Interesting research has also been done on narcissism and volunteering. Brunell, Tumblin and Buelow (2014) who conducted research investigating two groups of volunteers, found that in accordance with their original hypothesis, narcissists “tend to volunteer for self-interest rather than
humanitarian values.” (Brunell et al. 2014, p. 365) Altruistic concerns were not a motivator for narcissists and had little to do with empathy or concern. The link between narcissism and volunteering appeared to be “driven by psychological entitlement” and those volunteers that felt this were more interested in volunteering “as a means of building a network for future career success” rather than acting out of compassion and helping others. (Brunell et al. 2014, p. 373)

Satar and Waheed (2014) conducted a study exploring motivations of volunteer workers at non-profits in Islamabad in Pakistan. Their structured questionnaire revealed that egoistic as well as altruistic motivation play a key role in volunteer work at non-profit organizations. (Satar & Waheed, 2014, p. 61) However, “career development” did appear to be one of the largest motivations for volunteers, which is classified as egoistic in nature. The researchers state that everyone has meaning in the work they do as volunteers and these can be both altruistic and egoistic. (Satar & Waheed, 2014, p. 70)

In their research on AIDS volunteers, Omoto and Snyder write that volunteer motivation that revolved around “personal, self-oriented and perhaps even selfish functions” was essentially what kept volunteers “actively involved” as opposed to “humanitarian desires”. (Omoto & Snyder, 1995, p. 283) They identified these types of volunteering as self-oriented and other-oriented (similar to egoistic and altruistic motivations) and concluded that “ironically...volunteers motivated by more self-oriented concerns may actually provide greater benefits through their longer lengths of active service”. (Omoto & Snyder, 1995, p. 283)

Overall volunteer motivations may often seem similar externally, but can be very different for each individual internally. Each volunteer is motivated by various different factors and at different levels, and motivations can also change during volunteer work. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 17) The same behavior and work may be done for a plethora of different psychological, altruistic, personal or professional reasons and the following chapter explore critical pedagogy and why student teachers specifically may choose to take part in volunteer work, and how this can affect them.

2.3 Agents of Change: Critical Pedagogy and Teachers as Volunteers

Critical pedagogy is an approach to teaching and learning that is concerned with “transforming relations of power which are oppressive and which lead to the oppression of people”, moving
towards an increasingly just society where individuals have control of their political, economic and cultural lives. Critical pedagogy challenges any form of oppression or subordination and is opposed to the inequalities and “oppressive power relations” that continue to reside in educational institutions". (Aliakbari & Farafi, 2011, p. 77)

Critical pedagogy is an invaluable component for teacher education. Instead of reinforcing the idea that inequality is an inevitable aspect of our local and global societies, critical pedagogy can encourage teachers and student teachers of varying backgrounds and expertise to “explore the relationships among larger historical, economic, global, and social constructs as they relate to local and, more recently, global conditions”. (Kroeger & Lash, 2018, p. 2) Kroeger and Lash strive to encourage pre-service teachers to think of themselves as agents of social change in a world “awash with inequalities”, and encourage teachers to position themselves into “local social networks”, in order to strive towards social action and change. Furthermore, they want pre-service teachers to understand how to recognize and address the power structures that exist in schools and governments both on a local and global level and to obtain “an understanding of the necessity of moral action and ethical fidelity” both of which are invaluable prerequisites for social action and justice, as well as methods of encouraging teachers to view themselves as agents of this change. (Kroeger & Lash, 2018, p. 2) Having student teachers view themselves in this way can have a significant effect on the types of teachers they will become, as well as how they are concerned and engaged in global and local issues. If student teachers see themselves as agents of change, could this be a core motivator for engaging in volunteer work?

Kroeger and Lash argue that field experiences are key to obtaining the above mentioned understandings. Practical field experience allows pre-service teachers to view themselves as part of various communities, in order to better understand the social injustices occurring in the environments that surround them. Pre-service teachers or student teachers discover these local challenges and issues of power or oppression within their communities that directly affects the social environment and often the young children that reside there as well. (Kroeger & Lash, 2018, p. 3) Bringle and Hatcher (1996) summarized the benefits of service learning as a highly beneficial educational experience, where students who take part in organized service activities in their community that meet “identified community needs”, can gain further understanding of course content as well as a deeper and more expansive recognition and appreciation of the discipline, along with “an enhanced sense of civic responsibility”. (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, p. 222)
Boyle-Baise (2002) states that service learning can be highly beneficial for teachers to learn about “culturally diverse and low income communities” which highlights certain aspects of society including local concerns and issues of inequality or discrimination. (Boyle-Baise, 2002, p. 10) Having student teachers grasp the social contexts within which they not only live in but will one day teach in, can be beneficial to society as a whole. When teachers are aware of and involved in the concerns and issues that affect all of the members within a society, this can help combat issues of inequality and discrimination when pre-service teachers for example, recognize and are involved in the issues that various minority groups may face. (Boyle-Baise, 2002, p. 10) In the context of this study it is interesting to find out how volunteering with refugees may shape the ideas and goals of the student teachers interviewed, and whether or not this can be clearly observed. Boyle-Baise envisions programs for pre-service teachers where they would “live” a multicultural education, learning from adults and youth from different backgrounds, and “see their lives mirrored” onto people struggling with poverty or racial discrimination, aspects that students from elite university backgrounds may have little to no experience with. Through such experiences, multicultural education for these teachers can become a “promise of advocacy” and be encouraged to become a champion of “equal, equitable, excellent and humane education for all learners”. (Boyle-Baise, 2002, p. 4)

Being aware of one's own privilege and the neoliberal influences that affect societies can have major impacts on teachers professional work as well. For example, Kroeger and Lash state that when pre-service teachers understand how racism, classism and other types of oppression are “at the root of (or subtly hidden in) social problems” within a classroom context, they learn to “reinstate forms of power that are more relevant, authentic, and socially complex than what previously existed”, and this can be beneficial for society as a whole. (Kroeger & Lash, 2018, p. 3) It is interesting in this research to ponder whether professional development was an incentive for students to volunteer and continue volunteering, and whether they felt they would gain skills and experiences in social issues that would develop them as professionals.

Crawford et al. (2005) argue that multicultural education has not had much of an impact on the practices of pre-service teacher when they enter the classroom. They state that pre-service teachers must “reconsider their own assumptions” and strive towards “a better understanding of values and practices” of cultures and families that differ from their own. In order to include diversity as an imperative part of the curriculum, reflective analysis of beliefs and “systematic inquiry” into diverse cultures is needed. The researcher's state that this can be brought about with reflective self-analysis
Learning about critical pedagogy and engaging in field experiences can have an effect on teacher identity as well. Identity of teachers and teacher students is relevant in the context of this study, as understanding how teachers view themselves and what their identity looks like can provide insight into why teacher students choose to take part in volunteer field work with refugees and how this work developed their identity. Did the students who took part in the volunteer work view themselves as agents of social change and therefore feel obliged to participate in societal issues and work?

Beauchamp and Thomas write that student teachers “undergo a shift in identity” as they move through their teacher education programs and eventually assume positions as teachers in “today’s challenging school contexts”. Unfortunately identity as a concept is a complex one and identity shifts can occur throughout a teachers professional career. (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 175.) Identity is also dynamic in nature and can be shaped by various internal and external factors through teacher training education. Factors such as emotion, job or life experiences can all have a profound effect on how teachers identity changes and shifts, and is therefore relevant to look at how engaging in a certain activity such as volunteer field work with refugees may change and develop an aspiring teachers identity. (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 177) This identity shift in turn can have significant effects on the types of opportunities aspiring teachers choose to pursue as well as what type of teacher or professional they wish to be. If student teachers view themselves as agents of social change and attribute it as a part of their professional identity, this can have major influences on the reasons they take part in certain activities for example, volunteering with refugees. Beauchamp and Thomas write that what can result from a teacher’s realization of his/her identity “is a sense of agency, of empowerment to move ideas forward, to reach goals or even to transform the context”. The development of one’s identity can lead to a strong sense of agency and action. Teachers play a crucial role within institutions and society and this sense of agency within their identities can therefore be a “powerful force for good”. (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 184)

Ratanchandani conducted research that explored students as volunteers. The study looked at the reasons students choose to volunteer and was explored through Clary and Snyder’s (1999) 6 functions that influence motivation (discussed on page 9-10). Findings found that students placed significant importance on items that were categorized into Values, indicating that students
perceived motivation to be centered around altruistic intentions, giving back and helping others. "Varying regard" was given to the Enhancement function as well as the Protective function, with no clear consensus among students regarding ego or feelings of guilt. The Career function indicated that students were motivated by possible career enhancement from for example, expanding professional networks or learning more about their respective fields. Additionally, there was a significant importance that students placed on the Understanding function which explored students "understanding their role in society", with the majority of students believing volunteering to be an opportunity to understand "society at large and and to be able to see the bigger picture on their environment". The Social function indicated that interestingly students did not place large significant importance on socializing or meeting new friends or people through volunteering. (Ratanchandani, 2015, p. 31-42) These findings are interesting however, more research needs to be conducted on students as volunteers in order to provide clear conclusions concerning student volunteer motivations. It is interesting to compare how the participants in this study relate to these functions.

Exploring the experiences of the participants in this study can provide valuable information on the effects that volunteer work may have had on student teachers' values, views and even identity. Understanding both the motivations of the participants as well as the effects that volunteering had can provide insight into the types of values and ideas that these student teachers hold, and hence what types of in service teachers they will become. As teachers undeniably have a significant social impact throughout their careers, it is not only interesting but important to know what types of values and ideas are being passed on. This is especially essential in societies that are constantly increasing in diversity, as increasing globalization and migration continues to occur. (Vertovec, 2007) The following chapter explains the methodology that has been used to explore these ideas.

3. Methodology

Phenomenology has been chosen as an approach for exploring the data. The following methodology chapter begins by exploring phenomenology, its roots, challenges, importance and the idea of a phenomenological reduction, and then moves onto explaining the method used in this thesis. Phenomenology has been used as the appropriate approach for this research as it is based on the examination of human experiences.
3.1 Phenomenology: A brief introduction

Phenomenology is a fascinating branch of philosophy, focusing on the study of consciousness and the investigation of experiences. Phenomenology has many definitions and interpretations, and has been vastly expanded on since the ideas were primarily put forth in the early 20th century by philosophers such as Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and especially, and most prominently, the German philosopher Edmund Husserl. The essence of phenomenology can be summarized briefly as the study of phenomena. That said, this study and investigation into the understanding of phenomena and experience is an immense ocean of thoughts, speculations, definitions and opinions, all attempting to make sense of the word itself. (Smith, 2013, para. 35)

Phenomenology is not limited to merely sensory qualities such as seeing and hearing as experience, as human experiences are much more affluent in content than merely experiencing sensations. Phenomenology includes the meanings behind these experiences, the significance of events, objects, people, the self and time, as they appear and are experienced in an individual's "life-world". (Smith, 2013, para. 4) "Life-world" is explained by Husserl as the understanding that human beings obtain from that which they experience, through the "familiar context of sense-references" which therefore forms a "horizon" within which human beings of various forms of behavior can orient themselves, and distinguish their individual "life-worlds". (Held, 1998, p. 21) This "horizon" consists of all unrecognized and recognized reality that surrounds the individual, and humans lead a constant conscious or unconscious existence within this "life-world", which is made up of everything one experiences and understands. Husserl argues in his work that although life-worlds are individualistic in nature, they are nonetheless a "cultural accomplishment" as well as a "universal mental acquisition". (Zelic, 2007, p. 414) What this means is that although the life-world of the individual person may differ and even hold vast differences, they are nonetheless based on a similar structure that is universal in nature and is "meant as the world for all". (Zelic, 2007, p. 414) Held discusses a similar viewpoint by exploring the idea of cultures as life-worlds, and argues that every culture is a life-world, and that all cultures therefore share similar characteristics. The structure of life-worlds is open to differences and variations due to the pluralistic nature of cultures across the globe however, Held argues that there is a common ground that all of these different variations of life-worlds rest upon i.e. "the one world" which has limits on variation. (Held, 1998, p. 21)
3.2 Challenges and Importance of Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a highly debated topic of philosophy. The various ideas and theories are often extremely complex and difficult issues to discuss, process, and even understand. Phenomenology as a branch of philosophy has no doubt been assessed and criticized. Luckmann describes phenomenology as incredibly descriptive and at odds with concrete empirical science, where he states the data obtained from phenomenological methods are of “an elementary nature”, due to the fact that they are found by inspecting one's own experiences. (Luckmann, 1978, p. 8) Luft points out that the phenomena that the field attempts to explore can be incredibly obscure and difficult to deal with. For example, the phenomena of memory and ego, are highly abstract and, as stated by Luft; “inner experience can even deceive me; memory might be false or incomplete” and understanding and interpreting one's consciousness, ego and state of mind is not only tricky, but can even be deemed as impossible. (Luft, 2004, p. 210)

Finlay raises important questions in her article concerning phenomenological research methods as well as how phenomenology can be used in practice. Some of her main concerns include: the definitions of phenomenology i.e. “How tightly or loosely should we define what counts as “phenomenology”? ”, as well as how do different interpretations, including research subjectivity, affect definitions of phenomenology and how does this in turn affect the field in practice?” (Finlay, 2009, p. 6) Additionally, can there be concrete and distinctive characteristics of phenomenology and where do the boundaries and parameters lie, and what “distinguishes (phenomenology) from other variants of qualitative research that focus on subjective meanings”. (Finlay, 2009, p. 6) In comparison, Giorgi states that phenomenology will always maintain four main core characteristics that “hold across all variations”. These include rigorously descriptive research, the use of phenomenological reductions, the exploration of “intentional relationships between persons and situations” and finally, uncover “the essences, or structures, of meaning immanent in human experiences through the use of imaginative variation”. (Giorgi, 1989, as cited by Finlay, 2012, p. 18) Nonetheless, variations in phenomenological research methods continue to arise and exist, and is a phenomenon itself that cannot be denied. Some methodologies will stay close to Giorgi’s four main principles while simultaneously reflecting their own theories and ideas, while others may stray far from Husserl’s techniques, while still exploring lived experiences and the meanings behind them. (Finlay, 2012, p. 18)

Criteria is a parameter that decides whether or not a method of research is phenomenological
Finlay personally states that "phenomenological research is phenomenological when it involves both rich description of the lifeworld or "lived experience" which attempts to abstain from judgements and prejudices concerning the experience or phenomenon, and where the researcher has embraced an open and "special" phenomenological attitude and a phenomenological reduction is present. Any research that does not include at its core the idea of lived experience and the description of "the things in their appearing", cannot be said to be phenomenological. She further emphasizes that researchers must be clear about what method of philosophy or phenomenology is being used, and goes on to stress that it is important to be aware of which methods are appropriate in which contexts. Hence; "a phenomenological method is sound if it links appropriately to some phenomenological philosophy or theory, and if its claims about method are justified and consistent". (Finlay, 2012, p. 19)

From personal research it can be concluded that definitions, descriptions and interpretations of phenomenology can vary, and are therefore difficult to grasp. The ideas put forth by phenomenology are extensive and often extremely abstract, making it difficult to reach conclusions when one is bombarded with such large existential and transcendental questions and ideas. For example, when attempting to understand the ego or an experience, questions such as; what is the ego, does the ego differ greatly in all people, how does the ego affect an individual's experiences, tend to arise and often baffle. Furthermore, what constitutes an experience, and how can we know what an experience is? What is consciousness, and is all consciousness a consciousness of something? These types of questions are absolutely endless when dealing with phenomenology, and although various philosophers and phenomenologists have attempted to explore, open up and explain these phenomena, it can nonetheless get quite confusing and overwhelming. What then is the relevance and purpose of studying and exploring this irrevocably ambiguous field of philosophy?

In his book concerning Phenomenology and the Science of Behavior, Thines states that "the very use of the word 'phenomenology' raises immediate suspicion in many scientific psychological circles" (Thines, 1977, p. 15), as it can be understood to mean an exclusively descriptive, introspective and self-analyzing approach. Thines himself reproaches this view, as he believes it to be naive and "shallow", and is convinced that in the world of psychology, phenomenological issues and epistemologies do hold merit and value. He admits that 'consciousness' and 'subject' are abstract and therefore difficult to explore and analyze however, argues that modern phenomenology has stepped forward from its early years of "idealism" and speculation. Thines explains that the
concepts would be made clearer "if they referred to 'constitution', i.e. the active building up of the individual's own (or 'subjective') world according to perceptual and motor capacities" (Thines, 1977, p. 14) which would increase the legitimacy of claims and conclusions in the field of phenomenology. He goes on to say that phenomenology within the scientific field of psychology should not be viewed as a "purely philosophical dispute" (Thines, 1977, p. 14) attempting to strip scientific psychology of its merits or accomplishments, both theoretical and practical, as in its early years phenomenological psychology may have manifested itself almost entirely by "philosophical speculation", but has since moved towards becoming its own "autonomous field...distinct from transcendental reflection". (Thines, 1977, p. 14)

Husserl discovered the significance and need for phenomenology and the performance of a reduction, when he became aware that all of scientific work and inquiry was based upon a false foundation. He believed all of scientific inquiry to be compromised by the "psychological assumptions of the scientist" as well as the assumptions made by the entirety of the world that surrounds us. Husserl believed that through phenomenology and the performance of a reduction, the scientific field could be reformed in order to provide scientific knowledge, free from bias. (Husserl, 1927, p. 2) This idea is important, as if all scientific theory and fact are contaminated and compromised, this would mean that everything we hold to be true may in fact be different from what we believe. Although it is unclear whether or not it would possible to have all scientific inquiry be free from bias and contamination, exploring phenomenology is nonetheless important, as being aware that there is a problem is always the first step towards a solution.

Smith explains that phenomenology deals with the study of meaning "in a wide sense...that includes more than what is expressed in language". (Smith, 2013, para. 38) Attempting to understand the meanings behind human experiences is challenging however, understanding that the knowledge we have about the world, other people, phenomena, and about ourselves should not be blindly accepted as true, helps us to expand our thinking and perspectives, and provides us with questions that may be difficult to answer, but are nonetheless important to be aware of. In order to provide unbiased knowledge a researcher or scientist must not only be aware that bias is problem, it would also be ideal if the researcher was able to fully separate themselves from the research being done, and view knowledge from Husserl's phenomenological perspective, free from any contamination. With these thoughts in mind, various concerns about the scientific field arise. Is studying phenomenology and performing a phenomenological reduction ideal or necessary in all fields of research? Can any real data or information be released and believed to be unbiased without phenomenology? Should
phenomenology and the performance of a phenomenological reduction be a necessary requirement from every researcher attempting to explore and explain the world and human experiences? These questions do not have clear and simple answers, but are nonetheless interesting to explore. It is important to note that Husserl himself does not provide a simple solution to this problem, and his phenomenological quest and persistent enquiry into the foundations of knowledge, was not “for certainty, but for the founding of the conditions for the possibility of knowledge”, in a way to cast light upon the connection between “pure logic and the concrete processes of thinking”. (Cogan, 2006, para. 9)

Although phenomenology as a topic is a challenging one, it is nonetheless still an important topic to consider when executing research. If all scientific research is contaminated, should a phenomenological reduction be a requirement of all scientific inquiry? And if so, is a phenomenological reduction something that can be achieved personally?

3.3 Phenomenological Reduction

Husserl's work was a new and meticulous method of philosophical inquiry that provided a new method of approaching humans and human experiences, founded on a “radical shift on perspective”, and this new method was an attempt to explore and cast light upon the human world and concrete human experiences. (Luckmann, 1978, p. 7) This new descriptive method birthed a priori science that attempted to provide a reform for all sciences through this instrument of rigorous scientific philosophy. (Husserl, 1927, p. 2) Husserl believed that all scientific findings were irrevocably contaminated by a researcher's agenda, opinions, interests, beliefs, and assumptions about the world, which would ultimately lead to unreliable findings. Through phenomenology, Husserl wanted to move to a place of scientific discovery that was “pure” i.e. free from anything non-scientific, and he believed this was possible to achieve through a method he referred to as phenomenological reduction, also referred to as bracketing, epoché or transcendental reduction. (Husserl, 1927, p. 2)

Husserl describes a phenomenological reduction as a “meditative practice” where the individual is able to free oneself of all the aspects of life that one merely accepts as “true”, or in other words, “liberate oneself from the captivation in which one is held by all that one accepts as being the case.” (Cogan, 2006, para. 4) Husserl believed that once one was able to escape this cage of acceptance, the individual would be able to view the world differently, liberated from the “contamination” of
the psyche or of presuppositions, assumptions, pre judgements and prejudices that one might hold about the world. (Cogan, 2006, para. 4) What Husserl attempts to do with phenomenological reduction is question the legitimacy and validity of scientific inquiry, focusing on the assumptions it makes and the foundations it is based on. Husserl wanted to understand the connection between the processes of thinking and logic, and believed that "the results of scientific investigation are a function of both the architectonics of scientific hypotheses and the psychological coloring of the investigating scientist." What Husserl means by this, is that he believed that all scientific research is "contaminated" by the researcher him/herself due to the epistemological and psychological assumptions he/she maintains about the world as well as by the world itself. (Cogan, 2006, para. 6) Husserl’s work is critical of scientific inquiry as he believed it to lack a “philosophically rigorous foundation” as it does not consider the “psychological assumptions” of an individual or scientist, or even the “framework of its own inquiry” i.e. the assumptions concerning time, space, gravity, causality etc. (Cogan, 2006, para. 61) Performing a phenomenological reduction aims to eliminate this and a phenomenological reduction is a gradually obtained answer to the problem of adequacy within the scientific field and scientific inquiry. (Cogan, 2006, para. 6)

So how can one begin to perform a reduction process? In order to access the “pure world”, a world free from presuppositions and prejudices, all judgements, prejudices and epistemologies should be peeled away in order to return to the "things themselves" i.e. the world as it is before it is contaminated by “the psychological assumptions of the scientist”. (Cogan, 2006, para. 3) This “pure world” would then act as a new foundation for knowledge. This peeling away technique and suspension of prejudices is described by Husserl as consisting of two main processes; first an “abstention” or “époque” and secondly a “reduction proper”. (Cogan, 2006, para. 3) Husserl believed that humans exist in “captivation-in-an-acceptedness” in regard to the the world we live in, where we take for granted everything about our existence and live and exist within the world unquestionably and imperceptibly. An époque, also referred to as bracketing, is a the process where an individual will no longer “accept” this way of viewing and understanding the world, thereby escaping “captivity”. (Cogan, 2006, para. 34) The époque is neither a belief in or denial of the world, but is a transcendental reflective moment where the individual reaches a “suspension of judgments about the existence or non-existence of the external world” and becomes focused on the pure phenomena of the world itself. (Linsmayer, 2011, para. 3)

However, a phenomenological reduction does not appear as if from nowhere, and are far from easy steps to take. A reduction is a process that one does not, as Husserl states, accidentally achieve, but
is a rigorous procedure of philosophical and psychological effort that is difficult to both achieve and maintain. A reduction process is a regimen that attempts to transform a person by attaining a new perspective on the world and its phenomena. Additionally, once a reduction process in phenomenology has been performed, this does not mean that the outcome is valid for all time. A phenomenological reduction is something that Husserl stressed should be repeated, developed and practiced throughout one's life. (Luft, 2004, p. 199)

Cogan outlines this transformation as a process of rigorous meditation that requires persistence and mental strength. He stresses that a reduction meditation process is unique and differs from “ordinary meditation” which he claims only involves the mind. Alternatively, he states that a reduction process is a radicalization of “self-meditation” (Cogan, 2006, para. 42) and this process of meditation requires “the participation of the entire individual and initially brings about a radical transformation”. (Cogan, 2006, para. 3) Once this meditative practice has been completed, a phenomenologist is able to view the world without contamination, and liberate themselves from everything they perceive or believe as being “true” and are thusly “free from any contamination that presuppositions of conceptual framework or psyche might contribute” (Cogan, 2006, para. 4). Fink describes a phenomenological reduction as the “tearing oneself free” from one's own gullible and naive perception of the world, and states that it is not simply a “theoretical, intellectual act” but rather a “spiritual movement” that consumes the individual and provides a “fundamental transformation down to our roots”. (as cited in Cogan, 2006, para. 56) However, although it is possible to thoroughly learn about phenomenology as well as both steps that make up a phenomenological reduction, the actual performance of this process is incredibly complex. Cogan explains his views on how a reduction process could possibly be executed. He emphasizes that at the very least, there are clues to knowing whether or not a process has been completed at all. As Husserl and other phenomenologists describe the reduction as a “radical” transformation similar to changing one's belief system or religious conversion, it can be concluded that if at the end of this process the individual cannot describe this as being true or even similar to a feeling of such a transformation, the process can therefore be deemed unsuccessful. As a reduction is an exploration performed by the consciousness into the the consciousness, great cognitive strength is required. Cogan phrases this exploration as “an exercise in determining who the “I” is whenever we say “I AM” ” and is hence an; “interrogation of the self by the self”. (Cogan, 2006, para. 61)

The reduction process begins with undergoing self-meditation. Classic forms of meditation include the idea that the individual is zoned out of the world, and is one with his/her thoughts alone. Sitting
quietly, comfortably and still, while focusing only on one's mind and controlling one's thoughts, is a good place to start. However, as mentioned above, Cogan describes this phenomenological meditation as a "species of meditation" as it is different from ordinary meditation "which involves only the mind" and explains that, "this more radical form requires the participation of the entire individual" as well as the pathos of the individual. Nonetheless, beginning with ordinary meditation where the individual makes sure they are comfortable and will not be disrupted is an excellent way to prepare and begin. The aim of these initial preparations is to eliminate the distractions of the world around the individual "leaving only the meditative task to occupy one's attention". (Cogan, 2006, para. 64)

Once this has been achieved the self meditation can begin. In various forms of meditation the objective is to clear one's mind and essentially focus on nothing at all and include using and exerting one's imagination or repeating sounds or chants or incantations. Ordinary meditation often focuses on sitting in a quiet place, alone and learning how to clear the mind and accept and deal with disturbing or disruptive thoughts. However, in phenomenological reduction meditation, the individual must focus on the self, and the self alone, making it the only object of the meditation process. When the minds focus is on the self, the radicalization of this is, as Cogan describes it, the individual "relentlessly pushing back and forcing the self onto itself". The method of doing this is repeating and affirming "I am" in order to begin to feel and experience the "I" as it exists in the present. One will begin to feel the "I"-ness of it and the individual will begin to become "aware of the three "I"s: the human ego, the constituting ego, and the onlooker" (Cogan, 2006, para. 65-66)

Cogan states that very little progress will be made in the first attempts at this process, but that repeating this will eventually lead to a rise in consciousness and moments of clarity where "you will know "I AM" " as the individuals perspectives begin to change. (Cogan, 2006, para. 66) Additionally, Fink explained that an important initial step in the reduction process is "laying the ground" of a philosophy and emphasized that "the laying of a ground of a philosophy is the original beginning of the philosopher himself, not with and for others but for himself alone" and that this "ground" does not consist of other philosophies, ideas or propositions but "rather, the ground is precisely the philosopher him or herself". (Cogan, 2006, para. 42) Finally, Luft points out that Husserl himself emphasized that this process of reduction and entering into the world of phenomenology must be repeated and practiced, as phenomenology is not "a device that, once performed, is valid for all times", and that someone who has been "converted" would forever remain so. (Luft, 2004, p. 199) The process of a phenomenological reduction is without question
tricky to understand let alone perform, due to the challenging nature of phenomenology overall.

The following chapter describes the method of data collection with the help of phenomenology and a phenomenological reduction, and moves onto recounting the data that was obtained from the scientific method.

4. Data collection and analysis

4.1 Data Collection

A total of five participants was used in this study and open-ended interviews were conducted. It was emphasized with each participant that the interview was meant to be an open discussion about their experiences, and not a Q&A interrogation. Purposive sampling was used to choose the participants for this study. All participants were teacher students of around the same age who had taken part in the volunteer program at the reception center, set up the previous year by the University of Oulu. The participants all had varying degrees of past volunteering experience and all came from different backgrounds and teaching degree programs. However, this should not be seen as a weakness, as it is interesting to explore commonalities from this data despite varying backgrounds and levels of experience. All participants had been enrolled in the volunteer course, had been actively participating and were currently completing a teaching degree at the university, and these were the most important factors for both data collection and data analysis. Gender, religious beliefs or nationality were not considered as factors within this study. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed.

Each participant was told prior to the interview taking place, that they were free to talk about their experiences as openly as they wished and if they had a thought, idea or memory they wished to discuss they should be free to run with the thought and not pay too much attention to the specificity of the questions asked. I attempted to interrupt participants as little as possible as to not disrupt their flow of thoughts and experiences as they were unveiled. Additionally I attempted to remain neutral about the experiences being discussed and avoid and withhold any judgement or preconceptions that might arise during the interview. I attempted to keep reactions and facial expression relatively neutral in order to refrain from displaying judgement however, nonetheless responded to participants with nodding and smiling to encourage them to share their experiences and provide a
friendly and open environment. Care was taken to ensure the atmosphere was relaxed and open, and the researcher would first make sure to engage in non-interview related discussion about everyday life in order to make sure the participants felt comfortable and could relax into the setting before the interview began.

Although the interview was meant to be as free and open as possible, interview questions were used throughout the interview as a guide. When the conversation came to a standstill, these questions were utilized to find out more from the participant, and guide the conversation into further conversation about the participants' experiences. The interview questions were developed after the first interview was conducted when it was realized that questions would need to be designed in a way that would help participants dig deep into their experiences and therefore improve the process. The questions used can be found in Appendix 1.

Often the experiences of the participant would run into the next question, or an answer would refer to and answer many questions at once, and I would refrain from stopping the participant from talking in order to come back to the question at hand. Rather, I would acknowledge that the question had already been answered in one way or another and merely wait or ask if there was anything the participant wished to add. The interview process often strayed from the question sequence but I allowed this to happen freely in order to not interrupt the flow of thought. However, it was ensured that all questions were answered/covered in some way and at some point during the interview. Each interview was unique and individual to the participant in question. The questions often asked the participants to give examples of situations which encouraged the participants to dive into their past experiences, in the hope that this would provide insightful and meaningful information concerning that experience. Often an example of an experience or situation brought up a lot of not only information, but also emotions and the participants' own reflections of these experiences.

It was also clarified to each participant that the interview could be conducted in either Finnish or English, whichever language they felt was more comfortable for them. All participants chose to complete the interview in English. This was not the mother-tongue of all participants and in some cases this can be observed from the interview data. Some participants would code-switch slightly between English and Finnish if they could not remember a particular word however, this did not obstruct the data.
In order to keep the method phenomenological, I refrained from completing or working too much on the theoretical framework before analyzing the interviews. Reading and exploring theories and concepts are of course important to help understand where certain phenomena may arise from however, I first wished to read and analyze the data with as little prior knowledge on the subjects of motivation in order to eliminate any pre-judgements and preconceptions, as well as to avoid the very real possibility of confirmation bias. A personal process of phenomenological reduction was also completed and explained in Chapter 4.2.2.

4.2 Data Analysis

Richard Hycner's (1985) guidelines for phenomenological research have been largely utilized for this method, as well as Giorgi's phenomenological writings and examples from other phenomenological research, to create the following data analysis procedure. It is important to remember that phenomenology is far from a simple methodology and “unlike other methodologies, phenomenology cannot be reduced to a 'cookbook' set of instructions” (Keen, 1975, p. 41 as cited by Hycner, 1985, p. 279) The following method has therefore been developed and followed keeping in mind that there is more than one way to conduct phenomenological analysis and that no simple step by step method can be ungraciously thrown at a phenomenon with the expectation of finding answers. Phenomenological analysis is more than a step by step procedure. It is “an approach, an attitude, an investigative posture with a certain set of goals”, complex and even dubious in its proceedings. (Keen, 1975, p. 41 as cited by Hycner, 1985, p. 279)

Giorgi put forth 4 core characteristics of phenomenological approaches that have been utilized and kept in mind throughout this research. These include: descriptive research, the use of a phenomenological reduction, exploring the intentional relationships between persons and situations and the analysis also exploring and disclosing the essences or structures of meaning “immanent in human experiences”. (Giorgi, 1989, as cited by Finlay, 2012, p. 18)

The following steps have been developed and followed while simultaneously attempting to remain true to the phenomena being investigated. (Hycner, 1985, p. 280) An attempt has been made to adopt an open phenomenological attitude, different from the natural daily attitude, and refrain from “bringing in non-given past knowledge” as well as attempting to adopt a “special sensitivity” towards the phenomena. (Giorgi, 2012, p. 5)
The phenomenological analysis process in this research consists of 7 steps.

1. Transcription
2. Bracketing and phenomenological reduction
3. Capturing the sense of the whole
4. Finding and characterizing units of general meaning
5. Finding and characterizing units of meaning in relation to the research question
6. Clustering units of relevant meaning
7. Completing themes from clusters of meaning

The following chapters outline the analysis process that was undertaken in order to understand the phenomena at hand, as well as bring together ideas and perceptions from the interviews. It is important to note that this is a complex process due to the complex nature of semi-structured interviews. Each interview was very different in both structure and content, and therefore the idea of “bringing together” ideas or attempting to form general conclusions was challenging. (Burnard, 1994, p. 111) Nonetheless, valuable data was obtained from the analysis process and the findings are outlined in Chapter 4.3.

4.2.1 Transcription

The first stage of data analysis is transcription. This includes the researcher listening to the interview tapes and accurately transcribing the interview. Transcription includes listening and noting down all literal statements while also paying close attention to and noting “significant non-verbal and paralinguistic communications”. (Hycner, 1985, p. 280) Very close attention to spoken word was paid while writing the interviews into a transcript in order to capture the true essence of the ideas and experiences. (Indianscribes, 2010.) Smith et al. note that at this stage it is important that each theme “is represented in the verbatim transcript” which means converting the spoken words into text that captures the words exactly as they have been spoken, in order to avoid letting the researcher's own bias “distort the selective process”. (Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999, p. 223) All non-verbal communication was not noted down however, all verbal sounds from fillers (um, uh etc.) and false starts to sentences as well as laughter was noted down to remain true to the true
nature of the interview.

4.2.2 Bracketing and phenomenological reduction

As we have learned from Chapter 3.4, a phenomenological reduction is no easy feat to undertake. However, it is nonetheless imperative to the phenomenological process of analysis. An open attitude must be adopted towards the data in order to capture the true essence of the phenomena. (Hycner, 1985, p. 280) A phenomenological reduction is a “conscious, effortful, opening of ourselves to the phenomenon as a phenomenon” (Keen, 1975, p. 38 as cited by Hycner, 1985, p. 280) suspending and bracketing “the researcher's meanings and interpretations and entering into the world of the unique individual who was interviewed”. (Hycner, 1985, p. 281)

Due to the fact that the researcher has personal experience with the topic at hand, it is important that she attempts to perform a phenomenological reduction. It is undoubtedly debatable whether this is possible to do however, is still important. Attempting to strip one's self from pre-conceptions, prejudgements and biases is important in all research, as it aids in keeping the research as objective as possible. The researchers own bias and experiences will affect the way the data is analyzed however, performing a personal reduction helped to step away from her own experiences and examine them from a more objective lens, in order to see the experiences of the participants in their true form. Therefore, even in if a phenomenological process is unsuccessful, it is still worth the attempt.

The personal process of phenomenological reduction was carried out in the following way:

1. Personal written reflection process
2. Self-reflection
3. Meditation

These three processes did not occur in any specific chronological order but were intertwined throughout the research process. Once the topic for the thesis was decided upon, a reflective piece concerning personal own volunteer experiences at the reception center was written out, focusing on how possible personal bias could affect the research. This text was examined and analyzed before each interview that was conducted, and after each interview a self-reflective and meditative session would be used to reflect on experiences and how the interview could possibly be affected by bias
and preconceptions. Notes were made into a personal diary with the specific questions which included:

- What did this experience mean to me personally?
- How did my own experiences affect the interview? Did I stay neutral and objective?
- How were my experiences similar/different?
- How did I feel throughout the interview? Was there anything that affected me emotionally?
- What have I learned about myself and others?

Possible pre-suppositions that could potentially influence the data were also listed. Throughout the interview and data analysis process this self-reflective process was also maintained. The interviewer also attempted to remain as neutral as possible with the participants interviewed in order to ensure their own accounts would be uncontaminated. The personal reflective process was most important during data analysis. After each interview had been read through, the researcher asked these same questions and made notes. Vigorous reflection was undertaken when attempting to understand the data and the experiences of the participants, in order to ensure that personal judgements or preconceptions did not affect what the researcher was seeing or finding from an experience. The questions during the meditative process would often expand and move into other areas of thought as well, but the researcher did attempt to focus on volunteer experiences. The aim of the whole process was to separate from the experiences and look at them objectively, and not let them influence the experiences I was attempting to analyze.

Overall the process was challenging, but nonetheless worth doing. Reflecting on the self and one’s experiences is important in all research, but especially in this one. Performing the self-reflection and meditation session was sometimes tough and even overwhelming, however being aware of one’s own bias and how it could potentially affect the research was worth thinking about and did help in keeping the research process as neutral and objective as possible. It is unclear whether a successful epoche was reached, but nonetheless, it was an interesting and useful process to include into the research method. In fact Merleau-Ponty (1962) writes that the “most important lesson which the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a complete reduction … that radical reflection amounts to: a consciousness of its own dependence on an unreflective life which is its initial situation, unchanging, given once and for all”. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, xiv.) This new consciousness, although far from perfect, is one that was imperative for the remainder of the analysis process.
4.2.3 Capturing the sense of the whole

Once the reduction process had been undertaken, each interview was listened to several times as well as read several times. Hycner states that this “will provide a context for the emergence of specific units of meaning and themes later on” in the research process. He further emphasizes that while undertaking this process it is important for the researcher to especially listen to the “non-verbal and para-linguistic levels of communication, that is, the intonations, the emphases, the pauses”, along with the literal spoken text. (Hycner, 1985, p. 281) A journal was on hand while completing this preliminary phase in order to note down general impressions and any issues that came to mind. Any bias that arose when reading would be noted down and I and would refer back to the phenomenological reduction process when this occurred. This process was meant to provide a general sense and impression from the interviews before moving onto more specific analysis.

4.2.4 Finding and characterizing units of general meaning

Once the process attempted to capture the essence of the whole the analysis could move on to finding units of general meaning. What this includes is “the very rigorous process of going over every word, phrase, sentence, paragraph and noted significant nonverbal communication in the transcript in order to elicit the participant's meanings”. (Hycner, 1985, p. 282) This is completed with an attitude of openness towards the data, and at this stage still refrains from addressing the research question. The results that arise from this process are the units of general meaning, arising from the researcher obtaining the essence of meanings expressed by the participant in “a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph or significant non-verbal communication”. (Hycner, 1985, p. 282)

Hycner defines a unit of general meaning as words, phrases and communication that expresses “a unique and coherent meaning...clearly differentiated from that which precedes and follows”. (Hycner, 1985, p. 282) Burnard defines a a unit of meaning as “a discrete phrase, sentence of series of sentences which conveys one idea or one related set of perceptions”. (Burnard, 1994, 113) At this point in the research process, when it was unclear to if a word, phrase or communication seemed meaningful, I would still include and note the phrase as a unit of general meaning. Redundant units were eliminated later on in the analysis process but at this stage a note was made of everything that
caught attention in order to ensure nothing meaningful would be missed. (Hycner, 1985, p. 282) It is relevant to note that it is difficult to always clearly define and determine what establishes a unit of general meaning, and due to varying perspectives and opinions of phenomenological research, there will undoubtedly be differences and debates even when using the same method of analysis. (Hycner, 1985, p. 282) The dialogue was read carefully and notes made into the margins of the interview. The following examples represent the analysis process that resulted in a unit of general meaning.

**Example 1.** Units of general meaning: Interview 2

"it's always a lot of fun, and you feel better afterwards, like in a sense it's almost like stress relief and like, when you give back to communities, you yourself feel like ok I contributed to something and when it's so dark here (laughs) in the winter you kind of need something to uplift yourself as well, um (laughs) but also it's just that human interaction where you know everyone's laughing and smiling and it doesn't matter where you're from and I think I really enjoy that aspect of Heikinharju, like it was never really a chore to do it, it was like ok let's do this, what are we gonna do and like it also like, I can like set aside school work and just focus on this for a couple of hours to do.... It's a nice feeling"

| Joy | Escape and relief | Making a difference | Motivation | Human interaction | Joy, enjoyment | Community | Positive emotions |

**Example 2.** Units of general meaning: Interview 5

Interviewer: Yeah ok. Can you tell me about some events/people/turning points in your life that maybe affected your choice to do the volunteer work? Or is it just that you got the email and decided to do it?

Participant 5: No I think it’s like, politics that made a really big effect there because, especially with the asylum seekers, you know like you heard so much negative things about it and like Finnish people especially there are so many prejudices and
unfortunately also with my friends and it was, it was like really a hard situation also for me because I didn’t really know like can...I take sides because you know your friends think this way and you think this way and it was really hard and um..ristiitätinen (contradictory) in so many ways. So um basically...yeah I don’t know like I guess for me it was this political situation that made me think about it more. And I really started to think that I would like to see how is the reception center and how are actually the people living there and what is the real situation like behind it and actually dig into the life of the people. So that was maybe the reason why I started.

The words and phrases noted in the right margin are the units of general meaning. All units of general meaning were then gathered from each interview and are shown in the following table:

**Table 1. Units of general meaning: Interviews 1-5**
The units are noted down for each interview in chronological order i.e. as they appeared throughout the reading process. As can be observed from the table, many units of general meaning were present in more than one interview if not all of them.

4.2.5 Finding and characterizing units of meaning in relation to the research question

Once units of general meaning were determined, I then set out to characterize these units in relation to the research question which focused on what motivated student teachers to volunteer and what types of challenges they faced. Hycner states that in this stage the researcher "addresses the research question to the units of general meaning to determine whether what the participant has said responds to and illuminates the research question". (Hycner, 1985, p. 284) If the unit of general meaning was related to and shed light upon the research question, this was noted down as a unit of relevant meaning. Words, phrases and statements that are irrelevant to the research question were discarded, even if they had previously been units of general meaning.

This stage of the research process included eliminating units of general meaning that were inessential or unnecessary. Attention was paid to not only words or statements but the intonations i.e. how an experience was talked about and how many times it was mentioned. Repetitions, intonations, emotional emphasis, non-verbal and para-linguistic cues are very important to pay attention to as it can alter the literal meanings of words/phrases and change the context of a statement. This process was undertaken in order to focus on the units of meaning that were relevant to the research question. (Hycner, 1985, p. 286)

If it was unclear whether a certain statement or phrase was in fact meaningful, it was still included as a unit of relevant meaning just in case. (Hycner, 1985, p. 284) Clarity began to emerge throughout this process, and as certain statements and units of general meaning began to fall away, the phenomena being researched began to appear. The data was read through numerous times to ensure that nothing had been missed and that all relevant information was recorded. This process also required rigorous reflection and constant referral back to the phenomenological reduction process to ensure an open approach to the data was maintained to avoid any inappropriate subjective ideas or judgements. This was completed by reading reflections and referring back to past notes concerning prejudgements before, during and after each interview was analyzed.
4.2.6 Clustering units of relevant meaning

Once redundancies were eliminated and discarded, the final units of relevant meaning emerged:

| Human interaction | Mutual benefits |
| Community         | Need to help    |
| Making a differences | Value Basis   |
| Heroism           | Moral ideology  |
| Positive emotions | Moral obligation|
| Joy and enjoyment | Negative emotions|
| Challenges: time  | Feeling appreciated|
| Challenges: energy| Connections     |
| Challenges: language | Empathy   |
| Challenges: guilt | Personal learning|
| Challenges: shock | Personal goals  |
| Future work       | Desire to learn |

A phenomenological process was completed again and reflection undertaken. I then investigated the units of general meaning and attempted to discover if any units naturally “clustered” together, creating a “common theme or essence that unites” the units. (Hycner, 1985, p. 287) For example the units Human Interaction, Connections and Community naturally cluster together. According to Hycner, this essence emerges through rigorous examination of the individual units of meaning and “trying to elicit what is the essence of that unit of meaning given the context”. (Hycner, 1985, p. 287)

Hycner also points out that “more so than in any of the previous procedures”, the judgement, skill and creative insight of the researcher is needed. (Hycner, 1985, p. 287) During this part of the process the researcher must also be vigilant with his/her presuppositions, as they may interfere with judgements. During this process I went constantly back and forth between the units of relevant meaning, original transcripts and the clusters of meanings. It was often difficult to decide which units cluster together and which do not, as often units of meaning were intertwined with each other and overlapped in themes. This however is often unavoidable due to the ambiguous nature of human phenomena, and it would be near impossible to completely delineate different clusters of
meaning from one another. As Hycner states, “by their nature, they are already an integral part of the whole and naturally co-penetrete each other”. It is also important to note that a different researcher could come up with different clusters of meaning and themes due to varying subjective perspectives that individuals have, as well as varying levels of experience and skill hence, differences in opinion are unavoidable (Hycner, 1985, p. 290) This rigorous process was undertaken and the following section introduces the themes that emerged from this process.

4.2.7 Completing themes from clusters of meaning

The final stage of the process was creating themes that were relevant to the research, and could then be looked at individually in the context on the phenomena. Once again the back and forth between the clusters of meaning and the transcripts was undertaken, in order to determine which units overlapped, naturally clustered together and what kinds of themes could be created from these clusters. The final themes that emerged from the clusters of meaning taken from the units of relevant meaning are illustrated in the following table.

Table 2. Emerging themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters of meaning</th>
<th>Emerging theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human interaction, Community, Positive emotions, Joy and enjoyment, Feeling appreciated, Connections, Empathy</td>
<td>Social Connections and Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual benefits, Feeling appreciated, Positive emotions, Joy and enjoyment</td>
<td>Mutualism and Feeling appreciated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a difference, Heroism, Need to help, Moral obligation, Moral ideology, Value basis, Desire to learn, Future work, Personal goals</td>
<td>Moral and Professional Ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal learning, Professional learning, Personal goals, Future work, Desire to learn, Challenges: language, Challenges: guilt, Challenges: shock, Negative emotions</td>
<td>Personal and Professional Learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section explores each theme from the perspective of the experiences of the participants interviewed.
5. Findings

5.1 Social connections and community

Forming social connections and developing a sense of community turned out to be a significant motivator for all participants. More than one participant claimed to gain energy from the social visits with the underaged youth, and this would often be an important source of motivation to go to the center even though students were sometimes tired and apprehensive about going.

All participants mentioned in one way or another about how they enjoyed meeting different types of people and how social occasions at the center resulted in fun, joy, and energy. One participant referred to volunteer work as a form of stress relief and recounted how:

"it's always a lot of fun, and you feel better afterwards, like in a sense it's almost like stress relief and like, when you give back to communities, you yourself feel like ok I contributed to something and when it's so dark here (laughs) in the winter you kind of need something to uplift yourself as well, um (laughs) but also it's just that human interaction where you know everyone's laughing and smiling and it doesn't matter where you're from and I think I really enjoy that aspect".

From this statement it is clear that working at the center and engaging in human interaction and sense of community in a joyful setting provided a sense of escape and positive emotions. Another participant recalled that her mood and feelings towards going to the center would change drastically once she was there and interacting with the youth and her peers, and feel that after each time "it was worth it" to go. She reported that:

"I felt like, once we were there, there was a complete like emotional turn of that ok now we want to be here, we want to be with the kids, we want to be doing this when we see them, and then we would go home with a feeling like oh it was worth it, and I'm glad that um, that we came".

This statements indicates how engaging in social connections resulted in positive emotions after each visit, and feeling good that it had been completed. The fondest memories recounted by participants always included forming a social bond with the underaged youth, making connections and doing social activities together such as cooking, signing, playing games, dancing etc. These experiences were always recounted as positive and warm, one's that brought the participants joy
and enjoyment. One participant recalled her favorite memory:

"I know around Christmas time we bake cookies and made those Finnish pastries with like the plum jelly in the, and that was a lot of fun because we just baked cookies and all these pastries and then someone found a guitar and like people started singing along on the guitar and there were a lot of people that day too like a lot of volunteers as well a lot of the underaged youth there and I just remember that really cozy memory, in the middle of dark winter where everyone has this like warm and homey feeling.”

This statement shows how social events enhanced a sense of community and togetherness for the participants, and resulted in positive warm memories. A sense of community also motivated participants. Once a volunteer group as well as the youth got to know each other better, this became more of a motivation for volunteers to continue their visits. One participant claimed that she stayed committed because she claimed to feel it was also “about the sense of community that’s both within the group of people that are maybe benefitting from your work but also like the group of people that you’re doing it with, it’s kind of like abandoning your friends in a way if you quit.”

From this statement it is clear that going with other volunteers/peers was important to participants as well. This can also be observed from the following quote by another participant:

"I think first of all was that this university was organizing it, so that I would be going with like a group of my peers or my colleagues and that, if I had to kind of organize the whole thing myself, it would have kind of maybe been too hard or lack of motivation, so that kind of motivated me that they would give us the forms and they would tell us what to do... I felt like there was a lot of support and yeah. I wanted to also experience that with my classmates and kind of have that discussion.”

From this quote it is clear that having a group of peers as well as support from the program organizers helped motivate this participant. She recounts that because she felt supported and was able to complete the work in a group, this motivated her to take part and continue taking part in the volunteer work.

When asked about what made her feel especially committed to her volunteer work, one participant recounted how she felt that:

“personal bonds gives more meaning”
Another participant talked about how she felt hooked to the volunteer work because of the sense community she felt as well and recalled that:

“yeah it’s a bit hard because then you feel like you really should go because they really remember you and they would really like to hang around again and play something and so...It’s hard, because once you start it then you feel like you should also continue it so…”

One participant also reported that:

“also they were fun to hang out with once they opened up, because in the beginning it was a bit awkward but once you got through that stage it was really nice”

Fun was a key motivator here and this participant also recalled how she gained energy from the social environment:

“Well what I remember, I think the first thing that comes to my mind is that many times it’s, after the lectures at the university so something like 17:00 o’clock and I always felt like ah I’m so tired should I even go? But then I made myself go and then every time I felt like I went there really tired but then when I came home like I had so much energy because of all that, that had happened and that’s something that was always there that it wasn’t draining or anything and it was something that I got energy from. So I think that probably one of the reasons why I kept going there.”

This statement is a clear indicator of how this participant continued the work regardless of obstacles, due to enjoyment and gaining energy from the work. Overall forming social connections and having a sense of community among students as well as refugees was a major contributing component in volunteer motivation. Participants all recounted positive experiences they had with the volunteer group as well as the underaged youth they were working with. Positive social interactions can therefore be argued to have been a core motivator for participants in their volunteer work.
5.2 Mutualism and Feeling appreciated

The idea of mutualism and gaining something for one's self was also present in the discussions of the participants. All recounted feeling good and receiving positive emotions from the volunteer work, which undoubtedly committed them to continue the work. Alongside this, participants also recalled situations where they felt appreciated for the work they were doing as well as talked about mutualism, i.e. the benefits they felt they were gaining from the work. One participant claimed that she herself received a type of "prize" from the work when:

"you know, with volunteer work you also get something to yourself when you start doing it so it's not only about giving something to the other person so, I don't know it's selfish in a way also, like everything in life and uh, you feel good obviously if you can see that someone is cheered from your company or you get like a prize from it in a way, so I think that was another thing that motivated me."

Participant 4 recounted that she felt that volunteering for her needed to be mutual, where:

"I kind of feel like, when I volunteer I want to like give something and I want it to be mutual so that like, if it's person's involved like, I get something because in this case I always got so much energy and new perspectives and I also felt like the boys, they got something from me"

Participant 5 referred to a similar desire as when she recounted how:

"Well you know, with volunteer work you also get something to yourself when you start doing it so it's not only about giving something to the other person so, I don't know it's selfish in a way also, like everything in life and uh, you feel good"

This emotional symbiosis was undoubtedly a big motivator for all the participants, and it is difficult to say whether they would have continued the work if these elements of positive social interactions and human connections had been absent from the work.

Many participants reported positive feelings and motivation when they felt appreciated by the youth or by the center. Hearing "thank you" and seeing how people reacted to the volunteers had a positive effect on the volunteers and their levels of motivation. One participant recalled:
"once they opened up they started telling like 'well you're the only nice Finnish people here' or 'no one cares about us but you do', so also like getting that response felt like I need to keep doing this."

Another participant recounted how she enjoyed:

"just seeing that they kind of enjoyed our company and they were able to do a lot of different exercises through us being there so that felt like, motivated us to kind of come up with new things that they would not necessarily be able to do all the time and like give them those experiences"

This quote shows how important it was for volunteers to observe the effects of their work, and see the positive implications they were having. These experiences where all important factors in maintaining the volunteers motivation. Seeing the effects from their work and receiving feedback and appreciation was a core motivator. One participant recounted how she felt good when the employees at the center felt grateful towards the university volunteers when they were able to cheer up a lingually segregated boy:

"I didn't really understand like the whole, like how important it was for him in that situation yet, only like afterwards I realized that because we like spent the whole like two hours with this guy and the boy really wanted to speak with me the whole time...And after...one of the reception center workers told me that he's really thankful for the university people coming here, because for example this boy he really had been like so segregated the whole time, and this was the first time he saw him smiling when we came from the...Yeah so that's when I really realized ok this is something important really that we are doing."

This participant seems to have felt an increase in motivation when she received feedback, realizing the importance of the work and the good that the volunteers could do. Another participant recalled a very emotional incident where the youth surprised the volunteer group with food and gifts in order to say thank you:

"and then they brought so much food for us and then they had brought us presents and...yeah and they were just so nice and so nice to see from what little they had they also wanted to give something for us because they felt like we had given them so much...It was really touching. And I
"think almost all of us were crying at that point yeah."

Feeling appreciated and recognized for their volunteer work both by the underaged youth as well as the reception center was undeniably important for the participants and can be argued to be a core motivator for them to continue volunteering. Feeling that they were in fact appreciated and needed at the center may have contributed to a sense of importance in the work they were doing, and hence added to participants motivation as well.

5.3 Moral and Professional Ideology

Moral and professional ideology were also factors that motivated participants to begin volunteering and also continue. Professionally participants were motivated to work with young kids and learn about new perspectives and cultures, as they felt it would be beneficial for them due to their field and interest. As a student teacher Participant 1 talked about how she felt she had:

“interest in youth and in kids in general, um and also like maybe the will to pass on values or life experience or information”

Participant 2 reflected on how the work could be beneficial for her in the future:

“thought to myself also that if I ever return back to being a teacher like having that first hand experience of working with the people there, would be beneficial not just for me but also for my students because then I can explain to them a little more about how situations happen, how complicated it is the whole process because we learn about you know, how you become an asylum seeker how you become a refugee, what happens if your decision is negative, what happens if it’s positive, and I think I had no idea about any of that until I joined the course”

Participant 2 also mentioned that when doing volunteer work she relied on past teaching experience and her own ideas to remember how important it was to “be present” and make connections with the people she is working with or teaching. This ideology no doubt had an impact on how her volunteer work was then executed. Participant 2 also recalled how she had been volunteering all her life in one way or another, and had a “need” to help others:
“like personally from a very young age I just really wanted to help people like one of our neighbors used to tell my mom, that you’re daughter want’s to feed the world, because I would like go around passing around lollipops and food to all the neighborhood kids (laughs)...But like I think personally it kind of feels that, it feels that need to help, help someone or something.”

Also she recounted her experience about the reasons she began volunteer work and her experience with a peer:

“she basically told us “you guys made me realize that superheroes come in all shapes and forms and that I don’t have to be a doctor to save lives I can just be myself and like in other ways and methods I can still contribute in some respect”. And you know, she broke down crying because it was very personal to her when she told us that, and I think that spoke to me, just knowing that like yeah, you can in your own way be a hero like just by doing little things.”

Her moral ideology of everyone can be “a hero” in their own way “just by doing little things” seemed to be a core motivator for her in her volunteer work. Her reflection on her past indicates that volunteering and helping others was somehow encoded into her behavior from a young age, and may be a contributing factor for this volunteer work as well.

Participant 3 felt a sense of duty in her volunteer work, having personal experience with refugees and immigrants:

“I felt that it would be important since I was maybe one of the only people at the university who had that kind of background that I should go and kind of facilitate this discussion, or just like make the kids more comfortable and show them that, kind of the feeling of hopelessness that they would never integrate into society or be accepted here, so kind of show them that like maybe there is a future for immigrants or immigrant background people here.”

From this quote we can see how she almost feels a sense of moral obligation or duty due to her background. She related this view to the classroom as well:

“like showing, kind of having that representation for the kids of like seeing, especially not even like kids but immigrants and refugees in general, that maybe even through the work of a teacher when
you have like these students in your classroom that you kind of sort of just be that role model image of like oh, what they can accomplish or what they can do, cause a lot of the parents or a lot of them, the kids, have this um fear of integration or like will they be accepted or will they be able to integrate into society and kind of...a lot of them have ambitions of like studying and getting back into education and so a lot of them would ask me “oh you study at the university?” and would be kind of be interested in that line of talk. So I was thinking like, maybe that would be an important aspect to kind of corner, because if they’re, it’s really nice that they’re surrounded by so many nice staff members and things but also maybe they would need somebody they can relate to an a more personal level.”

Her moral obligation due to her background along with her professional ideology seem to have been a major core motivator for her volunteer work. From these statements it is clear that at least part of this participants motivation came from her belief in the importance of being a potential example, facilitating interactions and providing reassurance to the refugees.

Two participants talked about how doing volunteer work only “cemented” their ideologies and worldview, encouraging them to continue their current line of work. Participant 5 recounted that she was motivated to volunteer as well when thinking about the youth “being just kids”, and wanting to distract them from negative experiences and bring humor and laughter and try to:

“normalize the situation, maybe that’s my strongest characteristic I guess I could say. That you can react well in hard situations.”

This participants moral ideology also became clear from the following statement:

“I...like even because of like, I guess like I was a bit motivated also because of also, like people, like you just feel like, they are kids. So basically they are not like part of any of this crap in politics and stuff, they are just people who were thrown out to this place and they are like, it’s not their fault, in any case so maybe you feel like or maybe I felt like it’s just that they are so innocent about everything, so that’s something that gets me going. What’s gonna happen to these kids, seriously because there’s, this is just not the regular way of living your childhood when you’re a teenager and you’re thrown to another country and living with a bunch of teenagers most of them guys and it’s just. I don’t know you really should try to do something to make it better.”
The participants believe that the youth are "innocent" seem to be a core motivator for her volunteer work. The final sentence on the topic is a very strong indicator of her ideology and beliefs on the issue, that one "should" behave in a way that helps the families and youth. She also stated how it was easy for her to become dependent herself on the volunteer work:

"You feel sad and also you just think about politics and everything how it's, I mean also these people they probably didn't want to leave in the first place, it's their home country but it's just that, we should like. You really start to think like so widely about the world like so...So why are people in Finland for example angry about it that they came, but it's not like they originally wanted to come to Finland there is a reason behind it why they want to come so. It's just that (laughs), sad and angry yeah, sad and angry but then again you felt good because you could help in a way but then again you felt like your not enough, definitely not enough, and you feel bad if you can't go because it's...yeah, you're sort of like riippuvainen (dependent) on it after that so."

The participants viewpoint is quite clear in this statement, understanding the position of the refugees and referencing the emotions she feels when trying to understand the animosity of the majority population towards the minority group. She also seems to feel some type of guilt with her reference to "feeling bad" if unable to participate in the volunteer work and also stating that feeling that "your not enough". It can be argued here that the participants moral ideology mixed with feelings of guilt due to the society around her that she also belongs to. She further recounted feelings of guilt she seemed to feel when she compared situations to her own life:

"And that's another thing that made me a little bit angry because you feel like lots of people thought that these reception centers are super clean and everything is ready for you and it's like a hotel where people come but it's not really (like that)...After that day I came back to my "fancy" (uses air quotes) apartment and I just felt like, you just feel like everything is just so wrong."

This feeling of guilt and unfairness seems to have been a core contributor to why she started/continued her volunteer work. This participant was also one who referenced her struggles with friends and media opposing the migration of refugees. Her ideology also referenced politics which can be seen from the following statement:
“No I think it’s like, politics that made a really big effect there because, especially with the asylum seekers, you know like you heard so much negative things about it and like Finnish people especially there are so many prejudices and unfortunately also with my friends and it was, it was like really a hard situation also for me because I didn’t really know like can I take sides...yeah I don’t know like I guess for me it was this political situation that made me think about it more. And I really started to think that I would like to see how is the reception center and how are actually the people living there and what is the real situation like behind it and actually dig into the life of the people. So that was maybe the reason why I started.”

The political atmosphere surrounding the participant along with views from friends seem to have directly influenced the participants wish to know more about the situation unfolding, and once engaging in the volunteer work her own views seem to have taken full form. Volunteering can be said to have undoubtedly had a significant impact on this participant, and is worth keeping in mind when thinking about encouraging other teacher students in Finland to engage in humanitarian work.

Overall participants seemed to have strong moral and professional reasons for volunteering. All had personal factors that contributed to their willingness to volunteer however, all participants seemed to feel that the work was important and beneficial not only for the refugees but for themselves as well. The following section explores what the participants recounted in regard to their personal and professional learning and what they feel they gained from their volunteer experiences.

5.4 Personal and Professional Learning

Participants reported varied accounts when asked about their personal and professional learning. Participant 2 reported learning about the different ways to execute the volunteer work and encourage for example, the women at the reception center to join the women’s activity group. Professionally she also referred to the importance of “developing compassion and developing empathy” and is something she felt was very important especially for teachers and educators who will potentially work with students from many different backgrounds. She stated that:

“being able to show compassion is one thing that a teacher or an educator really really needs because you’re gonna be working with students from all these different backgrounds...And learning how to work with others and also understanding where they’re coming from and then being able to communicate with them, I think it’s a big aspect of just growing up and life, whether or not that’s work or your personal life as well.”
She felt that the experiences at the center encouraged her to look deeper into the policies in her own country and that she now knows more about what to look for, how the refugee system operates and "how as an educator I can best help them". She also recounted how she felt humbled by the experiences and how:

"I think that that aspect of it helped me see ok, so...there are ways that this can be done and you can have a positive influence as well as coming from a place like where like ok, so I think it also helps put into perspective your own privilege and I think it humbles you knowing. And also you have to learn to like, how do I work with another person without coming across as patronizing...so I think those were, those will definitely help in the future."

Participant 3 talked about how she learned how to connect with people as well as "getting more comfortable with different types of people". Professionally she felt that the volunteer work was important as it developed her competences for working in a classroom with children from refugee backgrounds:

"Um, professionally it was just I think it's really important because for me, that if I have these students with this type of background in my classrooms or if, well I work in right now um I do part time as an assistant like in classrooms and there are a lot of these classrooms with students who are struggling with the language or who have just, their parents have just got their residence permit yeah, you see like the, like the mental and emotional side of what their going through but then you...so it's important for a teacher to kind of know all that goes into them being in that classroom, their home situation and their life situation so...kind of looking at what influences student's life and like learning how to cope or help them with those kind of things."

From this quote it is clear that Participant 3 felt that having knowledge about refugee experiences could help her better understand and help her future students who may come from refugee backgrounds.

Participant 4 talked about how much she had learned about different religions, dynamics between different countries and the Middle East in general.
“I felt like I have learned a lot about Islamic religion and then also the dynamics because they were all so multiple, different nationalities and then like they would explain that well this person from this country is in the same classroom with us and how that affects something so I feel like I learned about religion but also the dynamics between different countries and yeah, anyways life in the Middle East.”

Competences she developed during her work included critical thinking and understanding. She felt that her experiences would: “definitely help me in working life...especially if I’m going to be a primary school teacher then for sure I’m going to face people from different backgrounds”.

She further explained that because of her volunteer experiences she would no longer feel nervous or unprepared when being put into a situation with refugees, as at first she was “really nervous like how can I speak to them, what do I have to take into consideration” as well as language barriers, however after her experiences she would no longer be “so stressed about those things”. She also learned about how to build trust, how to be a good listener while simultaneously remaining sensitive and not be “too pushy”.

Participant 5 talked about how she learned about the importance of sensitivity and being careful when working with children from rough backgrounds as well as how to “take them to another world in a way just for a while”. In regard to personal learning she recalled:

“I think um maybe it like even like, strengthened more my like own idea of my characteristics that I think are maybe positive. So maybe I, like sometimes you could really feel like wow I really made that kid laugh, even though we don’t have a common language or something like this, so you can find like new things about yourself as well.”

She also recalled skills she learned through the volunteer work:

“Well like we had so many situations that you had to be organizing and planning stuff and...Especially thinking about individuals and the backgrounds and you really had to be well prepared like before playing some “war games” or something, I mean no one would play that but you know yeah, you can’t be too careful with stuff...And there’s always the language barrier as well, so I don’t know. Maybe I learned some kind of a..... carefulness”
From this statement we can see how the participant developed her interpersonal skills especially in regard to sensitivity and language barriers.

Professionally, all participants reported that they felt different after taking part in the volunteer work and some reported changes to the type of work they wish to pursue in the future. Participant 3 reported that being part of the volunteer work reinforced her idea of what type of work she wishes to pursue, in this case intercultural teaching:

“Well, I don’t know because I think my future plans were already geared towards that um, children of that background or like a classroom like that, so I think that was the reason I was drawn to this. And further just like cementing my idea of what I wanted to do."

Participant 2 concluded that the volunteer experiences would undoubtedly help her in her future work as an educator, and specifically would help her cope with students from refugee backgrounds.

“I think the experience here will help me better understand and I think then when I go back I can look into more clearly like the policies that are going on, because I think before you aren’t quite really aware, especially since I’ve been away for awhile but at least now I know what to look for and how the system works and how as an educator I can best help them”

Participant 5 recounted that the experiences had an influence on the type of work she would like to pursue:

“like it makes you think what could I do besides, I mean regular teachers work is very important, and it’s already something that you really, it’s rewarding for you and your kids and like, how important it is in the, it’s considered very important work...but this maybe me even think about it more. That maybe I would like to do something, that I can help the immigrants, to settle down to Finland and then like, if there are, because there’s probably gonna be problems in the world and people are trying to come to different countries, so it’s, unfortunately it’s still probably gonna be in ten years it’s still gonna be the same, or better but something like this. And yeah it really makes you want to help these people, and for me I think even learning Finnish language can help them quite a lot, yeah so. That’s why I guess I got the idea to teach Finnish maybe to immigrants at some point and I’ve been thinking of adults but who knows like so.”
Participant 4 said she felt she became more interested in working in a preparatory class as well as possible work in an NGO:

"I guess also what I've thought during the process is that what if, like would I like to for example teach in a preparatory class and yeah, I think that would be interesting, but then also that has made me more interested in some kind of work in some NGO or something like that but related to educational, maybe also related to these kind of issues too."

As was observed from the professional learning section, participants felt their experiences gave them new skills and tools for working in a new environment while simultaneously gave them meaningful and emotional experiences as well, and this combination has clearly had an effect on the type of professional they will become in the future. Participant 1 recounted that now living without volunteering she “would be missing something if I didn't do it at all”. Participant 5 also recounted that she was currently volunteering as a supportive person for a young refugee and recalled that completing the volunteer work “got me into it”.

From these findings it can be stated that participants seemed to be aware of how the volunteer work could benefit them professionally and provide new skills in otherwise foreign areas of professional life, which may have motivated them to continue volunteering is they felt this experience was valuable for their future careers. The were also able to reflect on how the work could potentially benefit the development of their skills as a teacher/educational professional.

5.5 Challenges

Challenges are an important part of the volunteer experience as they are obstacles that volunteers had to overcome in order to continue staying committed to their work. Exploring the challenges volunteer workers faced can provide insight into some of the reasons they chose to stay committed and what factors of motivation overcame these obstacles. Future organizers of the volunteer programs can use the challenging experiences of the participants to understand some of the obstacles and demands the students faced, and use these as a reference point when planning and executing future volunteer programs.
One of the main challenges students faced was time and energy. Participants noted that the reception center was quite far away, and that one of the main reasons that often stands in the way of doing volunteer work was fitting it into a busy schedule. Other challenges included language barriers, cultural differences and organizational issues. Some participants recounted that it was sometimes frustrating to try and organize something when "no one showed up" and the information flow between the students and the center was limited and often difficult.

Participants also talked about how difficult it was to hear about trauma as well as situations of self-harm. One participant recalled how:

"we would always have like these emergency bracelets so it was always the fear of like if something arose that we would have to kind of...be equipped to like take care of that situation even though we weren't like that... thing. But just the idea of like the self-harm and the mental issues that the children had that we can't really help them, or like, you're not the person who's there to help them with all those things so can't really like...

From this quote it is clear the participant felt quite powerless in situations of trauma and self-harm, feeling that she never felt fully equipped to handle hard psychological situations. A few participants recounted how it was difficult to hear about some of the children’s past experiences and as one participant recalled:

"you just feel like everything is just so wrong. That's why it's also like risky to start doing the work because, obviously it's worth it to go there and do it, but then again you really, you need to be prepared to got through some really wild thoughts in your mind."

Here the participant explains how volunteers really needed to prepare to face situations where refugees talk about past trauma and experiences that can be shocking in nature. Reacting to a situation was also difficult as she later recalled an incident where a young boy had opened up to her about his past trauma and experiences:

"it was very rewarding but it was also very hard, because this boy had a really really rough background, so this was a situation where I was also shocked because, I didn't, I can't speak this particular language perfectly, but I could definitely tell like what he was talking about and it was really frightening and horrible stuff like behind the story. And he really wanted to open up to
me...very hard to also react with a language that you don't know really well you know like, and when you really want to say something emphatic and you really try to comfort someone, it's really hard only with your body language or your facial expressions so it was really really...and to a seventeen year old boy, that's just a really tough situation”.

Another participant recalled some of her most challenging experiences with the underaged youth involved instances where underaged-youth would point to scars or injuries and explain where they had come from. She also recalled an incident where one of the underaged youth’s drowned which she stated as being “shocking” for the volunteer group:

“Umm. Well first I just heard about it and I didn't know who it was but I remember we were going to the reception center that day and then we went to this room where they had set some kind of table where his picture was and they had some flowers and I remember once I went to that room and I saw the picture and I realized that ah I know this boy, I now know who he is and yeah I think that was quite a strong feeling when I actually saw that oh that's the one who died.”

This incident was one of the hardest experiences that this participant had to go through, causing shock and sadness for the entire volunteer group. She continued her volunteer work at the center prior to this incident.

Another participant stated that she also felt bad when some of the youth would be feeling bad about a friend being transferred or returned and the volunteers would try to organize something, how:

“I think it was um...just seeing their mood or reaction after one of their friends or one of their fellow housemates were either transferred or returned so then, it was then kind of hard, like you could see their emotion and their unwillingness to kind of participate. So that was a bit hard and and when you...it felt kind of sort of unfair for us to be like coming there out of the blue and being like oh you have to participate now when they were feeling that way so it was kind of...yeah like you kind of start to empathize or sympathize with them that, like the state their going through.”

Overall the participants did feel positively towards their experiences, also often stating that the challenges helped them learn and develop their ideas and perceptions. Along with shock and feelings of guilt, participants felt that the largest challenges they faced was time and energy as well
as organizational factors.

6. Examining the Findings from Different Theoretical Perspectives

Overall students seemed generally satisfied with their volunteer experiences. Because the volunteer work was so closely linked to many of the professional and personal values and ideas that the volunteers had, this made the work more satisfying. Participants felt they were truly doing work that was important for them in many contexts. As we discovered from Clary and Snyder (1999) and Omoto and Snyder (1995), volunteer workers often feel increased levels of satisfaction when they feel that their work is directly related to their reasons for wanting to volunteer, and this was apparently the case for the teacher students as well.

In terms of altruism it is difficult to determine the different levels or intensity of altruistic feelings from each individual participant, as this is something very difficult to measure, and each experience is highly subjective. However, the underlying motivations of the participants did seem to grow from similar roots. Participants attitudes towards the work were similar and participants seemed to have similar reasons for beginning their volunteer work, recounting that they felt it was important and morally the right thing to do. All participants were interested in issues of immigration as well as the refugee crisis, either due to their background, current professional interest or political view.

Altruistic feelings and values were present in the volunteer experiences as well. Clary and Snyder have Values as their first of six functional factors that influence volunteer motivation, and this was definitely the case for this context as well. (Ratan Chandani, 2015, p. 18) Some participants got very emotional when talking about the reasons why they felt their work was important. Participant 5 was especially fired up in her belief that the situation was “unfair” and other volunteers recounted this in their own way as well. All participants embraced the question of importance from a moral standpoint. One participant even felt it was a moral obligation for her to help, and others reported similar feelings as well, with the volunteer work further cementing their ideas about the type of work they find to be important. Ratanchandani (2015) refers to a study by Papadakis, Griffin and Frater (2004) that revealed that students who volunteered “at least once gave more importance to Values, Understanding and Enhancement” when compared to students who had never volunteered before and also mentions that Chapman (2008) states that personal values greatly influences an individual's decision to volunteer. (Ratan Chandani, 2015, p. 18)
Social interactions and bonding were undeniably important for volunteers. Participants recounted that they gained energy and enjoyed developing meaningful connections and friendships both with their fellow volunteers, as well as with the refugees. Fond memories were recalled of positive and warm moments of cooking, singing, playing or simply socializing together, and these moments and connections committed volunteer workers to continue their work and provided motivation. This aspect is undoubtedly very important in this volunteer motivation context, and has been researched and included as an important element in many different volunteer contexts as well. Participants also reported that volunteering was fun and enjoyed spending their time with the youth. This type of motivation falls under the category of intrinsic motivation, and the fact that the volunteer work was so enjoyable motivated the participants from within. This was work they wanted to do because it was satisfying for the individual, often on a personal level as well, which therefore impacted motivation levels. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55)

When comparing these student to Ratanchandani's study on students as volunteers, there seem to be some significant differences. Social aspects of volunteering was clearly of great significance for these participants while remained low for Ratanchandani's respondents. However, as was the case for Ratanchandani's respondents, Values, Career and Understanding can be ranked as functions of high importance for student teachers as well. Values played an important role as can be observed from the findings based on Moral and Professional Ideology. Career and professional development was reflected on significantly, and student teachers were also eager to learn and understand the environment they were engaging in. However, Ratanchandani's (2012) as well as Clary and Snyder's (1999) conclusion that motivations are multifaceted applies to this research context as well. Although participants reflected on certain aspects more than others, all still retained varying moral and professional motivations which stemmed from personal and subjective roots.

The volunteer work that the participants took part in will undeniably influence any other volunteer work they wish to do some day. Learning new skills from the field work seemed to be a core aspect for volunteers as well. As we have learned from Kroger and Lash (2018), field experiences can be invaluable to pre-service teachers in developing understanding of social action and change, and this can be argued to be the case for the participants of this study as well. From the findings concerning professional learning it is clear that the participants felt a shift in their career path and interests. Almost all participants reported a change in the ideas they had for their future work, with some becoming more interested in immigrant education, others interested in preparatory education as well as potential work with refugees in the future at for example NGO's or Non-profit organizations. All
participants also that they would be interested in continuing volunteer work, with 3 out of 5 participants currently engaging in volunteer work of different kinds. It could be argued that engaging in volunteer work with refugees may have had a significant effect in the type of impact that student teachers wish to make within their careers. Understanding one's own position and power within a society and being aware of the inequalities and stratification that exists in society may have helped participants redirect their interest towards one's of social change. Participants also reported feelings of guilt and uncomfortable with the levels of their own privilege when compared to the refugee's, reporting how it did not feel “right” or “fair”. This realization of social inequalities and injustice that reside in communities can provide an incentive to also attempt to change and combat these issues. In the context of the participants in this study, many reported the desire to continue work related to social action, fighting for the rights of disadvantaged and minority communities. These ideas will undeniably reflect into the types of teachers these students become as well. It is worth noting here that encouraging all student teachers to take part in some type of volunteer work within society could have a significant impact on the types of teachers they will become. If all teacher students took part in volunteer work with refugees, it is interesting to ponder what kind of impact this would have on both individuals and society as a whole.

Personality is a complex issue here, but worth mentioning. It is unknown by the researcher whether a certain “type” of person was more likely to volunteer although we have previously learned from Tumblin (2012) that certain personality traits can affect volunteer motivation over time. One participant did recall that she had been helping and doing charitable work since her childhood however, many other participants had never engaged in any volunteer work prior to volunteering at the reception center. It may be that some people have an inclination to help however, this could be due to backgrounds or cultures as well. Participants still had fairly similar levels of commitment to the work they had been doing, and all reported that they would like to continue doing volunteer work in the future as well. All participants had most likely chosen their field of work due to the values and ideologies they hold, and this in turn affected their desire and motivation to volunteer. As teachers they perhaps viewed themselves as social actors and agents of change however, this is difficult to know for certain. An in-depth analysis into identity would be needed in order to confirm this. Nonetheless, all participants felt that the work they did was important to them and to the people involved. Tumblin (2012) writes that volunteer literature has indicated that there is link between personality traits and volunteer behavior. Extraversion, agreeableness, empathy and self-esteem as personality traits have been “related to volunteer behavior”. (Tumblin, 2012, p. 6) It would be interesting for future research to conduct a personality survey to see what types of traits
the volunteers have and investigate if there are any correlations. These correlations could indicate if there is in fact a “type” of person more drawn to volunteer work, and whether this “type” is common among teachers.

Malkki (2015) talked about the aspect of self-escape, and at least one participant reported that this was one of the reasons she enjoyed volunteering. She felt that it was “never a chore to do it” because she could set aside her other worries and work and simply focus on the tasks at hand. This form of “escape” was probably felt by other volunteers as well who reported that they received energy from volunteering rather than it draining their energy. The researcher does not believe volunteering was used purely for self-escape by any participants, but was a minor part of motivation.

The four categories of VSI used by Wong, Chui and Kwok can be used to examine the findings as well. These included: “(a) organizational support, such as performance feedback and clear goals and objectives; (b) participation efficacy, or the use of one’s own skills and abilities to make a difference; (c) a sense of empowerment and (d) group integration, or the forming of bonds with other volunteers and paid staff”. (Wong, Chui & Kwok, 2010, p. 20)

In terms of organizational support, Participant 3 reported that she felt comforted by the fact that the university was organizing the course and providing information, guidance and support for the volunteers. She further reported that she felt glad that she would be working with a group of her peers as it provided motivation and support. Participant 5 reported that when she received feedback directly from one of the workers at the reception center, it made her feel that what she was doing was important and further committed her to the work she was doing. Feedback and support were not talked about in detail however, the course did seem to provide certain levels of this to volunteers which may have increased their motivation levels.

It is important to look into the ideas of ego as well. If engaging in volunteer work somehow increased the self-worth or self-esteem of participants and increased their idea of themselves as a e.g. “a hero” or a “humanitarian”, someone who sacrifices their time and energy for the greater good, may have played upon motivation as well. It was difficult to find from the data analysis how strongly the ego had affected the participants, and whether or not they felt better about themselves as individuals because of their choices or actions. However, feeling appreciated did undeniably affect participants feelings and experiences. Receiving feedback and positive reinforcement for their
work was important for volunteers, with participants reporting feeling good and touched when they received thanks and positive feedback both from center workers as well as from the youth themselves. This is important to note, as Tumblin (2012) writes, volunteers are more likely to stay committed if they feel that they are important and meaningful to the cause. (Tumblin, 2012, p. 7) It is natural and common for volunteer motivation to be linked to ego-enhancement, as people very often feel and work better when they are acknowledged and appreciated for it. (Tumblin, 2012, p. 7)

Because volunteers were also able to use the skills they had in their work, as well as develop those skills, this made the work engaging and rewarding. Participant 2 recounted how she was able to use and develop her skills as an ESL teacher, while other participants talked about how they used and improved their communication, social and planning skills at the center. Because such skills are directly related to the type of work participants are potentially interested in pursuing in the future, this may have motivated them to a certain extent to continue with the work they were doing. Developing professionally was something all participants reflected on with many participants talking about learning about refugees and other cultures, learning how to communicate without a shared language, learning how to work with different people, developing compassion, patience, emotional intelligence along with other skills that are all important for teachers. Wong, Chui and Kwok listed use of “one’s own skills and abilities to make a difference” as one of the categories for VSI (Volunteer Satisfaction Index). (Wong, Chui & Kwok, 2010, p. 20) When participants felt they were able to use and enhance their professional skills from the work they were doing, this may have contributed to motivation.

Additionally, developing professionally and gaining useful experiences could be labeled as extrinsic motivation, as it was essentially a type of “reward” for the participants to develop professionally while simultaneously doing something they found to be important as well. (Tumblin, 2012, p. 4) Participants received certain types of “benefits” from their work e.g. skills to use in later life both personally and professionally, meaningful social interactions and experiences and a broadening of perspectives and horizons. It makes sense that students would feel motivated and committed to the work they were doing when they felt to be attaining such benefits. Understanding these benefits could be a tool to recruit new volunteers as well, as teachers who are looking to develop professionally could be motivated to join the cause if they feel they would gain insight, knowledge and skills. Omoto and Snyder (1995) showed us that self centered goals in volunteering can actually provide more committed volunteers. (Omoto & Snyder, 1995, p. 283)
In terms of empowerment, because the volunteers had an element of control in their work, this may have increased motivation levels. Participants were in groups in charge of designing and executing activities with the underaged youth and this may have been key in helping the volunteers feel that their work was personal and important. If activities and events had been planned for the volunteers before hand, this could have influenced the motivation and commitment levels. As we learned from the Theoretical Framework, students who feel that they have no control in decision making often report lower levels of satisfaction. (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 158) However, this was not something specified by the participants and was not talked about very much. Nonetheless, being able to make one’s own decisions, and explore and expand on ideas with a group of one’s peers may have had a significant effect on the overall satisfaction levels of the participants. When someone feels they have control, they are more likely to work harder and better than if the opposite were true. (Duigg, 2016, p. 19-21) It is important to keep this concept of control in mind if executing volunteer courses in the future as well.

There were also various challenges that participants faced. How participants overcame these challenges provides insight into what motivational factors can potentially override possible barriers or obstacles that come along with volunteer work. The main challenges participants faced were often time, energy, language barriers and shock. We have previously found that optimal challenges are a part of intrinsic motivation however, it is difficult in this case to evaluate what can be considered “optimal”. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70-71) Participants did report that prior to volunteering they would feel tired and often reluctant to make the trip to the reception center, especially after a long day at the university. However, once there, participants reported that they would feel a shift in their mood and feel energetic and uplifted afterwards. The activities and positive social interactions seem to had a direct effect on feelings of reluctance and tiredness felt by the participants.

Participants also faced situations of shock when faced with issues of trauma experienced by the underaged youth they were working with. One participant reported that learning about trauma and being able to work through the situation made her realize how important the work she was doing was, and seemed to have increased her motivation as well. Whether or not this challenge is “optimal” is unclear however, it is worth noting that the significance of the work for this participant was highlighted through this challenge. It could be argued that challenges with trauma could potentially have increased motivation when the reality and importance of the work the participants were doing became more evident. This however should not be generalized due to the subjective
nature of this phenomenon. Experience with trauma can have a positive effect on the motivation of one volunteer, and simultaneously be completely demotivating and difficult for another. This can also be due to different volunteers retaining different skills. As we have previously learned, optimal challenges are described as ones where a previous skill set is modified and utilized to overcome the challenge. Challenges that exceed one's capabilities will not contribute to intrinsic motivation i.e. feelings of interest and competence, and can even cause distress. (Ryan & Deci, 1985, p. 123-124)

Therefore challenges with trauma may have different effects on different participants and cannot be classified as an “optimal” challenge for all participants. Other participants discussing trauma and difficult emotional situations were more quiet and perhaps reluctant to recall the experiences, also reporting feelings of powerlessness and shock.

7. Reliability, ethics and evaluation

The limitations of this study include the small sample size due to which it is impossible to make generalizations for student teachers and it is impossible for this study to make general conclusions concerning the reasons teacher students chose to volunteer as each experience is subjective to each individual. However, this was never the purpose of this study and given that the nature of the interviews were very in depth, this provided valuable information of each individual experience. It is not the aim of phenomenological research to work towards generalizations but is “interested in the detailed examination of particular cases”. (Smith and Osborn, 2013) It is worth noting that there is also no one defined way of executing phenomenological research, and researchers conducting similar studies may choose to develop their own version of phenomenological analysis. (Smith and Osborn, 2013) Hence, this study attempted to reach specific conclusions for specific individuals experiencing a specific phenomenon, and was successful in doing so.

Franklin, Cody and Ballan (2001) write that it is important when conducting qualitative research that the researcher use rigor when designing a qualitative approach and to ensure the minimization of bias in order to improve the quality of the research. (Franklin, Cody & Ballan, 2001, p. 355) The minimization of bias was completed in this study with the help of the phenomenological reduction, which was an important part of the method. A phenomenological method without a phenomenological reduction would have damaged the quality of this study significantly hence, a rigorous phenomenological method was utilized to aid in the elimination of bias. In order to ensure the quality of phenomenological research, this study developed the method with Giorgi's core
characteristics in mind: descriptive research, use of phenomenological reduction, exploration of relationships between people and situations and focus on the essence/structures of meaning in human experiences. These core ideas were kept in mind throughout the research process in order to ensure that the method remain phenomenological in nature. (Giorgi, 1989, as cited by Finlay, 2012, p. 18)

This study did not control for external factors such as background, level of education or age and it is important for the sake of transparency to mention that all of these factors could in one way or another influence the reasons participants chose to volunteer. Additionally, the nature of phenomenological research maintains the possibility that a different researcher could interpret the data differently. Therefore intersubjective consensus may not be completely possible for this study which in turn damages the reliability as replication would prove to be difficult. Nonetheless, valuable information was obtained from exploring participants experiences in depth and phenomenology was therefore the appropriate research methodology for the purpose of this study.

In terms of ethics this study was vigilant in ensuring that all participants were informed about their rights as interviewees. It was emphasized that participants could refrain from answering questions they felt uncomfortable with, and were informed that they could stop the interview at any time and all existing data would be destroyed at their request. Ryen (2011) writes that informed consent is imperative for ethically sound qualitative research. Subjects have a right to know they are being studied, have a right to be “informed about the nature of the research” as well as the right to withdraw at any time. (Ryen, 2011, p. 418) It was important to keep in mind when conducting interviews that participants are autonomous beings who will share information on their own terms and should not feel pressured to disclose any information. Prior to conducting the interviews, possible outcomes and reactions that could arise were considered for example, emotional or distressing feelings, and hence it was specified before each interview that the participant could stop the interview at any point. (Eisenhauer, Orb & Wynaden, 2000) All data was kept anonymous throughout this research and identity was protected in order to adhere to the participants right to privacy. (Eisenhauer, Orb & Wynaden, 2000)
8. Discussion and Conclusions

Overall, as noted, these finding cannot be generalized however, relevant and potentially useful information was uncovered from this exploration into student teachers volunteer experiences. Overall this study provides significant information into the values and ideas held by specific student teachers and how field experiences with refugees affected these students on a personal and professional level and what types of challenges they faced. Understanding these factors can provide useful information regarding the design and execution of both volunteer programs as well as teacher training programs.

The methodology chosen for this study was appropriate as it allowed for an in-depth exploration of participants experiences which was the overall goal of this research. The data obtained from each interview was unique and rich in the lived volunteer experiences of each participant. Although each interview was different, commonalities did arise when the data was analyzed and this provided insight into the various motivating factors as well as effects of the volunteer work. The phenomenological reduction process, though challenging was also a necessary step to adopt into the methodology. Performing a reduction helped eliminate bias and prejudice from the research and this study could not have been claimed to be phenomenological without one.

Exploring the experiences obtained by these student teachers in regard to volunteering with refugees provided insight into the types of values and ideas held by the students and how the volunteer work affected these values and ideas. The participants in this study had underlying moral and professional values that seemed to have motivated them to begin volunteering. From the findings we can see how participants felt it to be important for various reasons, including a need to help, a desire to learn, feelings of moral obligation, politics etc. but important nonetheless. Values can be linked to altruism or altruistic feeling however, it is difficult to conclude whether or not moral ideology was primarily based on altruism. Moral ideology seemed to focus on the feeling of unfairness, inequality and even guilt within the situation, mixed with desires to understand, learn and help.

Participants seem to have been both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated in the completion of their volunteer work. Intrinsic motivation can be argued to be stimulated by positive social interactions, a sense of community as well as the fun activities that participants were engaged in, as
well as the feeling of being appreciated for their work. Genuine enjoyment and interest in the work being completed and positive experiences undoubtedly increased intrinsic motivation and therefore can be argued to be a core source of motivation for participants. It is unknown whether participants would have continued to engage in volunteer work without these experiences. In terms of extrinsic motivation participants were aware of how the volunteer work could benefit them in terms of development of professional skills and competences. Participants were able to reflect on how their experiences could benefit them in their future careers as educational professionals, and this may have motivated them to continue the volunteer work and hence, the development of these skills. It is unclear how strongly this affected motivation levels however, is nonetheless an important factor to note. Future student teachers may be motivated to complete volunteer work if they feel it can be beneficial for the development and enhancement of their professional careers.

There were various challenges that participants faced throughout their volunteer work, and these were important aspects of the overall volunteer experience. Challenges were reflected on by all participants in different ways. It is unclear what challenges can be deemed as “optimal” for intrinsic motivation due to the subjective nature of each individual experience. Some participants were motivated by certain challenges, while others were not. For example, reactions to trauma and shocking situations differed with participants. All participants were able to overcome the challenges of time and energy, and all reported feeling more motivated once they had overcome these aspects. Participants often reflected on overcoming language barriers and issues with organizational aspects as something they could learn from, and these did not seem to demotivate any participants.

It is important to comment on the effects that volunteer work had on participants. It is interesting that a majority of participants reported a desire to pursue further humanitarian work as well as gear their career towards working with minority groups or with non-governmental organizations. This indicates the effect that working with the underaged youth refugees had on participants. As we have come to discover, critical pedagogy and the attainment of field experiences can further encourage student teachers to recognize and oppose social constructs that uphold injustice, discrimination and inequalities within society, and this can be argued to be the case for these student teachers as well. This information is useful and can be utilized when designing and executing teacher training programs. If goals in these programs include encouraging students to become aware of and fight against existing social constructs and to decrease societal discrimination and inequality, the adoption of volunteer work or field experiences into core parts of the program should be actively considered. It is interesting to speculate how this would reflect onto society as well as the
educational field in the long run. Understanding how volunteer work and field experiences can develop student teacher knowledge, understanding and attitudes towards the societal inequalities and injustices that plague local and global societies, can be utilized to design and develop programs that utilize this knowledge, designing training that helps to address these societal issues. Student teachers who are aware of and committed to combating these issues can have a profound effect on not only local but global contexts. Further research into the effects of volunteer work on student teacher attitudes and understanding of societal issues could provide extensive evidence to support these ideas. The current research could be developed and improved by increasing the amount of participants and controlling for factors such as age, education, and volunteer background.

In conclusion it can be stated that volunteer motivation is multifaceted in nature and a highly subjective phenomenon, with different individuals engaging in volunteer work for subjective personal and professional reasons. Overall this research provided useful information that can be expanded on in future studies. With the current increase in diversity that is occurring across the globe, educational systems will need to rethink and update their methods of training if they are to equip teachers with the appropriate skills and competences to address this change. The social impact teachers have is significant and incredibly important therefore, having teachers who are not only aware of but committed to social change is imperative. Teachers equipped with appropriate competences who understand the challenges and difficulties that certain students face, can provide a supportive learning environment where all students can thrive.

Additionally, although university settings are becoming increasingly diverse due to various exchange and mobility programs along with overseas internships, merely the exposure to multicultural environments and intercultural interactions is not enough to affect students intercultural competences. (Jackson, 2015) Unfortunately, recent research reveals that students who take part in for example, exchange programs often fail to benefit fully from their experience and often experience “little or no gains in intercultural sensitivity”. (Jackson, 2015, p. 91) Having a considerably homogenous student body within universities (specifically in Finland) presumably does not help the situation. Humans learn through interaction, and having opportunities for participatory learning where diversity, sharing personal narratives along with fostering listening and respect, is the only way transformative changes can happen. (Scherto, 2016, p. 483-498) Scherto (2016) also argues that it is the task of universities to “integrate intercultural learning into the university experience” promoting the development of intercultural competences such as dialogue, awareness and respect that students can take with them on their journey throughout their lives.
(Scherto, 2016, p. 483-498) It is therefore becoming increasingly difficult to think of reasons why volunteering or encouraging student teachers to gain field experiences within multicultural environments should not be an integral part of teacher education. Encouraging teachers to gain these experiences could undoubtedly move the world towards a global environment of equality, compassion and social justice. A world many of us surely envision for ourselves.
References


Kroeger, J. Lash, M.J. (2018) *Seeking justice through social action projects: Preparing teachers to be social actors in local and global problems*. Policy Futures in Education. 0 (0) 1–18. doi: 10.1177/1478210317751272


Retrieved from:


Date accessed: 22.3.2018


Appendix 1.

Guiding Interview Questions:

1. Tell me a little bit about your volunteer background. Had you ever volunteered before getting involved with the volunteer work at the Heikinharju reception center?
2. Can you think of some events/people/turning points in your life that have affected your choice to do volunteer work?
3. Can you tell me about the work you did/do? What did you do in practice?
4. What do you feel motivated you to take part in the volunteer work in Heikinharju?
5. Why did you think it was worth your time/energy?
6. Can you tell me a little bit about the feelings or emotions you get when you do volunteer work (either in general or at the center)? Can you give me an example of a situation/situations that evoked especially strong emotions?
7. Have you continued or do you plan on continuing doing volunteer work in the future? Why/why not?
8. What kind of volunteer worker are you? What are your personal characteristics or aims in this work?
9. What do you feel are the things that really make you feel committed to the work you did/do? Can you give examples?
10. Could you tell me about the most positive experience related to your volunteer work?
11. Could you tell me about the most challenging experiences?
12. How would you describe your personal and professional learning related to you volunteer work?
13. What kind of competences/awareness has volunteer work given you for your future work?
14. Do you experiences in volunteer work somehow affect your future work as an educational professional/teacher? How?