A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF
THE SPONSORS’ EXPERIENCE OF JOINING
A CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

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“*I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me.*”

*(Philippians: 4-13)*
ABSTRACT

This study attempts to identify the essence of the lived experience of sponsors who have joined a child sponsorship program. A comprehensive review of the previous literature reveals the charitable-giving behavior research only used quantitative methodologies. However, no research which specifically explores the sustainable giving behavior such as the experience of sponsoring a child substantially has been conducted using an interpretative phenomenological analysis. Therefore, a qualitative study with the phenomenological perspective was conducted and it was guided by seven open-ended focused interview questions. Five men and eleven women participated in in-depth interviews lasting approximately 20-30 minutes. The data were processed by the application of verification and validation, and the composite textural and structural descriptions of the phenomenon. The analysis of 84 significant statements reveals six core themes: (a) sponsors have gains and/or losses when helping others, (b) sponsors want to establish a close relationship with their sponsored children, (c) sponsoring a child is a personal decision, (d) joining a child sponsorship program is positively associated with the level of the sponsors’ financial conditions, (e) sponsors tend to help the beneficiaries who are relatively similar to themselves, (f) the motivation of joining a child sponsorship program is associated with peer influence. The integration of essences illuminates the existence and solitary struggles of joining a child sponsorship program. Practical implications and directions for future research are discussed.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Because of the financial crisis in the last few years, people tended to decrease their spending. The charitable donations were the first to be cut from the consumers’ budgets (Roberts, 2009). However, according to a survey conducted by American Red Cross, many people were still willing to support philanthropy. At the similar situation, helping for the child was the major purpose of the charitable donation in Hong Kong, besides providing a large financial support for Sichuan’s Earthquake in 2008, as pointed out by an Opinion Survey on Hong Kong People’s Giving Behavior (The Public Opinion Program, The University of Hong Kong, 2008). This study showed that most of the people were very concerned about the problems of needy children. Simultaneously, many charitable organizations such as World Vision, Volunteer Space and Po Leung Kuk have been holding a number of various child sponsorship programs in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, it is a challenge for these charitable organizations to maintain the current sponsors and persuade more people to provide financial support to the poor children continuously. No study has researched the experience of being a child sponsor. Therefore, a research of the experience of being a child sponsor is needed in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of the sponsors’ charitable-giving behavior. Then, it is effective for the charities to motivate more people to join such programs in the future.
1.2 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to describe the lived experiences of sponsors who have joined a child sponsorship program. The meaning of being a sponsor and providing financial support for the needy children is generally defined as an essence of the experience for all individuals. Results of this study is beneficial for charitable organizations to better improve the existing child sponsorship programs, consequently helping the charities enhance the number of new sponsors and retain the current sponsors in the future.

1.3 The Research Questions

The central research question is: What does it mean to be a child sponsor?

The sub questions related to this central research question are:

- What are the thoughts and feelings of sponsors who have joined child sponsorship programs?

- What are the underlying themes and contexts that affect the experiences of sponsors who have joined child sponsorship programs?
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Charitable-giving behavior is generally defined as an act of helping or prosocial behavior. Literature revealed that the meaning of prosocial behavior is giving a help to others (Taute & McQuitty, 2004). In the marketing investigation of prosocial behavior, researchers have paid attention to market-oriented helping behaviors, such as donation of money (Burnett & Wood, 1988), donation of blood (Allen, 1990), and giving of time - volunteering (Wymer, Reicken & Yavas, 1996). Apart from studying these charitable-giving behaviors, it is essential for charity’s marketers to understand the motivations behind. These giving behaviors can be realized in terms of generalized exchange, as defined by Bagozzi (1975). Generalized exchange includes behaviors that advantage some needy people and/or the whole society (Marshall, 1998), such as philanthropy. The dimensions of sustainable giving are also needed to be investigated in depth in order to help the charity’s marketers to maintain a long-term relationship between the donors and the charities. This research will mainly focus on the context of charitable donations, such as sponsoring a child. In this literature, I will first discuss the motivations of charitable-giving behaviors, the perceptions of charitable-giving relationship and the child sponsorship programs.
2.1 The Motivations of Charitable-Giving Behaviors

Motivation has long been investigated in marketing and has been defined in terms of drives, urges, hopes, or aspirations that originate the progression of events leading to a behavior (Bayton, 1958). The theory of charitable-giving behavior in the literature reveals that the reasons of charitable donations are generated by four different types of donor motives, namely, altruism, egoism, accountability and guilt.

2.1.1 Altruism

Among these four motivations, altruism is an obvious donor motive for interpreting why people donate money to some unrelated individuals and/or societies (Andreoni, 1990). The most important reason is that a donor wants to enhance the welfare of other people who are regarded as the poor and needy of social reinforcement (Guy & Patton, 1989; Price et al., 1995). Moreover, charitable contributions may be driven by a sense of social responsibility to provide support for the needy in the society (Navarro, 1998). Altruistic motives have been explained in terms of emotions and empathy (Craver et al., 1999c; Batson, 1987; Ray, 1998), humanitarianism (Cermak et al., 1994), as well as wanting to help others (Batson, 1991; Harvey, 1990). Furthermore, some literature demonstrate that reciprocity has been linked with a wide variety of altruistic behaviors (Krebs, 1970; Dawson, 1988; Grande & Vavra, 1999), for instance, individuals particularly donate money to some charities because they or
their families were helped by those charities in the past. Therefore, it is just like an exchange system of giving something in return for something received previously or anticipation of future returns (Amos, 1982; Beatty et al., 1991; Frisch & Gerrard, 1981).

2.1.2 Egoism

The second donor motive is egoism. It refers to that people who take part in charities are wishing to enhance their own benefits, including intangible and tangible rewards. For the intangible rewards, reducing peer pressure (Andreoni & Scholz, 1998; Harvey, 1990; Mora & Nugent, 1998), increasing personal reputation and self-esteem (Andreoni, 1990; Dawson, 1988) are the indirect benefits through engaging in the charities. Some of the donors also know that they may receive tangible benefits, such as lower taxable income (Cermak et al., 1994; Mora & Nugent, 1998).

2.1.3 Accountability

The third type is accountability. It reflects a direction whereby donors look for guarantee that their donations are making a difference and are administered efficiently and effectively (Campbell, 1999; Craver et al., 1999a, 1999c; Harvey, 1990). Therefore, the effectiveness and efficiency of the charities are a critical factor to influence people’s giving behavior (Bendapudi, Singh, & Nendapudi, 1996).
2.1.4 Guilt

In the studies of charitable-giving behavior, the meaning of guilt has been investigated by researchers. A well established guilt is also a significant motive of charitable donation (Andreoni, 1990; Sargeant, 1999). Many charity’s marketers may use guilt appeal to persuade people to make a donation or call for joining charitable activities in some charitable advertisements and direct mailings. If people do not give any response to them immediately, they may feel guilty. There are three major forms of guilt, which are reactive, anticipatory, and existential guilt (Huhmann & Botherton, 1997). Reactive guilt is experienced when one’s own standards of acceptable behavior is violated (e.g. failing to indicate that an item has been missed off the bill at a restaurant). Anticipatory guilt happens when one considers going against one’s own standards of acceptable behavior (e.g. preparing to give a call for sick leave but s/he is in well-being). Existential guilt [also known as social responsibility guilt by Burnett and Lunsford (1994)] occurs when one feels more fortunate than other people. For example, when we see a homeless child in a street, we may have a feeling of empathy. Therefore, guilt can enhance the charitable-giving behavior (Batson, 1998; Tangney, 1995).
Though Bennett (1998) recommends that guilt appeal is an effective tool for stimulating consumer behavior, the process of this appeal is not realized clearly. It is difficult but vital to manipulate the proper level of guilt appeal. Many studies have shown that a high level of guilt may discourage the desired giving behavior (Coulter & Pinto, 1995). Therefore, generating guilt effectively can easily lead to a desired action. Besides, supposing that people memorize past events, such as watching charitable programs and receiving donation letters; thus, their total feelings of guilt have accumulated over a long time (Diepen, 2009). Only through giving donations can reduce this sense of guilt. Dahl, Honea, and Manchanda (2003) mention that people with a guilty feeling related to charity attempt to compensate by making a donation in the future.

Bendapudi, Singh and Nendapudi (1996) declare that a charitable-giving decision depends on a cost-benefit investigation. The benefits consist of guilt release and three different costs, including monetary costs (money donated), physical costs (effort of donating), as well as opportunity costs (the contributions to charity cannot be spent on other things). When the guilt can no longer be tolerated or the guilt oversteps a certain threshold, people will donate money to reduce their guilt (Diepen, 2009). Therefore, if people have donated lately, the motivation for them to donate again immediately will be low (Diamond & Noble, 2001).
Since there is no definite evidence of which donor motive (altruism, egoism, accountability and guilt) is dictating, some donors may employ multiple motives, whereas other donors may have a conflicting feeling during the process of charitable-giving decision (Bendapudi el al., 1996). Different forms of charitable-giving may be derived by different types of motives. Hence, the present research examines the reasons why people are willing to join a sustainable giving program, such as child sponsorship programs.

2.2 The Perceptions of Charitable-Giving Relationship

In non-profit marketing research, studies of charitable-giving relationship (e.g. Peltier, 2002) include donors’ perceptions of their relationship with a group of people who will be advantaged directly by the donors’ financial support (e.g. sponsored children) and their perceptions of the charities appealing for benefactions, like World Vision Hong Kong. However, the exchange relationship between the donor and the charity is indirect (Bagozzi, 1975) because the more tangible benefits are given to a third party, such as the needy children. A good feeling of contributing to the society is the main benefit for the donor (Bruce, 1994). Therefore, it is worth discussing the donors’ different perceptions of the charitable-giving relationship.
2.2.1 Charity-Donor Relationship

Some psychological relational components, such as trust and commitment (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999), and the mediator of communication are a great impact for consumers to make a decision of choosing an organization (Iacobucci & Hibbard, 1999).

**Trust:** Only a few exploratory studies have tackled the role of trust in the relationship between donors and charities (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). However, there is an affluence of exploratory research to approve that trust is a significant role to influence the relationship between consumers and companies (Gounans, 2005). In these studies, the researchers conclude that a close relationship can be established by a higher level of trust. Generally, consumers regard trust as an important element to provide an intangible service to them when they are lacking in objective criteria to evaluate the performance of the company (Coleman, 1990). Similarly, some charity research shows that donors are also relying on charitable organizations to deliver benefits to the needy, and the service provided to the beneficiary (e.g. needy children) is not usually evaluated by the donors (Hansmann, 1980). Consequently, it is a meaningful question whether the trust of the donors towards the charities plays a critical role in determining making donations.
Commitment: Trust relates to the level of donors’ confidence that a charity will achieve its expected obligations (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). After establishing a trust in relation to charity-donor relationship, the higher level of commitment will be created by virtue of the existence of trust. The levels of both sales and loyalty will also increase (Anderson & Weitz, 1989; Dwyer, 1987). According to Moorman et al., (1992), researchers define commitment as “an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship” that it is a function of trust. A lot of literature supports that the definition of commitment always implicates some extent of self-sacrifice and is improbable to take place in situations where trust is lacking (Gabarino & Johnson, 1999; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Therefore, trust, commitment and charitable-giving behavior are associated sequentially (Sargeant & Lee, 2004).

Communication: The communications among donors, charities and beneficiaries have been classified in terms of the importance of the information shared (Andersen & Narus, 1990), frequency of contacts (Doney & Cannon, 1997), and sharing information to others (Frenzen & Davis, 1990). The communications among these three parties have also been demonstrated to positively influence the level of organizational trust (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), consumers’ perceptions of the quality of their relationship and the overall satisfaction with organizations (Brown & Schwartz, 1989; Crosby & Stevens, 1987; Suprenant & Solomon, 1987) and relational results (Andersen & Narus, 1990).
Hence, it is necessary for the charities to establish positive and long-term relationships with the donors by increasing their trustworthiness in order to solicit the donors’ financial support effectively (Burnett, 1993). Moreover, the quality and quantity of communications are important in attracting charitable donations (Considine, 1994; Craver et al., 1999c; Hibbert & Horne, 1996; Mora & Nugent, 1998).

### 2.2.2 Donor-Beneficiary Relationship

Not only considering the relationship between donors and charities, but also enhancing the relationship between donors and beneficiaries are very important in the communication strategies among both parties. Charity literature demonstrates that the perceptions of beneficiaries are also critical factors for the donors to consider whether making donations or not (Guy & Patton, 1989; Burnett & Wood, 1988). Therefore, the development of donor-beneficiary relationship is useful to create a lasting communication during the process of charitable-giving decision (Peltier, 2002). The relevant literature divides the process of making charitable-giving decisions into three stages.
Stage 1: Need-Deserve Help. According to Guy and Patton (1989), the charitable-giving decision process of the potential donors is kindled only when they notice that there are some people who need help. The awareness of needs could be the consequences of personal experience and/or charitable promotions.

Stage 2: Benefits of Helping. In the interactive donor-beneficiary relationship, both parties have to understand the benefits of each other (Peltier et al., 1998). For example, the donors may receive benefits in terms of internal good feeling about themselves (Dawson, 1988; Harvey, 1990) and/or higher external social recognition and appreciation indirectly (Andreoni, 1990; Andreoni & Scholz, 1998; Hibbert & Horne, 1996). Another benefit could be the consequence of perceiving that the needy and/or community is actually aided by their donations (Batson, 1991; McCarty & Schrum, 1994).

Stage 3: Accept Responsibility. In the last stage of charitable-giving decision process, the donor-beneficiary relationship is associated with whether the potential donors can be persuaded to accept a part of the responsibility for giving help (Peltier, 2002). However, some researchers express that the potential donors are less likely to help the needy people if many organizations and/or other individuals have already actively given support to them (Bendapudi et al., 1996; Guy & Patton, 1989).
2.3 Child Sponsorship Programs

According to UNICEF's Executive Director Carol Bellamy, the worthiest investment of all is in the development and concern of the youngest children. Giving children a good start in health and education is an investment which has a high return as the children grow to be adults, provide leadership in their communities and raise their own children. They can support themselves and others finally (Mayor, 2000). In addition, a survey by research group MORI earlier shows that after healthcare, the majority of the public care donation is spent on improving children's lives (Children's body pushes for a zone in the Dome, 1998).

A child sponsorship is a special form of sponsorship that is expectably more long-lasting than usual charitable donations. Through the child sponsorship programs such as World Vision’s Child Sponsorship Program in developed countries, an individual can sponsor a child in a developing country until the child becomes self sufficient or self-supporting. For example, in order to improve the education, health or security of the sponsored children or both in some cases, the sponsors will provide monetary support to them. On the other hand, some charities are benefiting more widely to the child's community, rather than only helping an individual child directly.
After selecting which children to be sponsored, the charities will send the background information of the children to their sponsors. These nonprofit-making organizations deliver the benefits to the sponsored children and manage the communication between the sponsors and their sponsored children, embracing translating letters, and assuring that the contents of the letters are proper in some situations. Most of the charity is concerned with providing food, water, clothing, accommodation, medicine and education to the needy children directly. Some charities also spend the donations on helping their families and/or their communities such as building a school or hospital.

There has been valuable prior research on consumer behavior related to generally charitable-giving behaviors. However, there has been no research on consumer behavior related to sustainable giving behaviors, such as sponsoring a child. Child sponsorship is a special form of sponsorship that is potentially more enduring than typical charitable donations. This sustainable donation is needed to fill the gap in the existing literature and to provide some relevant insights not mentioned in the literature. Therefore, the purpose of this exploratory research is to seek a more in-depth understanding of the motivations for charitable-giving behaviors and find out the essence of the sponsors’ experience of joining a child sponsorship program.
CHAPTER III: METHOD

3.1 Sample

A purposeful sample of 16 Hong Kong sponsors who have a lived experience of joining a child sponsorship program for two months or above participated in this phenomenological study. There were 5 male and 11 female participants. The average age of the participants was 30.

3.2 Research Design

The reason of employing an “interpretivism” paradigm in qualitative research was that I would like to obtain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of several individuals who have joined a child sponsorship program. It could only be gained by communicating directly with the sponsors. Thus, a phenomenological study of qualitative research was conducted.

3.2.1 The Assumptions of Interpretivist Research

The basic assumptions of interpretivism are that the whole needs to be examined so as to realize a phenomenon (Lincoln, 1995, Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Interpretivist proposes that there are multiple realities, and these realities can differ across time and place. Unlike quantitative research, subjectivity is permitted and informal style as well as first person is permitted in this research. Besides, it is a useful technique to build new theories. Some
similar research also uses small samples (e.g. interviews with 5-25 people, Polkinghorne, 1989) in the methodology. However, the researcher needs to go deeper and concentrate on understanding and interpreting how and why different people have different ways of experiencing something.

3.2.2 Phenomenological Study

This phenomenological study described the meaning and the structure for 16 child sponsors of their lived experiences of joining a child sponsorship program for 2 months or above. This study focused on describing what all child sponsors have in common as a phenomenon. The purpose of this study was that reducing individual experiences with the phenomenon come up with a description of the universal essence. Besides, it provided an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Knowing some common experiences of all participants can be valuable for charity marketers to retain the current sponsors and encourage more people to be sponsors.
3.3 Procedure

The phenomenological study was conducted in Chinese. A translation-back translation process was employed in translating the study instruments, including interview protocol and consent letter from English to Chinese (refer to Appendix I, II) to ensure that equivalent procedures was followed and equivalent constructs was being measured. Secondly, the interview protocol was pretested to examine if there was any inappropriateness or error before implementation. Thirdly, data was collected by using face to face interviews for 3 weeks and each interview was lasted for 20-30 minutes until no new themes emerged. In natural setting interviews were conducted with 16 participants (child sponsors). After obtaining informed consent, each participant was asked to verbally respond two core general questions in the interviews as follows:

➢ What have been your experiences since joining the children sponsorship program?

Describe your experiences in detail, and tell me how you think and feel about child sponsorship program.

➢ How did the context or situation (i.e. people, advertising, time etc.) influence or affect your experiences of joining a child sponsorship program?

Finally, all interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim (refer to Appendix III). Background information was obtained through a paper and pencil questionnaire.
3.4 Data Analysis

Methodological rigor was achieved through the application of verification and validation (Morse & Richards, 2002). The study was verified by fulfilling to the phenomenological method, obtaining literature searches, bracketing past experience, employing an enough and purposeful sample, and interviewing until saturation of data was completed (i.e. until each new interview contributed no more insights). In order to address any subjective interpretation of the interview finding by author, validation was accomplished through member checked by four participants to ensure the researcher’s accurate interpretation. The study posed no serious ethical problems that all participants were fully voluntarily and understood the purpose of the study. All respondents were assured of the strict confidential of their information and responses.
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

According to the Moustakas’s (1994) approach in analyzing the results, all written transcripts were read several times for getting a sense of the whole database. Significant statements (sentences or quotes) directly associated with the experience of sponsors who have joined child sponsorship programs were identified and clustered into themes.

Textual and Structural descriptions were written based on these significant statements:

- **Textural Description**: a description of what the sponsors’ experienced

- **Structural Description**: a description of the context or setting (i.e. time, place and people etc.) that influenced how the sponsors experienced the phenomenon

From the 16 verbatim transcripts (refer to Appendix III), 84 significant statements were extracted. These statements were clustered into six exhaustive themes (refer to Appendix VI), including textual and structural descriptions of the phenomenon.

4.1 Textual Description

**Theme 1: Sponsors have gains and/or losses when helping others**

This is the dominant theme to emerge in the textual description. The interviewees found that they were helped when they helped others by joining a child sponsorship program. Child sponsors obtain some intangible benefits from helping others. A 33-year-old woman said, “If giving a little money can help the needy children to improve their living conditions and
provide education to them, I will feel very happy in my spirituals.” Another interviewee also shared a similar experience. For example, a male respondent (aged 21) said,

“Joining a child sponsorship program is a meaningful thing. It’s also a satisfaction because I not only feel happy, but also help others.”

Moreover, the interviewees expressed that receiving letters and/or pictures from their sponsored children was the happiest thing in their experiences of joining the child sponsorship programs. A 24-year-old woman noted,

“When I opened the letter, I was very pleasantly surprised. The previous two letters only included some written words, but the recent letter included a hand drawing. So I was very happy and overjoyed. This was a bonus for me.”

Another 21-year-old man shared,

“One day, when I opened my mail box and saw a thank you letter from my sponsored child, all of my troubles were forgotten at that moment. I felt encouraged in spirituals.”

Although the sponsors gain happiness and satisfaction during the process of sponsoring children, they need to sacrifice some benefits such as money and time. A female (aged 24) expressed that she needed to save money for sponsoring her sponsored children,

“I go home immediately after work… If some people invite me to have dinner outside, I’ll reject them. When I know I don’t have enough money, I don’t want to spend more on entertainment.”
Another 33-year-old woman suggested, “If people buy 10 clothes, I’ll buy one only. I think buying clothes is less important than helping a life [a child].” Expressing the same belief in relation to sacrifice, a male (aged 21) said,

“It’s very easy to spend two hundred dollars on an expensive meal, watching a movie like Avatar. However, I prefer saving the money in order to help my sponsored child.”

**Theme 2: Sponsors want to establish a close relationship with their sponsored children**

Generally, child sponsors regard their sponsored children as a family relationship or a friendship. They do not only want to donate money to their sponsored children, but also want to show their concerns to them. Therefore, they wish to establish a close relationship with their sponsored children in the long term. Recalling a specific experience, a female (aged 31) expressed,

“Besides helping my sponsored child, it seems that I’ve another sister... As she is still studying in secondary school now, I’m thinking what I can help her when she goes to work in the future. It’s relatively a long term relationship that I’m not only sponsoring her study, but also helping her in the future.”

Another 33-year-old woman said, “I regard my sponsored child as a brother... to help him, to support and encourage him.” A male respondent (aged 24) said, “I wish I’m not only being their sponsor, but also being their friends. Also, I regard them as brothers and
“sisters.” Similarly, a 21-year-old male said that he always share the news of his sponsored child to his friends. He noted,

“I wish I could play the role of my sponsored child’s older brother who takes care of her and bring happiness to her when she is still young... It’s like a family relationship and she is a part of my life.”

Several interviewees also felt that they desired to maintain an interactive relationship with their sponsored children, as reflected in the experience of a female (aged 36),

“My sponsored child shares many happy and unhappy things to me, such as her exam results. But the most touching thing is the interactive relationship. She prays for me. I also give her encouragement... You should not only provide education to your sponsored children, but should also be willing to care about your sponsored children’s personal development and give them encouragement. We could grow together. It’s more meaningful.”

A male interviewee (aged 45) noted,

“After sending the gifts to my sponsored children, they will send a letter to me. So I will send some things to them again. In fact, I attached a stamped self-addressed envelope to them. They only need to write down some words and send the letter to me through the charity.”
Another female (age 27) shared,

“We [she and her sponsored child] will send greeting cards to each other during special occasions. He may draw a picture to me. Then, I’ll also write some blessing words to him every year. It’s an interactive relationship.”

After establishing a close and interactive relationship with the beneficiaries, the sponsors will be more concerned about the feelings of their sponsored children. For instance, many respondents expressed that they may felt worried that stopping helping their sponsored children may cause a negative impact or an uncertain result in the children’s living conditions and spirituals. Even though the sponsors understand that they need to sacrifice some benefits, they are still willing to retain the current relationship with their sponsored children. This view is reflected by a female respondent (aged 42),

“If I stop sponsoring the child, I’m not sure whether he’ll be seriously affected. I don’t know whether he’ll become very pitiful if stopping the sponsorship suddenly”.

Other similar comments include as follows:

“Sponsoring a child is just like taking care of a pet. If you stop it suddenly, the relationship will be lost. The children may wonder why the sponsor doesn’t give support to them anymore. It’s also difficult for the charities to find another sponsor. So I’ll keep it.”

(A female, aged 27)
“I don’t want to give my sponsored children a hope, and then take it back immediately... 

As long as I can afford it, I don’t want to make any change to them. After giving a change to their life, I don’t want to damage it.” (A female, aged 24)

Theme 3: Sponsoring a child is a personal decision

Many interviewees thought that sponsoring a child is a personal decision. Before making the decision of joining a child sponsorship program, they seldom shared with their family or friends. Even though the sponsors have asked for second opinions, they make their own decisions finally. Consider the following statements from two female respondents (aged 22 and 23 respectively),

“I didn’t ask my friends for advice. Only after making this decision, I’ll then actively share it with others, such as my schoolmates or friends. But I haven’t shared it with my family.”

“I didn’t ask others for advice because I thought that it’s not a big issue. It’s only a small favor.”

Similarly, another female (aged 27) noted,

“In fact, I didn’t actively share it with my family. They knew this issue [sponsoring a child] when they received the letters from the charity. It’s not necessary for me to share it with others.”
A male (age 21) also said,

“My decision of sponsoring a child won’t be influenced by anyone, except myself. In case, this decision was objected by my mother, then I didn’t share it with her anymore. But I insist on donating the money because it’s not a wrong thing... I just want to help a child and make her feel happy. That’s it!”

4.2 Structural Description

Theme 4: Joining a child sponsorship program is positively associated with the level of the sponsors’ financial conditions

Many interviewees expressed that economic condition was the main factor influencing their experiences when participating in the child sponsorship programs. If their financial situations could be improved, they were relatively more willing to sponsor more children.

This view is reflected by a female (aged 33),

“If I earn a higher salary in the future, I’ll sponsor 1-2 more children. Because World Vision [the charity] sends a newsletter to me regularly. I know many people need help all over in the world.”

Similarly, a 27-year-old woman asserted, “Finance is the main factor influencing my experience of joining this program. I may want to help one more child when I’ve a good financial condition.” Another female (aged 26) noted, “When I’m not facing any financial
pressure, I want to join another charitable program or donate more money to my sponsored child.”

Other similar experience is also reflected by a male (aged 23),

“We [the male respondent and his sponsoring partner] promise ourselves that we’ll sponsor 2 more children if our salary is increased or we’re promoted. After that, we achieved it... So, we sponsor 2 more children now.”

Contrarily, the sponsors feel pressured when they are facing a financial problem, as illustrated in the following statements: A 39-year-old woman with 3 sponsored children described,

“After quitting my job, I’ve an idea that I want to stop sponsoring one of my sponsored children, because I know my salary of the next job will be decreased. I’m afraid that I can’t afford sponsoring three children.”

A 36-year-old female also stated,

“The main concern is the financial conditions. I found it difficult to donate $180 per month and I wanted to give up at that moment... At the same time, when I was writing the letter to my child, my feeling was affected by the financial pressure also.”
Theme 5: Sponsors tend to help the beneficiaries who are relatively similar to themselves

This theme presents that the Chinese sponsors want to sponsor the children who are closer and relatively similar to themselves. This is evident in the following responses: A female (aged 31) said, “I chose to sponsor a girl in China.” Another female (aged 33) stated, “It is easier for me to visit him. So I hoped to choose a Chinese child.” A male (aged 23) also said, “I must target on Chinese if I’ve a choice.”

Other similar explanations are reflected as follows:

A 42-year-old woman mentioned,

“When I joined the child sponsorship program, I requested to sponsor some children who are living in Mainland China. As they’re my fellow nationals, our relationship seems to be closer... I don’t want to sponsor other foreign children because it’s more meaningful for me to sponsor a Chinese child.”

A 27-year-old male also explained,

“The reason of sponsoring a child in Hong Kong is that my sponsored child is closer to me. He is living in Hong Kong... It’s easy for me to keep contact with him.”

Another male (aged 21) described,

“After receiving the letter from the charity, I felt a little displeased because she was a Burmese. I’m Chinese, so I expected she is Chinese too... It’s unexpected. I thought maybe I should change to sponsor a Chinese child.”
Theme 6: The motivation of joining a child sponsorship program is associated with peer influence

Peer influence is a motivation for some interviewees to join the child sponsorship programs. It is easy for the sponsors to share their feelings with other sponsors because they have a similar experience. Some respondents noted,

“I think peer influence is an effective motivation for me to join this program continuously… We [she and her sponsoring partner] encourage each other not to go shopping and not to have dinner outside. Then we can save more money. Don’t give up easily.” (A female, aged 22)

Similarly, a male (aged 24) with several secondary students in his church joined a child sponsorship program. He expressed,

“The younger students [his sponsoring partners] are the motivation for me to actively involve in this program. Otherwise, it’s like paying the telephone fee every month only. You’ll not care about the issue… The younger students always forget to give the donations to me, and then I need to remind them. At the same time, this reminds me I’m sponsoring a child too. I would be more active in participating in this program.”
A male (aged 23) said,

“Every time I receive a letter or picture from my sponsored children, I’ll share it with my sponsoring partner... My sponsoring partner always says maybe we could visit our sponsored children if we’re available. In fact, it’s our target. We hope we could achieve it together.”

Related to motivation, a female (aged 26) also described,

“When I joined this program, I wanted a person who could join with me together. So I invited my friend... Then, I could share the information [sponsoring a child] with my friend easily because we’ve a common topic... This [joining the child sponsorship program with my friend] is my motivation. The motivation is larger if we could join this program together.”

4.3 Composite Description

According to the six themes, the textual and structural descriptions are integrated into the following composite description that shows the “essence” of the phenomenon focusing on the common experience of the sponsors who have joined child sponsorship programs:

Sponsors join child sponsorship programs in order to help the needy children to be self-sufficient through receiving financial support and education. In this charitable-giving process, the sponsors not only help others, but also gain happiness and satisfaction in their
spirituals. To the sponsors, sponsoring children is a small favor only. In contrast, it is a large contribution to the needy children to improve their living conditions. Therefore, the sponsors are willing to sacrifice their benefits in order to provide sustainable donations to their sponsored children. Even though some sponsors may face financial problems and think of giving up, they will not stop the sponsorship finally. As they have already established a close relationship with their sponsored children, they do not want to let the children down and damage the current relationship as well as the living conditions of their sponsored children. Conversely, the sponsors desire to sponsor more children when their financial conditions have improved.

Moreover, the sponsors expect to develop an interactive relationship with their sponsored children. Although not all the sponsors will write letters to their sponsored children, they will send greeting cards to the children during special occasions. At the same time, they wish to receive letters or hand drawings from the children. Furthermore, the sponsors have a preference of sponsoring Chinese children because they share the same nationality. Therefore, they think that it is more meaningful and closer for them to help the needy Chinese. It is also easy and convenient for them to communicate with the children in writing and visiting.
Finally, the sponsors think that joining a child sponsorship program is a personal decision. They are relatively passive to share this issue with their family members or friends. No matter whether their decisions are supported by others, they will not change their mind. However, peers and/or family members are a positive influence to motivate sponsors to make the decision and actively participate in the child sponsorship programs. It is easy for the sponsors to share their feelings of joining a child sponsorship program with their sponsoring partner or other people who share a similar view with them. Therefore, the charitable-giving behavior of joining a child sponsorship is a very complicated process. Some child sponsors may be influenced by others to join these programs, but all the sponsors will not be affected by others to stop sponsoring their sponsored children. To sum up, there are many conflicting issues (e.g. the sponsors’ psychology and their financial conditions) involved.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion and Theoretical Implications

The two main research questions are addressed by the experiences of sponsors who have joined a child sponsorship program in this qualitative research: What are the thoughts and feelings of sponsors who join this program and what are the external factors influencing the experience of being a sponsor. At the same time, the reasons for making this special form of charitable-giving decision and providing a sustainable donation to the sponsored children can also be found. People feel sorry for the needy children because they are relatively fortunate than the children (Craver et al, 1999c; Batson, 1987; Ray, 1998). Therefore, the social responsibility guilt (Burnett & Lunsford, 1994) is stimulated. In order to ease the feeling of guilt, people tend to provide financial support to the needy children through joining child sponsorship programs.

In the experience of joining a child sponsorship program, the sponsors have gains and/or losses when helping others. This is similar to the cost-benefit investigation of making a charitable-giving decision (Bendapudi, Singh & Bendapudi, 1996). Before making a donation, people will consider their cost, such as the amount of money and time. At the same time, the sponsors gain intangible benefits, such as happiness, to compensate their losses. Moreover, the reasons for providing a sustainable support to the needy children could
be illustrated by Peltier (1998) that the donors and the beneficiaries will obtain some benefits from each other through an interactive donor-beneficiary relationship. The existing literature also demonstrates that this relationship is like an exchange system of giving something in return for something received previously or anticipation of future returns (Amos, 1982; Beatty et al., 1991; Frisch & Gerrard, 1981). For example, the sponsors donate money to the needy children, and they also wish to receive thank-you letters from their sponsored children. If the sponsored children do not provide any response, their sponsors may not send gifts or letters to the children again. In this “exchange system”, the sponsors spend money and time to their sponsored children. They can obtain happiness and satisfaction from helping the children at the same time. To the beneficiaries, the sponsored children spend time on writing letters or drawing pictures so as to thank their sponsors. Simultaneously, they could receive financial and spiritual support from their sponsors.

The findings that the sponsors want to establish a close relationship with their sponsored children, and that the sponsors tend to help the beneficiaries who are relatively similar to themselves could add value to the existing literature relating to the donors’ perception of the beneficiaries. The sponsors not only want to give money to the needy children, but also want to establish an interactive relationship with them. This relationship is an emotional connection between both parties. As a result, the sponsors will be more concerned about the
feelings of their sponsored children, and they even regard them as their family members and/or friends. No matter what difficulties the sponsors are facing in financial problems or even if their sponsorship decisions are rejected by others, they will not stop sponsoring the children because they do not want to damage the relationship with their sponsored children.

Unique to this study, the sponsors are likely to help the needy children who relatively share a similar background, such as the same nationality. According to the inclusive fitness of the evolutionary psychology, the concept of kin selection is a relevant interpretation in this finding that people are used to behave altruistically to their relatives (Hamilton, 1964). This also explains why sponsors do not want to stop helping their sponsored children because they regard them as their fellow nationals. In addition, they have already established a friendship or a family relationship with their sponsored children.

Besides the direct relationship between the sponsors and the beneficiaries, the reasons for joining a child sponsorship program and insisting on donating money are also associated with the relationship between the sponsors and other sponsors. As the motivation of joining a child sponsorship program is associated with peer influence, the intangible rewards of making a donation, such as reducing peer pressure (Andreoni & Scholz, 1998; Harvey, 1990; Mora & Nugent, 1998), offer an explanation of this finding. The sponsors are
motivated by their peers’ invitation and/or encouragement in joining the child sponsorship programs together because of reducing peer pressure.

5.2 Practical Implications

The results of this study have practical implications for charities which are interested in implementing child sponsorship programs in the near future. Given the literature demonstrate the importance of the charity-donor relationship and donor-beneficiary relationship, charities should take a proactive role in managing an appropriate communication among the charities, the sponsors and the beneficiaries. They should also actively encourage both parties (sponsors and beneficiaries) to maintain a regular communication so as to establish a close relationship. Then, the current sponsors will not stop giving donations to their sponsored children easily because they are not willing to give up the relationship with their sponsored children.

Besides reducing the number of lapsers, it is important for the charities to persuade more people to join their child sponsorship programs. The charities should encourage the current sponsors to actively share their happiness and satisfactions of being child sponsors to their friends. It is an effective way for the current sponsors to invite their friends to be new sponsoring partners because of the positive peer influence. For example, the charities should
offer a special plan for a sponsoring pair or a group of people to sponsor a child or several children with their friends or families.

Finally, the charities should try their best to satisfy the requirements (e.g. the preference of the sponsored children’s nationality) of the current sponsors and the new sponsors if possible. Enhancing the transparency of the child sponsorship programs, such as how the sponsored children are benefited from the sponsors’ donations can also increase the loyalty and trust of the current sponsors towards the charities. Thus, it is more effective for the charities to retain the current sponsors and attract more people to join these programs in the future.

5.3 Limitations

There are several limitations in this study. First, a central limitation is that the current study is designed to investigate only one specific aspect in the phenomenon of the sponsors who join child sponsorship programs. Second, although the sample size could meet the phenomenological study’s requirement, it did not mean that the sample is large enough to represent all the experiences of the sponsor. It is more objective to interview both current sponsors and lapsers in order to find out whether there are different voices about this experience. There may be other unfound factors existing, such as the sponsors’ attitudes.
toward the charities, which cannot be revealed in this study. Third, the purposeful sampling method may create bias because it is not purely random. In addition, the demographics of the respondents are not balanced (e.g. the population of the male respondents is smaller). This may affect the generality of the results. Lastly, this qualitative research is constrained by limited time.

5.4 Future Research Directions

This phenomenological study and the previous literature present that a charitable-giving decision depends on a cost-benefit investigation (Bendapudi, Singh & Bendapudi, 1996) and the donors’ perceptions and the relationship between the charities and the beneficiaries. However, some questions that are still ambiguous in the charitable-giving behaviors include: (1) Would these sponsors who have a higher financial ability will sponsor more needy children? (2) Would it be reasonable to expect that the sponsors are likely to give support to the beneficiaries who are relatively similar in nationality to themselves? (3) Is it effective for the sponsors’ peers or other sponsors to positively influence their friends participating in child sponsorship programs or making other forms of donations? To answer these questions, further research is needed to determine whether there are strong associations between the sponsors’ financial ability and the number of sponsored children; the preference of helping the beneficiaries who are relatively similar with the sponsors as well as the effectiveness of
peer influence. It is hoped that these qualitative results can encourage further investigations of the sustainable giving behaviors in charitable organizations.

5.5 Conclusion

This study is unique because there is no previous research studying the phenomenon of sponsors who have joined a child sponsorship program. It reveals the tendency of helping the beneficiaries who are relatively similar to the sponsors. Simultaneously, the study finds that joining a child sponsorship program is a complicated process because it is not only a personal decision, but also positively influenced by other sponsors and/or peers. These findings are useful for the charitable organizations to understand more about the perceptions and relationships of the sponsors towards among the charities, the beneficiaries as well as other sponsors. This contribution is very significant for facilitating the charities to maintain a long-term relationship with their current sponsors and encourage more people to be sponsors in the future.
REFERENCES


Electronic reference formats recommended by The Public Opinion Program at The University of Hong Kong. (2008, November 27).


APPENDIX I: CONSENT LETTER

1.1: Consent Letter (Original Version)

Hong Kong Baptist University
BBA – Marketing

Experiences in Joining a Child Sponsorship Program:
A Phenomenological Study
Consent Letter

Dear Participant,

We would like to invite you to participate in a research study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the instructor or the Hong Kong Baptist University.

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of joining a Child Sponsorship Program and the charitable behavior of sponsoring child. The procedure will be a single case study design. If you agree to participate, we will arrange an individual in-depth interview to you approximately 20-30mins. The whole conversation will be conducted by an audio tape-recorded during the interview. However, your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and your identity as a participant will be known only to the researchers.

There are no known risk and/or discomforts associated with this study. Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study before participating. Also, we would be happy to share our findings with you after research is completed. If you have any inquiry about the research study itself, please contact Maggie Chan via phone 6231-9375, or e-mail: maggiechan1218@gmail.com.

Please sign your consent with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the study. A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep.

Thank you very much for your participation!

___________________                              __ __________________
Signature of Participant                                      Date

Researcher: Maggie Chan
Honor Project in BBA - Marketing
Hong Kong Baptist University
1.2: Consent Letter (Chinese Version)

敬啟者:

本人是香港浸會大學工商管理市場學系三年級學生。此調查乃香港浸會大學工商管理學士（榮譽）學位課程要求學生實踐的其中一環。本人誠意邀請您參與這項研究調查。是次參與純屬自願性質，您可隨時終止參與是次研究，有關決定將不會引致任何不良後果。

這是一項有關助養兒童計劃的學術研究，旨在探討助養者的經驗及慈善行為。該項研究屬單一個案研究。若您願意參與這項研究，研究員將會跟你進行一個深入的訪問，需時約 20-30 分鐘。整個對話內容將會被錄音，而所收集的資料只作研究用途，個人資料將絕對保密。

如您對是項研究有任何問題，請現在提出。當我們完成是項研究，我們很樂意跟你分享研究的成果。如有任何疑問，請致電 6231-9375 或電郵至 maggiechan1218@gmail.com 與本人聯絡。

如您充分了解是項研究的性質和宗旨，並同意接受是次訪問，請在下方簽名。我們將會提供一份同意書副本給您作保存。

非常感謝您的參與！

__________________________________________    ______________________________
參與者簽署                                                   日期
陳克慧 謹啟

香港浸會大學工商管理

市場學系三年級學生
CONSENT LETTER

A Phenomenological Study of
The Experience of Joining a Child Sponsorship Program:

Dear Participant,

I am a final year student majoring in Marketing at Hong Kong Baptist University. This study is a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons) Degree offered by Hong Kong Baptist University. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the instructor or the Hong Kong Baptist University.

The purpose of this study is to understand the experience of joining a child sponsorship program and the charitable-giving behavior of sponsoring a child. The procedure will be a single case study design. If you agree to participate, we will arrange an individual in-depth interview to you approximately 20-30mins. The whole conversation will be conducted by an audio tape-recorded during the interview. However, your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and your identity as a participant will be known only to the researcher.

There are no known risk and/or discomforts associated with this study. Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study before participating. Also, I would be happy to share my findings with you after research is completed. If you have any inquiry, please feel free to contact me at 6231-9375 or via e-mail: maggiechan1218@gmail.com.

Please sign your consent with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the study. A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep. Thank you very much for your participation!

_________________________________________  _____________________
Signature of Participant                                             Date

Yours sincerely,
Maggie, Chan Hak Wai
Final Year Student, BBA - Marketing
Hong Kong Baptist University
APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

2.1: Interview Protocol (Original Version)

Interview Protocol Project
“Experiences in Joining a Child Sponsorship: A Phenomenological Study”

Time length of interview: Approximately 20-30mins
Date: Place:
Interviewer: Maggie, Chan Hak Wai Interviewee:
Position of interviewee:

The purpose of this interview is to understand the experiences of joining a child sponsorship program and the charitable behavior of sponsoring child.

Questions:
1) What do you think about the meaning of child sponsorship?

2) When did you join the child sponsorship program?

3) Which charitable organization did you choose to join this child sponsorship?

4) What is the most unforgettable/interesting experience after joining this child sponsorship program?

5) What have been your experiences since joining the children sponsorship? Describe your experiences in detail, and tell me how you think and feel about child sponsorship program.

6) How would you describe the relationship between your adopted child and you?

7) How did the context or situation (i.e. people, advertising, time) influence or affect your experiences of joining a child sponsorship program?

Thank you for participating in this interview!
~The End~
2.2: Interview Protocol (Chinese Version)

香港浸會大學
工商管理市場學系

訪問內容

參與助養兒童計劃的經驗 - 現象學研究

時間長度：大約 20 至 30 分鐘

日期：
地點：

採訪員：陳克慧 (Maggie)
受訪者：

年齡：
職業/職位：

目的：了解參與助養兒童計劃的人士的經歷和感想，及有關助養兒童的慈善行為

主要問題：

1) 你對助養兒童有什麼看法?

2) 你何時曾參與助養兒童計劃?

3) 你選擇了那一間慈善機構/團體的助養兒童計劃?

4) 在參與助養兒童計劃當中，令你最難忘/有趣的事是什麼?
5) 自從你參與了助養兒童計劃後，你體會到什麼？請詳細描述參與助養兒童計劃的經驗及感想。

6) 請你詳細描述你和助養兒童之間的關係？

7) 有那些背景或情況下（例如外在因素：親戚朋友、經濟、時間等等），影響你在參與助養兒童計劃當中的經驗及感想。

感謝您參與這次訪問！

-完-
2.3: Interview Protocol (Back Translated Version)

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

A Phenomenological Study of
The Experience of Joining a Child Sponsorship Program:

Time length of interview: Approximately 20-30mins
Date: Place:
Interviewer: Maggie, Chan Hak Wai Interviewee:
Age: Occupation:

The purpose of this interview is to understand the experiences of joining a child sponsorship program and the charitable behavior of sponsoring child.

Questions:

1) What do you think about the meaning of child sponsorship programs?

2) When did you join the child sponsorship program?

3) Which charitable organization did you choose to join this child sponsorship?

4) What is the most unforgettable/interesting experience after joining this child sponsorship program?

5) What have been your experiences since joining the children sponsorship? Describe your experiences in detail, and tell me how you think and feel about child sponsorship program.

6) How would you describe the relationship between your adopted child and you?

7) How did the context or situation (i.e. people, advertising, time etc.) influence or affect your experiences of joining a child sponsorship program?

Thank you for participation in this interview!
~The End~
APPENDIX III: TRANSCRIPTION (CHINESE VERSION)

Selected a Example of the Interview’s Transcribed Verbatim

Interviewer: MAGGIE (M)
Interviewee: Bonnie (B)

M: 當你諗起助養兒童計劃，你會聯想到咩？

B: 會聯想要好多兒童係需要我地助養，啡如果有能力都應該幫手下

M: 覺得助養計劃既意義係咩

B: 在我黎講，因為我係教徒，啡其實香港人好富裕，如果我有能力，有工作有健康，啡如果我可以減少物質既人而幫到人既話，尤其是小朋友，啡因為佢係無辜同佢自己搵唔到更好既環境，都係要靠第三者去幫手，啡如果我地可以付出少少錢，已經可以幫到佢改善環境又或者學習，各方面，啡我自己心靈上會好開心，啡對佢既話，對佢既成長亦會好 D

M: 你係大約邊年開始參加

B: 其實大約兩年，大約係零八，零九年

M: 你係透過邊間機構參加？
B: 其實最初點解你會揀宣明會

B: 佢宣傳都足, 你會見到周慧敏, 好多名人都有個改變, D 名人去到當地, 有個感受話俾我地聽, 都會人感染, 會感染到, 同埋個機構都係大機構, 比較穩陣

M: 其實你係一直都有助養既諗法定係突然之間

B: 其實一直都好想, 但呢兩年就特別, 覺得真係可以咁做, 因為之前 D 錢就唔係太鬆動, 其實而家都唔係鬆動, 但會覺得做得幾多就做幾多。 其實係自己既心路歷程變左, 覺得生存既意義, 幫到人都係好 D

M: 咁點解有呢個轉變？

B: 我諗都係洗左禮, 做左信徒之後, 我 05 年底做, 慢慢, 愈黎愈大既感受

M: 最大既感受係咩呢？因為其實你仲有其他機構可以選擇, 例如老人家, 又或者賑災, 點解選擇小朋友？

B: 其實賑災就間中, 但呢個就持續性。小朋友, 其實因為我係個幾鐘意小朋友, 暫時屋企又未有小朋友, 自己又係最細個個, 所以就揀左呢個。其他行業我都做義工, 但就唔係捐錢嘅
M: 現時助養左幾多個小朋友？

B: 助養左一個，係男仔黎既，就係國內既，都十二歲啦而家，由十歲到而家

但在於佢講，佢讀緊小學架昨，讀到小學三年級定二年級，都唔似香港正常個 D 讀到中
一或者 6 年級，因為佢地都遲 D 先入學

M: 咁你係自己揀定係機構編？

B: 其實如果唔提出意見就係機構安排既，但我自己谂，如果會有機會可以去探下佢都好
啲，所以就話希望幫我揀個中國既，最後就安排左一個中國既俾我，但都遠既，就江西既

M: 咁你地既關係都兩年啦，咁你地有冇點建立或者維持你地既關係？

B: 其實都冇乜點維持架，不過其實宣明會都 OK 既，係新年，聖誕，又或者一開頭迎新都會

有個 Material package，就會提供一張卡，或者摺紙，或者手工仔，就俾小朋友好容易咁樣

表達到自己心意，如果識寫字就寫字啦，唔識就畫下公仔，填下顏色之後再透過宣明會寄

返俾我。另外宣明會亦定期寄 d 野俾我，俾我寫 d 字又或者夾上少少既文具寄返過去，

而過時過節就一定會有得聯絡既。但平時就可能只係生日先會送野俾佢，就唔係好密既

往來。同埋宣明會都會幫個小朋友影相架，大約一年一度，你會見到佢改變左，由開頭天
真 d, 到而家高大 d, 有少少男仔出左樣。

M: 咁 o 者係都係宣明會做主動去幫你地維持個關係？
B: 都係，因為咁樣都會有個好處，就係令你知道自己唔剩係俾錢，而有 D 祝福話，係一種關懷個 D，都好好，可以提醒返我地忙裡偷閒黎送上祝福

M: 咁係呢兩年入面，你覺得最開心同最有趣既係咩呢？

B: 咁暫時係一個小朋友，又唔大又唔細，佢畫 D 圖畫都幾得意，油埋顏色，佢最窩心就係佢會用鉛筆黎起稿，會見到擦左既鉛筆稿跡，之後再油返 D 樹呀，蘋果上去，都係同童真同埋都觉得佢都係用心去做個樣野。

開心既仲有，佢會寫 D 自已既野俾我睇，佢都知道係有個人係幫助緊佢，同埋見到佢生活有改善

M: 咁你見到個陣，除左開心仲會唔會有其他感覺，例如想回信，或者想問多 D 佢既事情？

B: 又唔會主動問既，但係佢耐唔耐又會寫 D 俾我。咁我係教徒啦，有時送 D 卡俾佢會係有 D 聖經既金句，我寄左過去，咁宣明會都會打返過黎話介唔介意我刪左個 D 金句，照寄個書籤過去，咁我話唔介意，o 者係佢唔可以寄 d 有關聖經既事情，於是就只能寫 d 開心每一天，鼓勵佢努力讀書，但就表達唔到我想傳福音既意思。咁都令我少冚寫，因為本應可以打開話題，可以講多 d 相關既野佢既，但係唔緊要啦，因為最緊要佢感受到，唔會咁絕望，太貧窮就會好絕望。

M: 因為個次宣明會既 reject 就令到你唔會刻意準備金句？
B: 其實耐唔耐都會寫封信問候下，但就會小心唔好涉及宗教上

M: 咁會唔會同你原本既諗法唔同呢？

B: 其實都唔會既，幫人都未必要做到傳福音個個目的既，最緊要佢開心

M: 咁你會點樣形容你同佢之間既關係呢？

B: 好得意囉，因為佢就寄過相俾我，但其實我未寄過相俾佢架嘅，因為佢第一次寫信俾我

咁其實我都想等，等助養左佢五年啦，等佢大個仔 D，又或者第時讀書個 D，有機會黎香港，

先見下我個樣囉，又或者等我有機會去見佢，先俾佢見到個樣囉。我諗佢對我地既關係仲

估估下囉，呢個人係咩人黎架，點解寫得咁少信俾我，又唔俾幅相俾我，但係都好深刻囉，佢

個樣，因為佢個名都幾得意架，佢叫做潘逸蘋，所以佢畫左兩次畫俾我，但兩次都有畫棵蘋

果樹俾我，所以都好深刻，同埋第一次自己助養，都好開心囉

M: 咁頭先話，佢係叫你姐姐，咁佢同你既關係會係咁，你會唔會覺得自己好似係助養既媽媽

咁，寫信個陣你會點寫上款下款？

B: 其實我地寫助養者個度係唔需要寫名架，有個編號，但如果你鐘意寫都可以寫，但我就

冇寫名，剩係寫姐姐囉。視佢為細佬咁，去幫助，支持同鼓勵佢
M: 你參加左兩年，會唔會主動同身邊既人分享？

B: 有呀，我開頭報助養個陣，都有 SEND EMAIL 同朋友講，你地都助養返個啦，$7 妹嘛，o 者係每日$7，我有架。同埋收到 d 相同卡都有俾 d 朋友睇，鼓勵下佢地，如果可能既話都助養下

M: 你係你決定之前有鼓勵朋友或問人？

B: 我有鼓勵，但係冇去問人地意見，因為覺得呢件事係一件比較簡單既事，金額比較小。

M: 咁你會透過咩形式去鼓勵朋友？

B: 其實講嘅，如果見到電視有，又會同朋友分享

M: 岩岩你講，「如果人工高 d，都會再助養多一個小朋友」，咁係你決定之前有鼓勵朋友或問人？

B: 其實會有因素，佢用除開每日($7/DAY)，咁你可能會諗，食少包零食就已經幫到個小朋友，幾有意義，同埋每個月俾銀，如果唔得既話，一年後可以 CUT 同埋調返轉黎講，你會愈黎愈想助養多幾個，如果當你有錢的話

同埋我會量入為出啦，如果名星佢話自己助養左十幾個，咁岩呀，佢人工高，岩比例。因為
其實都要顧掂自己，屋企人，咁有 D 人會用 D 閒錢黎買衫，但係我就覺得買衫唔會重要過一個生命

M:o 者係你都覺得有額外金錢都會助養小朋友而唔買奢侈品

B: 唔人地買十件衫，可能我買少 D，買一件咁樣囉

M: 系同朋友分享個陣，朋友既反應會係點？會唔會正面？

B: 有反應，但係冇負面反應。同埋我唔理佢地反應，因為可能佢當下未有感受，但係之後會突然有感覺，所以就算佢地回應比較冷淡都唔會減低我講既意欲，因為我覺得呢個係一個對天父既一個責任。有時呀媽話乜你咁傻既，但係我都唔會影響到我。其實身邊朋友都係好善良，有所感動或者話會諗諗助養。

M: 朋友既支持會唔會係你持續既一個因素？

B: 都可以咁講啦，但係其實我都係一個係有信念既人，就算身邊冇人支持都會繼續架，因為其實我身邊冇乜人一齊助養，不過我死講死講

同埋我自己會堅持，唔會受人地影響，人地會話儲銭去旅行，我唔係為旅行囉，我起碼會

KEEP 左呢$220 先再諗其他囉

M: 啥點解會有咁既堅持既？
B: 因為都係一個字：神，神是愛嘛

M: 啥你除左助養小朋友，仲會唔會有其他既慈善行為呢？

B: 其實挪亞方舟都係香港建立左年幾，𠮶個度都有 D 導賞員既 COURSE 係義工黎既，
但係要俾錢去讀既，咁就讀完啦，可以做導賞員，我都會間中入去幫手下講解。

咁而家都有 FACEBOOK，咁係一種聯繫黎既，咁我都會透過呢個平台去分享，當中都有
D 朋友係唔同機構，咁如果有時間都可能會去幫手做下義工

M: 啥你呢兩年入面有冇諗過想停？

B: 冇嘅，雖然我冇比較過其他機構，但因為我覺得呢個計劃既金額其實已經係好少既付
出架啦，如果咁都卻步就好大藉口囉

M: 啥你呢兩年有咩感覺或者得著呢？

B: 起碼我覺得自己做過少少野，唔係得個講字，咁祈禱係有用，但亦要做一 D 實質既野，俾
人去感受啱，我會覺得我咁做，天父係會加分架。同埋別人都開心，我亦都會開心啱。香港
人年輕既女仔都貪靚，我成日都會咁講，衫可以成櫃都係，但係買少一兩件衫可以幫到人，
令到佢生活有改善，我覺得真係好值得。會加強左，自己唔係剩係講，亦係會做既，想咁樣
去感染人。
## APPENDIX IV: TABLES OF SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS AND THEMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant statements</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt happy when I received the letters, hand drawings or photos from my sponsored children. This good feeling can reduce my pressure.</td>
<td>Sponsors have gains and/or losses when helping others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After joining this program, I think my life is more meaningful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a tangible benefit for the beneficiary. This program can help the child to be self sufficient or self-supporting via education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think it is a small favor for helping others. So I am willing to sacrifice my benefits to help the needy children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regard my sponsored child as a family relationship or a friendship</td>
<td>Sponsors want to establish a close relationship with their sponsored children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would actively send letters or little gifts to my sponsored child during special holidays such as Christmas or Chinese Lunar New Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish to receive the personal letters or hand drawings from my sponsored child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want to only donate money to my sponsored children, but also want to be concerned about the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant statements</td>
<td>Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I didn’t actively share it with my family or friends after joining this program.</td>
<td>Sponsoring a child is a personal decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before making the decision of joining this child sponsorship program, I hadn’t asked my</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family and friends for advice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I earn a higher salary in the future, I will be willing to sponsor one more children</td>
<td>Joining a child sponsorship program is positively associated with the level of sponsors’ financial conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main concern is the financial condition. I found it difficult to donate $180 per</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>month and I wanted to give up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer sponsoring Chinese children because of the relations, culture and distance.</td>
<td>Sponsors tend to help the beneficiaries who are relatively similar to themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although the charity helped me to do the translation of the letter, it’s not a direct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily communicate with the older sponsored children because they know how to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>express themselves in writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining a child sponsorship program with my friend is a good motivation for me to insist</td>
<td>The motivation of joining a child sponsorship program is associated with peer influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on donating money to the sponsored children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shared the information to my sponsoring partner when I receive the letters from our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sponsored children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We encourage each other not to go shopping and not to have dinner outside. Then we can</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>save more money to help our sponsored children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>