

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The previous chapter clarified the subjects, materials, and relevant procedure employed in obtaining and analyzing the data. This chapter presents the data collected from the sample size of 300 Thai AFS participants between 2006 and 2007 with 150 from each hosting category: English speaking and non-English speaking countries. The findings were interpreted to form conclusions related to participants' satisfaction with their experience. The chapter begins with descriptive statistics. The data were examined and analyzed to indicate if there were statistically significant differences in the participants' satisfaction with the program based on the subjects' hosting countries residential area in Thailand and the level of expectations. The purpose of this study was to examine the degree of satisfaction with AFS exchange program of the Thai students placed in English speaking and non-English speaking countries. The results of the study collected from the questionnaires of 300 respondents can be presented based on the objectives of the study previously explained in Chapter 1.

After SPSS Version 12.0 processed all the data collection, results were shown. The analysis was divided into 4 parts:

4.1 Participants' General Information

4.2 Participants' Satisfaction with the program in three consecutive phases:

4.2.1 Preparatory Stage

4.2.2 During the Program

4.2.3 At the End of the Program

4.3 Participants' Suggestions for Program Improvements

4.4 Testing Hypotheses

4.1 PARTICIPANTS' GENERAL INFORMATION

Demographic information of the respondents is presented in the form of numbers and percentages in Tables 1-5.

Gender

Table 2 shows that 82% of the respondents were female, almost 5 times that of the male respondents.

Table 2 Gender

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Female | 246 | 82.0 |
| Male | 54 | 18.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 |

Residential Area in Thailand

Table 3 Residential Area in Thailand

| | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Bangkok and its nearby provinces | 171 | 57.0 |
| Other provinces | 129 | 43.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 |

From Table 3, 57% of the study subjects live in Bangkok and its adjacent neighboring provinces including Nakhon Prathom, Nonthaburi, Prathum Thani, Samut Prakarn and Samut Sakhon, whereas the remaining of 43% live in other provinces.

Levels of Expectations

Table 4 Levels of Expectations

| Areas of Expectations | Levels of Expectations | | | | | X | SD | Degree of Expectations |
|---|------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----|----------|-------------|------|------------------------|
| | Very High | High | Medium | Low | Very Low | | | |
| 1. To gain language skills (Foreign Language Appreciation and Ability) | 76.0% 228 | 23.0% 69 | 1.0% 3 | - | - | 4.75 | .458 | Very High |
| 2. Occasions to experience different things in your life (Opportunities) | 27.0% 81 | 72.0% 216 | 1.0% 3 | - | - | 4.26 | .463 | Very High |
| 3. To share your Thai identity with others (Awareness and Appreciation of Home Country) | 22.0% 66 | 66.0% 198 | 12.0% 36 | - | - | 4.10 | .577 | High |

(table continues)

Table 3 continues

| Areas of Expectations | Level of Expectations | | | | | X | SD | Degree of Expectations |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|-----|----------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
| | Very High | High | Medium | Low | Very Low | | | |
| 4. To be able to change yourself to deal with new environments successfully (Adaptabilities) | 29.0% 87 | 50.0% 100 | 21.0% 63 | - | - | 4.08 | .706 | High |
| 5. To be more self-assured of success when dealing with situations by using your own abilities (Self-confidence) | 22.0% 66 | 61.0% 183 | 17.0% 51 | - | - | 4.05 | .626 | High |
| 6. To learn and understand more about other cultures (Awareness and appreciation of Host Country) | 24.0% 72 | 55.0% 165 | 21.0% 63 | - | - | 4.03 | .674 | High |
| 7. To be able to behave yourself in a sensible way like an adult (Personal Growth and Maturity) | 23.0% 69 | 50.0% 150 | 27.0% 81 | - | - | 3.96 | .710 | High |
| 8. To be able to behave properly and make the right decisions without a need to be monitored or controlled (Independence and Responsibility) | 11.0% 33 | 66.0% 198 | 23.0% 69 | - | - | 3.88 | .573 | High |
| 9. To be able to listen to and consider other people's ideas and suggestions willingly (Open-Mindedness) | 11.0% 33 | 45.0% 135 | 44.0% 132 | - | - | 3.67 | .667 | High |
| Total | | | | | | 4.09 | .266 | High |

Table 4 indicates that in the nine areas of expectations measured, only two levels of expectations were rated as: high and very high. The respondents had *very high* expectations in two areas: obtaining language skills (4.75) and experiencing different things in their life (4.26). Meanwhile, the other seven areas are at a *high* level of expectation.

How the Participants found out about the Program

Table 5 Channels of Information Participants found out about the Program

| Channels of Information | Frequency |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Through my school | 279 |
| 2. From a friend / an acquaintance | 155 |

(table continues)

Table 5 continues

| Channels of Information | Frequency |
|---|------------------|
| 3. From AFS web site | 114 |
| 4. Through AFS Chapters | 81 |
| 5. My parents have known AFS since they were teenagers | 78 |
| 6. A member of the family previously participated in an AFS program | 75 |
| 7. Previous participation in AFS as a host family | 72 |
| 8. My parents heard about AFS at work | 48 |
| 9. From media: press, radio, TV | 42 |

*Note Respondents marked more than once.

From Table 5, with all applicable items marked, the most frequent channel from which the respondents found out about the program was through their schools (279). The least frequent channel was via media (42). Pocket books on AFS experience by AFS returnees, AFS Newsletter, and AFS returnees in persons were specified as other channels from which the respondents learned about the program.

Applying for similar Program

Table 6 Percentage of Participants' Applying for Similar Program

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| No | 204 | 68.0 |
| Yes | 96 | 32.0 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 |

Table 6 reveals that 68% of the respondents applied merely for AFS program. The remaining (32%) applied for alternative organizations, namely, Youth for Understanding Program (YFU), Youth Exchange and Study Program (YES), AYC Intercultural Programs Thailand (AYC), and Universal Cultural Exchange Thailand (UCE).

Reasons for Choosing AFS

Table 7 Participants' Reasons for Choosing AFS

| Reasons | Frequency |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Good reputation and visibility | 278 |
| 2. Well recommended by the people affiliated to AFS, including schools and other educational organizations | 253 |
| 3. Records of successful AFS returnees | 225 |
| 4. Well recognized as a voluntary and non-profit Organization | 162 |
| 5. High standard of service and operational system | 138 |

*Note Respondents marked more than once.

Table 7 indicates the first 3 reasons why the respondents chose AFS for their experience as good reputation and visibility, recommendation from people affiliated with AFS, and records of AFS successful returnees (278, 253, and 225).

4.2 PARTICIPANTS SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRAM

4.2.1) Preparatory Stage

Table 8 Participants' Satisfaction with Information and Documentation Arrangement

Level of Satisfaction: Information and Documentation Arrangement

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|--|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------|-------------------|------|------|------------------------|
| 1. AFS took good care of necessary documents including visa and other papers required from host country in a timely manner. | 76.0% 228 | 23.0% 69 | 1.0% 3 | - | - | 4.33 | .533 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 2. AFS had arranged all necessary documents including visa application and other papers required from host country. | 36.0% 108 | 61.0% 183 | 3.0% 9 | - | - | 4.31 | .533 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 3. The materials provided including handouts, brochures and guidebooks helped you get settled after arriving in your host country. | 5.0% 15 | 80.0% 240 | 15.0% 45 | - | - | 3.90 | .438 | Satisfied |
| 4. Apart from regular information, AFS also provided other information involving the program requested. | 7.0% 21 | 72.0% 216 | 21.0% 63 | - | - | 3.86 | .513 | Satisfied |
| 5. AFS provided adequate information about host country before your departure. | 2.0% 6 | 66.0% 198 | 32.0% 96 | - | - | 3.70 | .503 | Satisfied |
| 6. You received necessary information in a timely manner. | 4.0% 12 | 57.0% 171 | 39.0% 117 | - | - | 3.65 | .557 | Satisfied |

(table continues)

Table 8 continues

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|---|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 7. AFS provided adequate details about host family, host country and host school before your departure. | 2.0% 6 | 41.0% 123 | 57.0% 171 | - | - | 3.45 | .539 | Satisfied |
| Total | | | | | | 3.88 | .340 | Satisfied |

Table 8 shows the respondents' overall satisfaction with the preparation provided by AFS Thailand at a satisfactory level (3.88). The participants were strongly satisfied with the timeliness of the documentation arrangement (4.33) and the service during the process of documentation arrangement (4.31). The least satisfied area was adequate details of host family, host community and host school provided before the respondents' departure (3.45).

*Table 9 Participants' Satisfaction with Orientation Program***Level of Satisfaction: Orientation Programs**

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|--|----------------|--------------|-------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|------|---------------------------|
| 1. You are happy with the AFS returnees' help at the Pre-Departure Camp. | 54.0% 162 | 41.0% 123 | 5.0% 15 | - | - | 4.49 | .595 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 2. You are happy with the activities organized at the Pre-Departure Camp. | 45.0% 135 | 46.0% 138 | 9.0% 27 | - | - | 4.36 | .644 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 3. You are happy with the AFS returnees' help at the General Orientation. | 27.0% 81 | 62.0% 186 | 11.0% 33 | - | - | 4.16 | .598 | Satisfied |
| 4. Overall you are satisfied with the orientation programs organized by AFS. | 14.0% 42 | 78.0% 234 | 8.0% 24 | - | - | 4.06 | .468 | Satisfied |

(table continues)

Table 9 continues

Level of Satisfaction: Orientation Programs

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|--|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 5. You found that the information and preparatory activities provided at all orientations were helpful for the beginning of your AFS experience. | 8.0% 24 | 82.0% 246 | 10.0% 30 | - | - | 3.98 | .426 | Satisfied |
| 6. At AFS orientations, you received necessary information for the beginning of your AFS experience. | 5.0% 15 | 80.0% 240 | 15.0% 45 | - | - | 3.90 | .438 | Satisfied |
| 7. The information provided at all orientations was useful for the beginning of your AFS experience. | 6.0% 18 | 74.0% 222 | 20.0% 60 | - | - | 3.86 | .493 | Satisfied |
| 8. You are happy with the activities organized at the Departure Orientation at the bank. | 7.0% 21 | 51.0% 153 | 42.0% 126 | - | - | 3.65 | .609 | Satisfied |
| Total | | | | | | 3.99 | .361 | Satisfied |

According to Table 9, the respondents were satisfied with the overall orientation programs organized by AFS (3.99). The activities involving the returnees' assistance were strongly satisfied with by the respondents, i.e. the returnees' help at the Pre-Departure Camp (4.49) and the activities at the Pre-departure Camp (4.36). The activities organized at the Pre-Departure Camp and the General Orientation were given different scores (4.36 and 3.79). The respondents were least satisfied with the program information provided at the General Orientation and the activities organized at the Departure Orientation at the bank (3.73 and 3.65).

4.2.2) During the Program

Table 10 Participants' Satisfaction with Support from AFS

Level of Satisfaction: Support from AFS

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|---|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 1. Any problem during your stay was appropriately handled by AFS people. | 15.0% 45 | 64.0% 192 | 21.0% 63 | - | - | 3.93 | .590 | Satisfied |
| 2. Overall, you are happy with the support from AFS during the program. | 12.0% 36 | 67.0% 201 | 21.0% 63 | - | - | 3.90 | .560 | Satisfied |
| 3. In your host country, it's not difficult to contact your local contact persons. | 7.0% 21 | 41.0% 123 | 50.0% 150 | 2.0% 6 | - | 3.51 | .643 | Satisfied |
| 4. You were contacted by your volunteer contact person or someone from AFS in your host country in a timely manner. | 7.0% 21 | 39.0% 117 | 52.0% 156 | 2.0% 6 | - | 3.50 | .644 | Satisfied |
| 5. The orientation events in your host country were useful for your AFS experience. | 4.0% 12 | 43.0% 129 | 53.0% 159 | - | - | 3.49 | .559 | Satisfied |
| Total | | | | | | 3.67 | .512 | Satisfied |

Table 10 represents the respondents' satisfaction with the support from AFS during the program. The least satisfactory area was the orientation events in their host countries (3.49). Meanwhile, the most satisfactory area was the handling of problems occurring during the program (3.93).

Table 11 Participants' Satisfaction with Hosting Milieu

Level of Satisfaction: Hosting Milieu

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|--|----------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------------|-------------|------|---------------------------|
| 1. At host school, your classmates were nice and friendly. | 76.0% 228 | 23.0% 69 | 1.0% 3 | - | - | 4.75 | .458 | Strongly Satisfied |

(table continues)

Table 11 continues

Level of Satisfaction: Hosting Milieu (Continued)

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|---|----------------|--------------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 2. You were happy with your host school. | 60.0% 180 | 36.0% 108 | 4.0% 12 | - | - | 4.55 | .575 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 3. You were happy with your host family. | 47.0% 141 | 52.0% 156 | 1.0% 3 | - | - | 4.45 | .520 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 4. Your host family treated you like one of the family members. | 46.0% 138 | 50.0% 150 | 4.0% 12 | - | - | 4.41 | .570 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 5. The teachers were helpful. | 40.0% 120 | 58.0% 174 | 2.0% 6 | - | - | 4.38 | .528 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 6. You were happy with your host community. | 30.0% 90 | 66.0% 198 | 4.0% 12 | - | - | 4.25 | .520 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 7. People in your host community were nice and friendly. | 29.0% 87 | 66.0% 198 | 5.0% 15 | - | - | 4.23 | .529 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Total | | | | | | 4.43 | .389 | Strongly Satisfied |

Table 11 points out that the respondents were strongly satisfied with the hosting milieu in all aspects (4.43). Host school with nice and friendly classmates had the highest score of 4.75.

4.2.3) At the end of the Program

Table 12 Participants' Satisfaction with Program Achievements

Level of Satisfaction: Program Achievements

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|---|----------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------------|------|------|------------------------|
| 1. You can communicate in your host country's language comfortably. (Language Appreciation and Abilities) | 90.0% 270 | 10.0% 30 | - | - | - | 4.90 | .302 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 2. You are proud to be Thai. (Awareness and Appreciation of Home County) | 81.0% 243 | 19.0% 57 | - | - | - | 4.80 | .402 | Strongly Satisfied |

(table continues)

Table 12 continues

Level of Satisfaction: Program Achievements (Continued)

| Description | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | X | SD | Degree of Satisfaction |
|--|----------------|--------------|-----------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 3. You are satisfied with the opportunities to experience new and different things in your life. (Opportunities) | 79.0% 237 | 21.0% 63 | - | - | - | 4.79 | .409 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 4. You feel more comfortable when taking part in activities or dealing with unexpected situations. (Self-confidence) | 74.0% 222 | 26.0% 78 | - | - | - | 4.74 | .441 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 5. You feel more comfortable when being in new environments. (Adaptabilities) | 68.0% 204 | 32.0% 96 | - | - | - | 4.68 | .469 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 6. You realize and accept the differences between your host country and your home country without negative feelings. (Awareness and Appreciation of Host County) | 61.0% 183 | 39.0% 117 | - | - | - | 4.60 | .492 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 7. You know how to behave yourself in a sensible way like an adult. (Personal Growth and Maturity) | 60.0% 180 | 39.0% 117 | 1.0% 3 | - | - | 4.58 | .516 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 8. You can accept other people's ideas or the way the things are without negative feelings or being against them. (Open-mindedness) | 57.0% 171 | 43.0% 129 | - | - | - | 4.57 | .498 | Strongly Satisfied |
| 9. You can behave yourself in accordance with rules and regulations without a need to be controlled or monitored. (Independence and Responsibility) | 48.0% 144 | 51.0% 153 | 1.0% 3 | - | - | 4.47 | .521 | Strongly Satisfied |
| Total | | | | | | 4.68 | .316 | Strongly Satisfied |

Table 12 signifies the respondents' satisfaction at the strongly satisfactory level in all areas of program achievements (4.68). The language appreciation and

abilities received the highest score of 4.90. The ability in behaving oneself in accordance with rules and regulations without being monitored, albeit being strongly satisfied, received the lowest score of 4.47.

4.3 PARTICIPANTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

The respondents' answers to the open-ended questions for suggestions on program improvements were summarized as follows:

What could AFS Thailand do to improve the current services provided?

- Most of the responses suggested AFS Thailand provide sufficient details of host family, host community and host school at least 3 weeks prior to the participants' departure to enable proper personal preparation.
 - Late placement and delayed departure should be remedied.
 - AFS style of communication, a long and redundant process, should be developed.
 - A practical guidebook covering all possible preparation subjects should be available.
 - A call-center should be set up to accommodate in-coming questions and concerns about the program.

How could AFS Thailand improve the current preparatory programs?

- Cross-cultural issues and hints on getting through them should be intensified at the Pre-Departure Camp. Allotment of more time to hear the experiences of the returnees was also recommended.
 - More and intensive language preparation should be provided to help reduce the language barriers at the beginning of the stay.

4.4 TESTING HYPOTHESES

1. Table 13 presents the test results of hypotheses 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Hypothesis 1 stated that the participants placed in English speaking countries are more satisfied with the AFS exchange program between 2006-2007 than those placed in non-English speaking countries. Likewise, hypotheses 3, 4, and 5, noted that the participants

placed in English speaking countries are more satisfied with the AFS exchange program in particular areas than those placed in non-English speaking category: preparatory programs, supports form AFS, and hosting milieu. Hypothesis 6 claimed that the participants placed in English speaking countries have higher degrees of program achievements than the other group.

Table 13 Test Results of Hypotheses 1,3,4,5 and 6

| Hosting country | English Speaking Countries (n=150) | | Non-English Speaking Countries (n=150) | | t-value | p-value |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| Preparatory Programs | 3.84 | .320 | 4.04 | .288 | -3.314 | .999 |
| Support from AFS | 3.42 | .373 | 3.91 | .516 | -5.463 | 1.000 |
| Hosting Milieu | 4.32 | .366 | 4.54 | .383 | -2.976 | .998 |
| Program Achievements | 4.58 | .329 | 4.78 | .272 | -3.202 | .999 |
| Overall Satisfaction | 4.00 | .244 | 4.26 | .246 | -5.356 | 1.000 |

* $p < 0.05$.

Table 13 shows no statistically significant difference of satisfaction between the participants placed in English speaking and non-English speaking countries in all areas. The results reveal a non-significantly higher satisfaction degree of the participants placed in the non-English speaking countries than those placed in English speaking countries.

- Hypothesis 2 proposed that there is a difference in the degree of satisfaction with the AFS exchange program of 2006-2007 between the participants whose residence is in *Bangkok and its nearby provinces* and those whose residence is in other provinces.

Table 14 Test Results of Hypothesis 2

| Residence | Bangkok and its nearby Provinces (n=171) | | Other Provinces (n=129) | | t-value | p-value |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| Preparatory Programs | 3.89 | .342 | 4.01 | .277 | -1.786 | .077 |
| Support from AFS | 3.59 | .494 | 3.77 | .521 | -1.822 | .072 |
| Hosting Milieu | 4.43 | .374 | 4.43 | .412 | -0.084 | .933 |
| Program Achievements | 4.67 | .314 | 4.70 | .320 | -0.596 | .553 |
| Overall Satisfaction | 4.09 | .270 | 4.18 | .281 | -1.654 | .101 |

* $p < 0.05$.

Table 14 signifies no statistically significant difference of satisfaction with the AFS program between the participants whose residence is in Bangkok and its nearby provinces and those whose residence is in other provinces. The results show a non-significantly higher satisfaction degree of the participants whose residence is in other provinces than those whose residence is in Bangkok and its nearby provinces.

- Hypothesis 7 suggested that the participants with different levels of expectation have different degrees of satisfaction with the program.

As to the statistics of the participants' expectations were rated only at 2 different levels of high and very high in all areas measured (as shown in Table 4), the one-way ANOVA could not be used to test this hypothesis.

In summary, the study shows that there was no significantly difference in the degree of satisfaction with the AFS exchange program between the participants placed in the English speaking countries and those placed in non-English speaking countries in all aspects.

The findings of the study will be summarized and discusses in the next chapter