

**COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISM IN THE
TSHIVHASE AREA,
LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

By

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Abstract

A review of case studies in community-based tourism (CBT) indicates that most initiatives emerged from a rather comprehensive critique of the international tourism industry and were part of the community's movements searching for solutions to the many worrisome impacts generated by increasing mass tourism (Christensen, 2002 & Pleumarom, 2002 & Christ, 1998). These alternative tourism projects were certainly not without problems, but what is important to note is that they were genuinely owned and controlled by local people and their organizations without interference from government, business and international agencies. Commercialisation was seen as the main cause of tourism-related problems, so the motivation was not to establish profitable businesses. Rather, the priority was to expose visitors to the realities of Third World countries and to engender understanding and solidarity for peoples' struggle against injustices and unwanted development schemes. This kind of community attitude is often rooted in tourism developers' and researchers' lack of understanding of community views and perceptions. A literature review revealed that resident perceptions of tourism are an important planning and policy consideration for the successful development, marketing, and operation of existing and future tourism programmes and projects.

The research undertaken for this study aims to provide a better understanding of community perceptions surrounding tourism, as perceived by the residents of the Tshivhase area, a relatively newly established tourism destination in Venda, Limpopo Province, and draws implications for future marketing and sustainable tourism development. The study indicates variables that influenced community perceptions of tourists, tourism and their own cultural heritage and indicates its significance for the study area. It provides insights into community perceptions towards tourists, tourism and their cultural heritage in the tourism context by discussing research findings that were identified in the study area during the field research. Furthermore, the study identifies how the community perceive their own culture in respect to tourists' culture and finally, how they perceive tourism to

influence their own cultural traditions (socio-cultural impacts of tourism). Finally, the study provides guidelines for an appropriate marketing approach for Community-based Tourism (CBT) and indicates the significance of community perceptions for sustainable CBT development.

The semi-structured interviews produced a very large range of responses that were categorised by grouping community members according to their common socio-demographic characteristics. Education, age group and occupation emerged as the most important variables. Community members in the Tshivhase area with similar socio-demographic characteristics in terms of education, age and occupation demonstrate similar perceptions, thus enabling the researcher to draw clear distinctions among them. On the one hand, the findings suggest that there is a high degree of agreement among respondents with regard to the positive economic and socio-cultural impacts of tourism on the area. On the other hand, despite their very favourable disposition towards the industry, respondents recognise the possibility that some negative social effects may ensue, despite their absence in the area thus far. In most cases, however, respondents are convinced that these negative consequences of tourism will not emerge in the area because of certain African practices such as the custodian role of the chief and the strong moral codes and values generally upheld within the community. Another important conclusion is that certain socio-demographic characteristics play an important role in understanding significant perceptual differences between Category A, B and C. The most crucial and explanatory of these were education, age, and occupation. Category B and C in particular demonstrate little understanding of the tourism industry as a result of low levels of education and limited exposure to the tourism industry.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Rural community participation in tourism-based developments has emerged as a major trend throughout the world, but especially in developing countries. It calls for the empowerment of rural communities to participate in their planning and management. The goal is to ensure that local communities have a greater level of control over the effects those tourism developments may have on them and on their environment (Timothy, 2002: 150). The motivation behind the popularity of the approach stems from the dissatisfaction with the centrally driven, top-down type of development that originated during the twentieth century. Moreover, tourism developers have started to realise the need to purposefully involve rural communities to the extent where they effectively and sustainably develop and manage their resources (Maclaren, 1999: 4). This has given rise to Community-based Tourism, or CBT. CBT is “grassroots-empowerment”, which seeks to develop a tourism industry in harmony with the host community’s needs (Timothy, 2002: 150). CBT’s goal is that the community will have substantial control and involvement in the tourism project, and that the majority of benefits will remain in the community. This form of tourism develops in a way acceptable to and controlled by the community, because it sustains their economy and is not as destructive to their cultural traditions and daily existence as other, more aggressive types of tourism might be (Drumm, 1998: 12).

Generally, project designers and managers are convinced that CBT is “good” in principle – even a “miracle” agent for sustainable development, and as a result they assume that communities will welcome the development of CBT (Pleumarom, 2002:1). However, local people who get involved are often kept in the dark, and the lives of thousands are often ruined when the projects fail. As black rural communities undergo a process of socio-cultural change in South Africa, communities’ viewpoints and values also change. Because of changing socio-cultural environments, it is no longer necessarily accurate to assume that all community members value the principles of CBT, or that they welcome tourism development at all. The majority of studies that have investigated community

perceptions of tourism were conducted at a later stage of tourism development. In these case studies, residents' views prior to the initiation of the tourism project were often neglected and as a result the residents experienced a loss of control and determinism over the tourism project. In this study, I argue that the first step in CBT should be to conduct a survey of community perceptions of tourism and then to design tourism strategies that are in line with these perceptions.

During my two years' involvement in the Tshivhase area (Venda) as CBT facilitator, I progressively became more fascinated with the worldviews of the Venda people, but most importantly, I came to realise that a proper understanding of the community's outlook, and their perceptions of tourism, is imperative if CBT is to succeed as a sustainable tool for community upliftment in the area. Conversations with members of the community in the Tshivhase area made me very aware of the divergent, and sometimes surprising, views community members possess regarding tourism development – which to date is still at a relatively early stage. This drew me to investigate how the community in the Tshivhase area perceives tourism, tourists and their cultural representation in a tourism context. I also examined the implications of community perceptions for sustainable tourism development.

2. Study area

2.1 The Tshivhase area

The study area is situated entirely within Venda, a former black 'homeland' under the South African system of apartheid, and now part of the Limpopo Province. The origins and political history of Venda have intrigued generations. Historians and ethnographers alike have been sceptical of using oral tradition in historical reconstructions. Venda history is complex and has become the subject of unending dispute among different parties and dynastic groups that inhabit the territory (Fokwang, 2003: 36; Loubser, 1988: 302). A brief historical overview of the Tshivhase area is outlined below to provide a background of the people under investigation in this study. The description is based on the literature and my own research.

The black people of southern Africa speak languages belonging to the Bantu language family. Despite the unity suggested by linguistic similarities, the Bantu-speaking peoples of Africa exhibit diverse cultural characteristics. Using mainly descent systems as his criterion, Murdock (1959) divided the Bantu-speaking peoples of Africa into three main clusters, namely Equatorial and Interlacustrine Bantu, Central Bantu, and Southern Bantu. According to early ethnographic work in the region, the Bantu-speaking peoples of southern Africa crossed the Limpopo Province in at least four large migrations which gave rise to the principle divisions which are currently recognised in South Africa, namely Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Tsonga and Venda (Bruwer, 1956; Van Warmelo, 1974; Van Wyk, 1966). Each of these consists of two or more subgroups and these in turn may include a number of separate clans. The Venda are generally regarded as the last of the Bantu-speaking groups to enter the region south of the Limpopo River. The descendants of the successive Venda groups (clans) who migrated southward over the Limpopo River from Zimbabwe can roughly be divided into a western group (mainly of Singo origin and descendants of the followers of Mphephu, Senthumule and Khutama), and an eastern group (of Singo, VhaNgoni, MaKhwinde and Vhatavhatsinde origin and descendants of the followers of Lwamondo, Rambuda, Mphaphuli and *Tshivhase*) (Van Warmelo, 1974: 322).

These two groups occupy an area in and around the Soutpansberg Mountains in the northeastern section of South Africa's Limpopo Province (Stayt, 1968). The eastern boundary of this region is formed by the Kruger National Park on the border of Mozambique. To the south is the Tsonga ethnic group. Agricultural farmlands and cattle ranches owned by English and Afrikaans-speaking white South Africans as well as areas inhabited by the Northern Sotho form the western boundary. To the north is the Limpopo River, the international boundary between South Africa and Zimbabwe (Hanisch 2002: 368).

As indicated above, the Venda are not a homogeneous ethnic group, but consist of numerous clans that settled in the Soutpansberg area at various times over the last six hundred years (Stayt, 1968: 9). Oral tradition provides evidence of numerous migrations, mainly of small clans or parts of clans whose names have counterparts

among the Karanga. Three major migrations took place. Two of them (by the Vhatavhatsinde and MaKkwinde groups) occurred early. Upon entering the Soutpansberg area the migrants found that people calling themselves the VhaNgoni were occupying it. The third migration was that of the Singo clan (Hanisch 2002:367). The Singo group crossed the Limpopo River under the leadership of the traditional leader, Dimbanyika and once in Venda they soon dominated the entire region and settled at Tshiendeulu, where the Vhatavhatsinde had established their capital. Dimbanyika placed his sons and other kinsmen as petty traditional leaders throughout the villages and gradually incorporated the other groups under his hegemony. Dimbanyika's reign did not last long and after subjugating the other groups he died in c.1720 (Fokwang, 2003: 37). Although the manner of his death is highly contentious among the Venda, it is undisputed that his oldest son, Phopi, succeeded him and chose to call himself, Thohoyandou (Head of the Elephant), given that his father, the 'elephant', had died. He then moved his capital to Dzata, which today is 'regarded as the ancestral home of the Venda' (Stayt, 1968: 12).

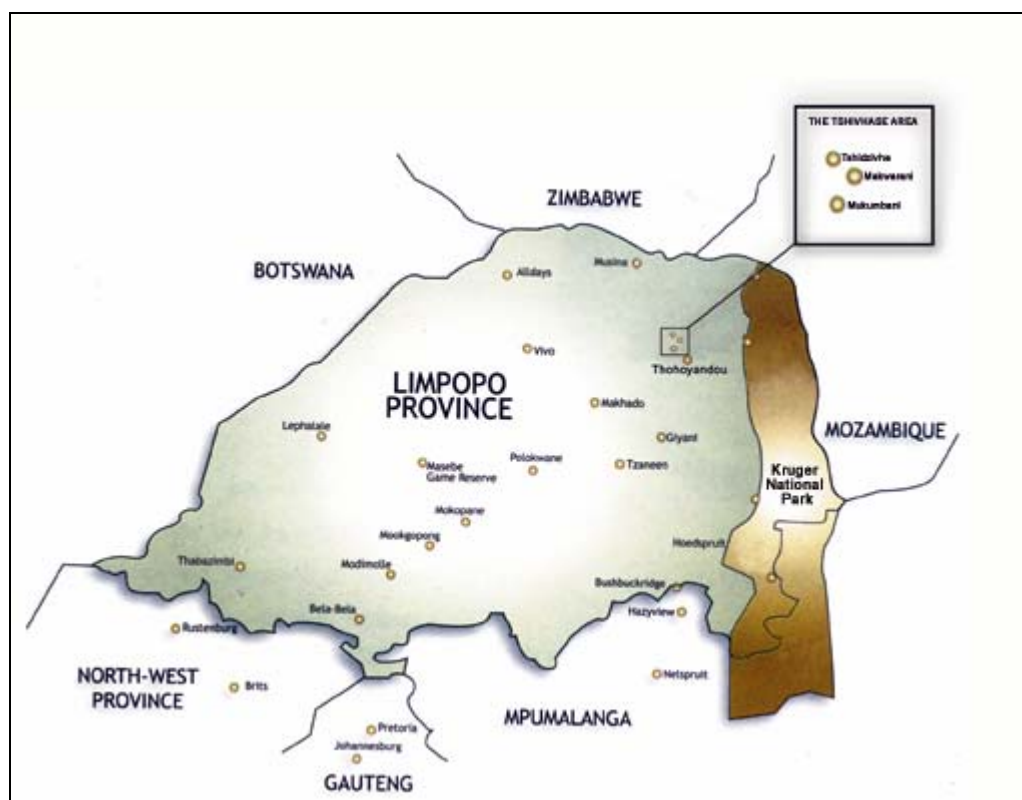
Stayt (1968) has described Thohoyandou's reign as the *golden age* of the Venda. This is because all the traditional leaders were united under his leadership. But after his death family disputes and 'internecine warfare' precipitated the disintegration and division of the kingdom (Fokwang, 2003: 37). Oral tradition holds it that at the time of his death, Dimbanyika had four adult sons of whom Phopi was the oldest. He had appointed them as petty traditional leaders in satellite villages: Phopi (Thohoyandou) ruled in Nzhelele, Tshisebe in Makonde, Tshivhase in Phiphidi, and Bele in Vuba. After Thohoyandou's death the other brothers declared their villages independent of the capital. Although Thohoyandou's son, Tshikalanga was appointed to take over from his father, Venda was already disintegrating into 25 autonomous areas of jurisdiction. This fragmentation was aggravated by the advent of European invaders and colonialists (Stayt, 1968: 15; Fokwang, 2003: 37; Loubser, 1988: 275). Of the several lines of descent of Dimbanyika, the Mphephu and Tshivhase are the most numerous and powerful. Other areas of jurisdiction that were recognised by the colonial and apartheid authorities are the areas of Senthumele, Khuthama and Rambuda (Fokwang, 2003: 37). The Mphaphuli area is the third most populated Venda territory. Its history is highly complex, but this falls outside the particular focus of this study.

This study is limited to a discussion of the Tshivhase dynasty, which is dominant in the eastern section of the Venda territory. After the death of his older brother Thohoyandou, Tshivhase declared himself independent. He became a wealthy and powerful traditional leader and was succeeded by his son, Mukesi Tshivhase (Fokwang, 2003: 38). When Mukesi died, he was succeeded by his son Legegisa, who moved his capital from Liluwani to Mukumbani – the present Tshivhase capital and one of the villages investigated in this study. His son, Ramaremisa Tshivhase succeeded him and was in turn succeeded by Ratshimphi Tshivhase. Ratshimphi was a powerful and wealthy traditional leader, who remains, even today, a legendary figure among the Tshivhase people. Local accounts hold that he resisted Boer encroachment into his territory so resolutely that it cost him his life. In the 1930s, during his reign, Ratshimphi joined the Communist Party and was arrested by the state for fear that he might turn his area of jurisdiction into a communist stronghold. He was incarcerated in Pretoria where he died in 1946 and was succeeded by Thohoyandou Tshivhase (also referred to as Prince Tshivhase), the father of the present senior traditional leader, Kennedy Tshivhase. Although Kennedy Tshivhase was installed in 1970 as heir to the throne of the Tshivhase, his uncle, John Tshivhase was put in place as regent until it was deemed appropriate for Kennedy Tshivhase to assume effective office (Fokwang, 2003: 38-40).

2.2 Mukumbani, Makwarani and Tshidzivhe villages

The study area lies entirely within the Tshivhase area. Of the 25 tribal authorities that make up Venda, Tshivhase is the most populated and largest in-land area. Tshivhase has 74 villages and consequently 74 headmen (Fokwang, 2003: 49). The study area comprises three of these villages, namely Mukumbani, Makwarani and Tshidzivhe that fall under the tribal area of the senior traditional leader, Tshivhase. These three villages were selected for this study, as their inhabitants are involved with the Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp, which forms part of a tourism development concept, the African Ivory Route. Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp is situated in Mukumbani, Kennedy Tshivhase's capital. During 2003 the community, with my assistance, designed a cultural tourist route to present the Venda culture to tourists visiting the camp. All three villages are involved in this route. It is important to note

that it is not within the scope of this study to compare the study results at the three villages. Instead, the study sees Mukumbani, Makwarani and Tshidzivhe as a single entity, referred to as the Tshivhase area, which represents the host community surrounding Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp. In this study, the concept of host community refers to any local resident in the three villages, and not only to service providers or people involved in the tourism trade, as is the case in some studies that deal with host perceptions of tourism (Reisinger, 2003: 162).



Study area

2.3 The African Ivory Route

The African Ivory Route is an initiative of the Limpopo Province Tourism Directorate, which aims to empower and benefit poverty-stricken disadvantaged rural communities in the province through CBT. It also aspires to promote the Limpopo Province as an eco-tourism destination and to create a catalytic effect on CBT development in the province. The product is based on the natural, cultural and

historical assets found primarily along a vast imaginary geographical arch referred to as 'The Golden Horseshoe of Tourism' of the Limpopo Province (The African Ivory Route: n.d.).

The African Ivory Route consists of a series of 12 small camps packaged along the imaginary arch. There are two types of camps, namely tented bush camps at the nature conservation sites and camps built in the style of traditional homesteads at the cultural sites. The product offered at the cultural camps is predominantly based on the cultural resources of that particular community, including some natural features with cultural significance that are attached to them (Directorate Tourism, 2002: 2). Fundudzi-Tshivhase Camp in Venda offers a convenient base camp for short trips to visit Lake Fundudzi, the Sacred Forest, Tshatshingo potholes, Phiphidi waterfalls and many other scenic attractions in the area. Cultural huts provide accommodation. The guided cultural tour provides tourists with the opportunity to experience aspects of Venda lifestyle, such as traditional healing, dances, food production, agriculture, arts and crafts and general social life.

A central controlling body named Community Ecotourism Development Association (CEDA) manages the African Ivory Route, comprising of members of the Limpopo Tourism Board as well as representatives of the communities. Each community that forms part of the African Ivory Route has its own Community Tourism Association (CTA). Two members, one being the chairperson, represent a CTA at CEDA. The villages of Mukumbani, Tshidzivhe and Makwarani are as yet the only three villages represented in the CTA of Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp.

Community characteristics in terms of their cultural, political and historical background, level of tourism development, economic dynamics and community demographics are discussed in chapter 4, as they are factors that can influence a community's perceptions of tourists and tourism.

3. Problem statement

3.1 The identification of community perceptions as a prerequisite for sustainable CBT development

In the past three decades researchers have given increasing attention to the impact of tourism on host communities in tourism destinations. This is in part because the perceptions and attitudes of residents towards tourism are an important planning and policy consideration for the successful development, marketing and operations of existing and future tourism programmes and projects (Ap, 1992: 665). CBT assessment, especially, requires consideration of the political, economic and environmental micro and macroclimate. Project designers and managers, however, are generally convinced that CBT is “good” in principle – or even a “miracle” agent for sustainable development and tend to reject a comprehensive and holistic examination of broader issues. They barely consider precautionary measures before they draw communities into new schemes (Pleumarom, 2002; Christ, 1998; Drumm, 1998; MacLaren, 1999).

The CBT concept, however, requires that the community has substantial control and involvement in the tourism project, and that the majority of benefits remain within the community (Timothy, 2002: 148). I argue that in order to ensure a high level of control and involvement in the tourism project, it is essential to begin with a thorough understanding of how the host community perceives tourism development. This can indicate how interested a particular community ‘really’ is in a proposed tourism project. In response to criticism that projects are imposed without the full consent of communities, defenders of “real ecotourism” ventures point out that they only assist local communities that express interest in getting involved in projects (Pleumarom, 2002: 4). But, as Pleumarom writes, if villagers are so desperate that they even sell their daughters to unscrupulous agents for prostitution, one could certainly expect that they would be “interested” in making a living from tourism – at whatever cost. The real question, therefore, is: If poor rural residents had adequate access to land and natural resources for farming, and were given more freedom to determine and control their own community affairs, would they then still be interested in CBT?

Thus, the identification of community perceptions is an ethical obligation to ensure that the views and needs of the host communities are taken into consideration when tourism-planning policies are formulated and to promote the overall well-being of the community.

Moreover, the identification of community perceptions of tourists is very important for sustainable CBT development, since the way people perceive each other determines the way they are most likely to interact with each other. When there are great cultural dissimilarities between rural communities and tourists – as is the case in CBT in South Africa where Western societies interact with African societies – the probability of negative perceptions of each other is high (Reisinger, 2003: 151). It is critical to develop positive perceptions in the minds of potential visitors and rural communities as this affects the level of tourism satisfaction for both parties. The goal for any development should be to achieve outcomes that deliver the best balance of benefits and costs for both residents and tourists (Graburn, 2002; Ap, 1992: 667). Determining community perceptions of tourism may reveal areas where activities need to be introduced in order to minimise adverse impacts of tourism.

3.2 The need for an appropriate marketing approach for CBT

In recent years numerous tourism facilities, additional infrastructure and attractions have been developed and funded by the South African public and private sector in an attempt to enhance local economic development. Large amounts of money have been spent in Limpopo Province on community-empowerment through the introduction of tourism training programmes (Moloto, 2005). All these initiatives have been implemented, but they can only serve as viable poverty relief mechanisms if tourists visit these destinations. This necessitates the design of an appropriate marketing approach. Practitioners, developers and researchers have given very little attention to the development of an integrated marketing approach for CBT. Walle (1998), Butler *et al* (1996), Godfrey *et al* (2000) and Heath *et al* (1992) conclude in their studies that the current 'mainstream' marketing concept is inappropriate for CBT due to the complex nature of rural communities. They claim that rural communities have unique characteristics and needs and therefore call for a holistic

marketing approach that takes into consideration the needs of all stakeholders, in particular the host community.

The tourism product offered at the Tshivhase area consists predominantly of cultural attractions. Marketing agencies of cultural tourism are often faced with the following question: To what extent should black rural communities developing tourism produce a product tailored for the market, and to what extent should tourists accept community constraints and special conditions? For example, the activities and performances that have “universally” perceived elements of traditional African culture, such as traditional dress and dance, are the easiest to sell and are the most successful because of long established marketing of African cultures by films and advertising (James, 1999: 21; Nash *et al*, 1991: 415). These presentations do not truly reflect the cultural face of South Africa’s many and varied indigenous groups and they certainly do not reflect their modern cultural expression. Tourists therefore develop inaccurate stereotypes of black rural communities. Because of these inaccurate stereotypes, tourists are sometimes disappointed when they see that communities do not appear and behave in the expected way, which can lead to a decrease in satisfaction levels (Echtner *et al*. 1991 & 1993; Fakeye *et al*. 1991). It is imperative to determine whether local communities concur with the way in which they are being marketed to the outside world. Local tourist operators and marketing agencies should not be permitted to simply portray people in terms of the interests of the industry alone.

This requires us to identify how particular communities perceive their own culture, heritage and lifestyle. By extension, how comfortable are they with presenting their cultural traditions to tourists? How do they perceive westernisation and potential cultural impacts of tourism and how would they prefer to be marketed to the outside world? No study appears to have identified whether community members are satisfied with the image created of themselves and their culture. It is not the aim of this study to design a marketing plan for CBT, but merely to outline key aspects that should be taken into consideration when an appropriate marketing plan for CBT is developed.

3.3 Limitations of existing research that deals with community perceptions of tourism

Another justification for this study resides in a silence in the literature dealing with community perceptions in a South African CBT context. As CBT is a relatively new initiative in South Africa, there is scant literature available on perceptions of tourism among black rural communities. Several studies have, however, been undertaken on host perceptions of tourism and tourists in other parts of the world (Ahmed, 1987; Akis *et al*, 1996; Alexander, 2000; Allen *et al* 1988; Andereck *et al* 2000; Andriotis, 2000 & 2002; Ap, 1990 & 1992; Johnson, 1994; Jones, 2000; Korca, 1996 & 1998; Lankford, 1991 & 1994; Lea *et al* 1994; Lee *et al* 2003; Lindberg *et al* 1997; Liu *et al* 1986; Long *et al* 1990; MacKay, 1987; Maddox, 1985; Madrigal, 1995; Martin, 1996; Mason *et al* 2000; McCool *et al* 1994; Nash, 1996; Pearce, 1996; Reisinger, 2003; Robinson *et al* 1999). These studies primarily examine the host's perceptions of the social impacts of tourism. Indeed, host perceptions of tourists have been studied more frequently than the tourists' impressions of their hosts (Reisinger, 2003: 158), but significant gaps are revealed in the literature, which this study attempts to address.

Firstly, there is a major conceptual problem in their analysis of host perceptions (Ap 1990 & 1992). There is a discrepancy in defining the concept of hosts. Some studies refer to hosts as host communities, residents or local residents, others as service providers and people in the tourism trade. Additionally, the concepts of *attitude*, *attribution*, *imaging* and *perception* have been used interchangeably, often mistakenly. Many researchers do not acknowledge the differences between the various concepts. Secondly, many studies are concerned only with perceptions in developed economies (Lea *et al* 1994; Lee *et al* 2003; Lindberg *et al* 1997; Liu *et al* 1986; Long *et al* 1990; MacKay, 1987; Maddox, 1985; Madrigal, 1995; Martin, 1996; Mason *et al* 2000; McCool *et al* 1994), and thus little is known about perceptions among black rural communities in developing countries, such as the Tshivhase area. Thirdly, most of these studies have been undertaken on community *attitudes* rather than community *perceptions* (the difference between these two concepts is described in the next chapter). In contrast to this study, they were predominantly concerned with communities exposed to a later stage of the tourism area life cycle (a

description of the tourism area lifecycle is outlined in chapter 4). Fourthly, most of the research is descriptive in nature and focuses on differences in perceptions – with little attention being paid to explanations of these differences (Ap, 1992: 666). Fifthly, most of these studies focus on hosts' perceptions of tourism impacts (cf. Brunt *et al* 1999; Haralambopoulos *et al* 1996; Dogan, 1989; King *et al* 1993; Tosun, 2002; Tsartas, 1992; Mason *et al* 2000; Korca, 1996), tourism development options (Andereck *et al* 2000; Johnson *et al* 1994; Perdue *et al* 1990), and the role of the government (Madrigal, 1995). But very little has been offered on hosts' conception and perception of the tourism industry at large, such as tourists, attractions, the CBT concept, and the marketing of their culture.

When research findings have been ascribed to one community in particular, it is inappropriate to generalise these to include other communities, because community characteristics differ from one region to the next (De Vos *et al* 2002: 436). The field-work undertaken for this study can therefore be considered groundbreaking research of a black rural community's perceptions of tourism in South Africa, given that this particular community's characteristics differ from communities elsewhere in the world, particularly those in developed countries.

4. Objectives

The objectives for this study are to:

- Provide a better understanding of community perceptions of tourists, tourism and their cultural heritage in a tourism context, by discussing research findings that were identified in the Tshivhase area during the field research.
- Explain variables that influenced community perceptions of tourists, tourism and their own cultural heritage, and to indicate its significance in the study area.
- Provide guidelines for an appropriate marketing approach for CBT and to indicate the implications of community perceptions for sustainable CBT development.

5. Structure of the study

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the study by explaining the rationale for the study, providing a description of the study area, indicating the research methodology and outlining the aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2 explains the key concept of the study, namely perception. In addition, attitude, attribution and imaging are defined in order to clarify what these concepts imply and to indicate why I have chosen to use perception and not attitude, attribution and imaging in this study. The chapter also discusses concepts that deal with host perceptions of tourism and serves as a background foundation for chapter 3.

Chapter 3 describes the community's conception and perception of tourists, tourism, and their cultural heritage in a tourism context as identified in the Tshivhase area during field research.

Chapter 4 explains why community members perceive tourism in the way they do by focusing on variables that influenced the manifestation of community perceptions in the Tshivhase area. This chapter reviews variables that were identified in previous studies as well as research findings. It also includes an investigation of unique factors associated with the Venda culture that influenced perceptions in this study.

Chapter 5 explains research findings that were identified in chapter 4. It suggests guidelines to be considered in the design of an appropriate marketing strategy for CBT and also indicates key issues pertaining to community perceptions of tourism that emerged during the preceding chapters. These issues relate to the community's expectations for tourism development in their area and also highlight measures that should be considered to ensure the development and maintenance of positive community perceptions of tourism.

6. Research strategy

6.1 Research approach

Most research on community perceptions of tourism has been extremely quantitative. Ap (1990) hopes that the over use of statistical techniques to analyse community perceptions may possibly lead some researchers to consider other alternative techniques in future. Attempting to measure the social attributes of tourism provides a formidable challenge to researchers. Tourism needs to forcefully articulate, in a general and universal way, that it is a broad and distinct field and that it embraces a variety of appropriate research strategies (Walle, 1998: 535). The choice of qualitative or quantitative approaches must be determined by the specific research goals and the situation in which research takes place (Simpson, 1993: 179).

In this study I have chosen to follow a qualitative approach to identify community perceptions in the Tshivhase area. Qualitative research evaluates what kinds of things people do, what kinds of processes are at work and what kinds of meanings are constructed. It examines what kinds of purposes and goals influence the way in which participants act, and what kind of problems, constraints and contingencies they see in the worlds they occupy (Guy *et al* 1987: 256). The emphasis, in other words, is placed on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency (Denzin *et al* 2000: 8).

The nature of this study is descriptive as it identifies community perceptions of tourism and then uses this description to suggest implications for sustainable tourism development. This approach is best served by qualitative research taking into consideration that the majority of community members in the Tshivhase area are illiterate and respond better to broad conversation than to questionnaires. Qualitative research is also preferable because identifying the perceptions of people (their social perceptions) is extremely complex. By extension, it was found to be the most appropriate method for obtaining, in a particular community, an in-depth

understanding of perceptions that haven't yet been investigated. The study therefore qualitatively describes the ways in which the community perceives tourism in their environment and does not measure or compare individual responses statistically. Social perceptions differ from the perceptions of physical objects and are more difficult to measure. The perception of objects is directed at surface characteristics, which are immediately observable, such as size, mass, or volume – quantities. The perception of people, on the other hand, is concerned with characteristics which are not immediately observable, but must be inferred – such as intelligence and attitude (Reisinger, 2003: 157-158; Walle, 1998: 534). When research is more qualitative, the skills, training, intuition and insights of the researcher must be more acute (Walle, 1998: 532; Denzin *et al* 2000: 45). I interacted with community members in the area for two years prior to conducting this research project, and as a result became acquainted with community characteristics in the study area, which made qualitative work, not only desirable, but also feasible.

6.2 Data gathering techniques

Participant observation is probably the best-known technique of field research, and it has been most popular with sociologists and social psychologists working within the paradigm of symbolic interaction (Guy *et al* 1987: 289). This methodology is also called, variously, participant observation, field observation, qualitative observation, direct observation, or field research (Guy *et al* 1987: 260). The classic meaning of the term refers to a researcher entering a setting he or she wants to study and actually participating in the very scene he or she is observing, analysing, and writing about. The research is characterised by a period of intense social interaction between the researcher and subjects, in the milieu of the latter (Guy *et al* 1987: 290; Schwandt, 1997: 110). As a result of my involvement in the study area for two years, I developed a good relationship with many people in the study area. In the case of this study, participant observation can be seen as the most valuable research technique that enabled me to “intuitively” comprehend the “world view” of the group under investigation.

In the latter stages of the field research process, a qualitative non-schedule-structured in-depth personal interview, as defined by Frankfort-Nachmias *et al*

(1992), was identified as the most favourable research methodology to identify community perceptions about more specific aspects of tourism. This method was preferred above questionnaire-based surveys due to the high level of illiteracy among community members in the study area and because of the difficulty of measuring objective social perception, as indicated earlier.

During the field research I spent long periods interacting with the community by participating in conversations about tourism, tourists and presentation of the Venda culture in a tourism context. I recorded research findings briefly after each interview. The pre-condition of the community members in the study area required such an approach as the majority of community members had no previous interaction with researchers and as a result were quite unfamiliar with the research process, especially in the case of older community members. Conversations were restricted to one person per day since the individual's conceptions and perceptions tended to change in the course of a conversation as the individual became familiar with, and more informed about, the research topic.

A local research assistant from each village was identified who accompanied me throughout the course of the field research. They acted as translators, and also provided me with additional insight on community characteristics that influence their perceptions. I have improved my Venda language skills during the past two years, but nevertheless made use of local translators to optimise the accuracy of research findings. All interviews were conducted personally in order to ensure credibility of research findings. Walle (1998: 532) supports such an approach by stating that research credibility might be sacrificed during qualitative research if authority and research tasks are delegated to low level associates and that "although scientific methods can be taught, the 'artistic' insight is unteachable and unscheduleable". Conversations were held on an individual basis, rather than in focus groups, as the latter cause community members to influence one another's responses through peer pressure.

The interviews conducted in the Tshivhase area solicited community perceptions of tourism, tourists and the presentation of their culture in a tourism context. The interviews also sought information from respondents on a number of socio-

demographic variables to determine the relationship between these variables and their significance to the study area. Interviews were therefore conducted with respondents from different spheres of life - differentiating between age group, level of education and occupation. These variables are among several suggested in the literature (Ap, 1990; Johnson *et al* 1994; Lindberg *et al* 1997; Madrigal, 1995; Mason *et al*, 2000; Smith *et al* 1998; Teye *et al* 2002), and appeared, *a priori*, to be directly relevant to the Tshivhase area. The selection of a diverse sample was made possible with the help of local research assistants and as a result of my involvement in the Tshivhase area.

The diverse sample produced a very large range of responses that were categorised by grouping respondents according to a set of variables that united respondents who think a certain way about tourists and tourism. Respondents in the Tshivhase area with similar socio-demographic characteristics in terms of age, education and occupation demonstrated similar perceptions, which enabled me to draw distinctions among them. Brunt *et al* (1999) originally developed this process. Responses were grouped into three categories during field research and were then re-read and re-analysed to ensure that they were appropriate in their respective categories. There are three key aspects that may influence the categorisation of community perceptions in this regard. Firstly, perceptions are highly selective and limited to one person or one situation only in the specific context in which social interaction takes place. Secondly, perceptions are often categorised, that is, grouping people or objects according to their common characteristics, which allows drawing distinctions among them. Thirdly, sharp distinctions between categories inhibit the development of accurate perceptions (Reisinger, 2003: 150). Even though we categorise community perceptions, it is important to bear in mind that perceptions are highly selective and limited to individuals, and therefore we find heterogeneous variations within the categories. The three categories can be described as follows.

Category A –This category comprises of community members who are directly involved in the tourism industry. They may be members of the CTA, African Ivory Route employees, or local tourism service providers, all of whom rely on the tourism industry as a source of income. Members of the CTA and African Ivory Route employees demonstrate differences in their perceptions, since the latter comprises

younger people who are apt to live a modern lifestyle, whereas the former tend to live in a more conventional Venda way. The people in this category are mostly between 20 and 50 years old and reside in areas that are relatively accessible to tourists. These people have a relatively high level of education (at least grade 12) and, importantly, have received some sort of tourism training. African Ivory Route employees have undergone formal in-depth tourist guiding courses, whereas CTA members attended general tourism awareness training that provided them with an overview of the tourism industry. They have a relatively high level of tourist-host interaction, in particular African Ivory Route employees. It is important to keep in mind that they have a high level of tourist-host interaction for a community that is between the initial exploration phase and involvement phase of the tourism area life cycle. They still have a relatively low level of tourist-host interaction compared to communities elsewhere, such as those in Cape Town or the Kruger National Park, who are involved in the development, consolidation, or stagnation phase of the tourism area life cycle. (The tourism area life cycle will be discussed in chapter 4.)

Category B – This category consists of community members who are not directly involved in the tourism industry, and as a result do not directly rely on the tourism industry as a source of income. They have a relatively high level of education (at least grade 10) and are currently or previously employed in sectors other than tourism, such as education or healthcare. Community members have a relatively high awareness of developments and trends in the macro environment, either through media or former job opportunities in urban areas. People in this category also reside in areas that are relatively accessible to tourists, but have low levels of tourist-host interaction. Their ages range between 16 and 65 years. In some cases, they overlap with the Category A in terms of age group – the major distinction here is that they are not directly involved in the tourism industry.

Category C – This category includes community members who are mostly older than 65 and reside in isolated and inaccessible areas. They have a low level of education (average grade four), a very low level of tourist-host interaction and are still anchored in their traditional beliefs and activities. The majority of people in this category seldom leave their village and therefore have a low awareness of developments and trends in the macro environment. A higher number of elderly

women than men fall in this category, since women used to stay at home to fulfil their traditional activities during the apartheid years while men often went to the cities in search of job opportunities. Perceptions among these community members are very important to identify, since they are people almost entirely anchored in their traditional ways – making their involvement in cultural tourism ideal. Predictably they are also the candidates most sensitive to new developments in the area.

I did not settle on a predetermined sample size, but instead investigated respondents' perceptions until I was confident that research findings accurately reflected the community's perceptions. This resulted in 10 respondents from each category being interviewed, excluding informal interviews that were conducted at random during the past two years. Justification of the sample size was also partially based on pragmatic criteria suggested by Brunt *et al* (1999). In short, it was felt that this number provides sufficient data given the method and in the context of an exploratory study. During the final stages of the field research, findings were discussed with various community members in the respective categories in order to investigate whether they concurred with the perceptions I had identified. This method, referred to as perception checking, consists of three processes: describing others' behaviour, telling others one's own interpretation of others' behaviour, and asking others if one's own perceptions are accurate (Reisinger, 2003: 150-151). In order to ascertain the significance of factors that influence community perceptions in the Tshivhase area, I posed questions to respondents about the perceptions they believe fellow community members possess and the variables they believe to be important in segmenting fellow community members' perceptions. This approach proved very useful during conversations with prominent and educated figures in the villages, such as headmen, CTA members and teachers, because they are knowledgeable about the worldviews of fellow community members as a result of the role that they fulfil in the community.

In most cases, respondents were comfortable to participate in the study. However, two general limitations of the study can be identified in this regard. Firstly, intrafamilial relations in black rural communities, such as the area under consideration, are still governed by relatively strict patterns of patriarchal authority. In some cases I observed that older women did not feel comfortable to converse with

me in the absence of their husbands. Secondly, it was observed that older people in general are less comfortable talking to white people. The headman of Mukumbani confirmed this, saying that “old people in the village take longer to adapt to changes and do not understand tourism,” and that “they are not used to seeing white people and are in general scared to talk to any strangers”. These aspects could have influenced older respondents’ perceptions on some issues.

CHAPTER 2: KEY CONCEPTS PERTAINING TO HOST PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISM

1. Introduction

There is a serious conceptual problem in studies dealing with host perceptions of tourism. Existing studies that deal with the views of a host community often refer to the terms perception, attitude, imaging, attribution and conception. Many researchers have not acknowledged the differences between these concepts and often use them interchangeably (Ap, 1990 & 1992; Reisinger, 2003: 158). This chapter briefly differentiates between the concepts of *perception*, *attitude*, *imaging*, *conception* and *attribution*. Thereafter it explains what the significance of these differences is and also explains why the term perception was favoured over attitude, imaging, conception and attribution for this study.

This chapter also provides a theoretical background to concepts that emerge during the description of community perceptions in the subsequent chapter, namely tourism, socio-economic impacts of tourism, tourist, culture and marketing – the principles of the CBT concept have already been outlined in the previous chapter and as a result do not form part of the discussion here. This chapter highlights the need to identify community perceptions of these concepts, seeing that most existing studies have only investigated community perceptions of tourism impacts (cf. Brunt *et al* 1999; Haralambopoulos *et al* 1996; Dogan, 1989; King *et al.* 1993; Tosun, 2002; Tsartas, 1992; Mason *et al* 2000; Korca, 1996).

2. Perception versus attitudes, conception, imaging and attribution

2.1 Perception

Perception represents the process by which meaning is attributed to an object, event or person encountered in the environment (Reisinger, 2003: 148 -149). Hargie (1986: 47) defines perceptions as the impressions people form of one another and how interpretations are made concerning the behaviour of others. In general terms,

perception can be defined as the process by which people see the world around themselves (Reisinger, 2003: 149). Stewart (1979: 10) argues that perception refers to the processes by which a person comes to know and think about other persons, their characteristics, qualities, and inner states. It is based on the observations people make about intentions, attitudes, emotions, feelings, ideas, abilities, purposes, traits, thoughts, perceptions, memories – events that are inside the person and strictly psychological. By way of summary, it appears that the definitions by Reisinger and Stewart focus on perceptions as a process whereas the definition by Hargie focuses on perception as the result – the manifestation of impressions. For the purposes of this study, the term perceptions refers to both the process by which black rural community members attribute meaning to tourism, tourists and their culture in a tourism context and also the impressions they form as a result of the process. The community's *impressions* are discussed by describing what the community currently understands by the concepts of tourism and tourist and how they attribute meanings to tourism, tourists and their culture in a tourism context. Thereafter the study discusses the *process* by investigating the variables that influence the manifestation of perceptions.

2.2 Attitude

An attitude, as opposed to perception, is created on the basis of experience during the process of learning, and acquiring knowledge (Reisinger, 2003: 148). Smith *et al* (1998: 784) state that community attitudes toward tourism are directly related to the extent of its presence in the community. Here I examine *perceptions* rather than *attitude* to analyse community views in this study, although most existing studies that deal with cross-cultural interaction often refer to the term community attitudes (cf. Brewer *et al* 1976; Brislin, 1981; Robinson *et al* 1999). The concept of perception is more appropriate and can be used more effectively in such a study than the concept of attitude for the following reasons (Reisinger, 2003: 148 and Ap, 1992: 671):

1. An attitude, as opposed to perception, is created on the basis of experience during the process of learning, and acquiring knowledge. Perception can be created without experience and knowledge of the object or person. This is

very often the case in the Tshivhase area, where community members develop perceptions of tourism, but lack first-hand exposure to the industry.

2. Tourists and hosts may attribute meaning to each other without having previous experience and knowledge of each other, as is often the case in the study area, and consequently have perceptions rather than attitudes of each other.
3. Not all tourists and communities meet and experience each other. Those who do may have only very limited experience, which does not allow for attitude development.
4. And, the decision to travel comes from a perception at first, and attitudes develop later, after travel has commenced.

2.3 Conception

Perception asks what the community thinks or feels about tourism, but conception, suggests what the community understands by tourists and tourism (Lea *et al* 1994: 407). For example residents' subjective definitions of tourists and tourism in New Zealand do not match up to the technical definitions in general use in tourism research. Respondents in New Zealand were inclined to include foreigners rather than their compatriots in the category of tourists and also demonstrated little understanding that generally tourism is taken to include at least a one-night stay away from the place of permanent residence or origin. The authors, therefore, suggest that these differences need to be taken into account when investigating and interpreting community perceptions of tourism (Lea *et al*, 1994). Since tourism in the Tshivhase area is only in a relatively early stage and community members have relatively low levels of education, it is foreseen that community conceptions will be subjective in nature. As a result, community members' conception of tourists and tourism are first identified to determine their understanding of tourism and only then can their perceptions be understood. Such investigation is important as it provides more insight into why the community perceives tourists and tourism in a certain way and also because misunderstandings of the tourist and tourism concept can create negative perceptions. For instance, if respondents define tourists as white people who travel to claim their land, respondents will most definitely have negative perceptions of tourists. On the other hand, respondents will be more likely to have

positive perceptions of tourists if they understand that tourists can contribute to the local economy and that a tourist can be any person who travels to experience an area's natural and cultural resources.

2.4 Image

Image is defined as a visible representation or likeness of a person or thing, or the impressions given to others of a person's character, etc, or a mental picture (Cassell, 1997: 735). The importance of image has been widely recognised in tourism literature (Alhemoud *et al* 1996; Baloglou *et al* 1999; Chen *et al* 2000; Chon, 1990, 1991 and 1992; Echtner *et al* 1991, 1993; Fakeye *et al* 1991; Joppe *et al* 2001; Litvin *et al* 2002; Lubbe, 1998; Schroeder, 1996; Vaughan *et al* 1999; Walmsley *et al* 1998). Most of these studies focus on tourist images of host communities, and not on the images created by host communities of tourists, tourism and their cultural heritage in tourism. A review of these studies shows that image determines destination choice, successful tourism development, tourism marketing strategies, and travel decision-making. For the host community, image plays an important role in the evaluation of tourist behaviour and satisfaction. Image can therefore be a useful concept to analyse social interaction between tourists and host communities, and satisfaction with this interaction. As far as this study is concerned, the respondents' images of tourists are investigated, but also respondents' image of the Tshivhase area, specifically focusing on the image residents would prefer to be depicted in promotional material for tourism in the area.

2.5 Attribution

Attribution is a process of ascribing characteristic qualities to people or things (Cassell, 1997: 98; Reisinger, 2003: 168). Tourists and host communities attribute certain qualities to each other's behaviour and try to explain what causes that behaviour. Host communities and tourists might be biased in ascribing attributes as they have less knowledge about those who are perceived than about themselves. The scope of misunderstanding may be particularly great when tourists and hosts from different cultures make different attributions (Reisinger, 2003:168). This particularly applies to this study, which concentrates on culturally different hosts and

tourists who have relatively little access to information about each other. In this study I will describe some of the qualities community members ascribe to tourist behaviour, for example the food they eat and the clothes they wear.

This section revealed that the concept of perception is closely related to the concepts of attitude, image, and attribution. Attribution is pertinent to some parts of this study that describes the way in which respondents attribute meaning to tourist behaviour, while image is applicable to discussions about respondents' image of tourists and respondents' existing and future image of the Tshivhase area. The community in the Tshivhase area has had relatively low levels of exposure to tourism and has not acquired complete and accurate knowledge of the industry. They have therefore developed perceptions, rather than attitudes, of tourism. Furthermore, the Tshivhase area's early phase in the tourism life cycle necessitates the need to identify community conceptions of tourism and tourists as well, in order to investigate whether the community members understand what the concepts of tourists and tourism entails.

3. The Tourism Concept

Community members' understanding of the tourism concept is described in the subsequent chapter. It is appropriate to briefly define the tourism concept in order to establish whether respondents' concepts of tourism match up to the technical definition, as given below.

Although complicated, cutting across sectoral categories, and fragmented, tourism is and should be viewed, as a single system comprised of interrelated parts. Tourism is mostly referred to as an industry, a socio-economic activity or sector (Inskeep, 1991: 22). Various writing on tourism, for example, Gunn (1994) and Mill *et al.* (1992), describes the tourism system in terms of supply and demand. Gunn identifies the 'population' with an interest in, and ability to travel, that is, tourists as the demand, and the supply side comprised of the various modes of transportation, the attractions, facilities and services for tourists, and the tourist information and

promotion provided. Mill *et al.* (1992) identify the four major parts of the tourism system as being:

- 1) The market (tourists)
- 2) Travel (transportation)
- 3) Destination (attractions, facilities, and services)
- 4) Marketing (information and promotion, with each part closely linked in sequence with the other, including no. 4 being linked with no. 1)

4. Socio-economic Impacts of Tourism

Hosts' perceptions of socio-economic impacts of tourism have received a great deal of attention by researchers in more recent years (cf. Brunt *et al.* 1999; Haralambopoulos *et al* 1996; Dogan, 1989; King *et al* 1993; Tosun, 2002; Tsartas, 1992; Mason *et al* 2000; Korca, 1996). Socio-cultural impacts of tourism are less tangible than economic impacts and are more difficult to quantify. This aspect of tourism has been the subject of much research recently by sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists. Earlier studies that evaluated the success of tourism development projects were concerned primarily with their economic benefits (Van Harsseel, 1994: 183; Theobald, 1998: 63). Van Harsseel (1994: 183) points out that tourism researchers are now beginning to understand that tourism has often been found to have pervasive effects on residents and host communities of tourist destination areas. It is now widely recognised that tourism development creates social change, resulting in the emergence of numerous studies that deal with socio-cultural impacts of tourism (Van Harsseel, 1994: 184). Long *et al* (1999: 3) argue that in spite of the magnitude and global importance of tourism, its impacts persistently accumulate with little understanding by practitioners, planners, and academics.

Economic benefits include provision of government revenue, business turnover, household income, employment, and (for international tourism) foreign exchange, which lead to improved living standards of the host community and overall national and regional economic development (Inskeep, 1991: 368; Theobald, 1998: 65; Van Harsseel, 1994: 151). An important indirect economic benefit of tourism is that it serves as a catalyst for the development of other economic sectors such as

agriculture, construction and handicrafts. Another benefit is improvements made to transportation and other infrastructure facilities and services for tourists that coincidentally also serve community needs (Inskeep, 1991: 368- 370). The so-called 'demonstration effect' of prosperity amidst poverty may create a desire among local people to work harder or to achieve higher levels of education in order to emulate the way of life of tourists. In this instance, the community perceives the life style of tourists in a positive light. Alternatively the inability of the local people to achieve the same level of affluence may create a sense of deprivation and frustration, which may find an outlet in hostility and even aggression (Theobald, 1998: 72). Inskeep (1991: 372) argues that there may be resentment by locals of the perceived or actual 'more money and more leisure time' of tourists. Although not surprising amongst people whose options for leisure travel are non-existent, this is partly because the perceptions of tourists' lifestyles do not take into account that many of the tourists have worked hard for most of the year to be able to take their holiday. Feelings of jealousy, deprivation, frustration, resentment and conflict decrease the satisfaction levels for the host community, and as a result can lead to the creation of negative perceptions.

The type of tourism that is being developed in the Tshivhase area can be defined as cultural tourism. There are many definitions for cultural tourism. Inskeep (1991: 278) defines cultural tourism as visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle / heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution. Lord (1999) defines cultural tourism as "the practice of travelling to experience historic and cultural attractions to learn about a community's heritage in an enjoyable and educational way". Cultural factors (attractions) may include architecture and decorations, arts and crafts, cuisine, clothes and fashion, dance, music and song, theatre, language, literature and storytelling, village life and the like (McCarthy, 1992: 2).

As a result of the cultural product offering at the study area, strong emphasis has to be placed on community perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Van Harsel (1994: 154) noted that the potential socio-cultural benefits from tourism, though less obvious than economic benefits, might be equally significant. A listing of the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism includes that tourism improves the

quality of life, increases availability of recreation and entertainment opportunities, improves the quality of police and fire protection, improves the understanding and images of different cultures, promotes cultural exchange, preserves the cultural identity of the host community, and increases the demand for historical and cultural exhibits (Brunt, 1999: 497; Haralambopoulos, 1996: 508; Turco, 1998: 22). Dogan (1989: 223) noted that tourism itself might be a factor in the preservation of the traditional culture rather than in its dissolution. In many instances, traditions, customs, and institutions in the process of vanishing under the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation have been revived and have gained new spirit and meaning when they have become tourist attractions themselves.

Among the major negative socio-cultural consequences of tourism are a decline in traditions and an increase in prostitution, alcoholism, materialism, crime rates, social conflicts, crowding, environmental deterioration, and dependency on the industrial countries (Dogan, 1989: 218; Brunt, 1999: 497; Haralambopoulos, 1996: 508; Turco, 1998: 22). Dogan (1989, 217) points to the loss of authenticity and identity of the traditional cultures resulting from the inhabitants' tendency to imitate tourists (demonstration effect) who represent to them a respectable and higher civilization. Under the impact of mass tourism, food, folklore, ceremonies, entertainment, accommodation facilities and the like lose their authenticity and become commercialised in order to satisfy the standard desire of mass tourists. Inskip (1991: 372-374) concurs by saying that over-commercialisation and loss of authenticity of traditional arts and crafts, customs, and ceremonies can result if these are over modified to suit tourist demands. For instance, important traditional dance and music performances, some of which may have religious significance, being greatly shortened and changed to fit tourist's tastes and schedules and traditional high quality handicraft being mass-produced to provide tourist souvenirs.

5. The Tourist Concept

Community members' understanding of the tourist concept and their perceptions about tourist behaviour and motivations to travel are described in the subsequent chapter. The tourist concept is explained below in order to establish whether

respondents' concepts of tourism match up to the technical definition, as defined below.

The commonly although not universally accepted definition of an international tourist is that recommended by WTO (1998), which stated that a visitor is "any person visiting a country other than in which he has his usual place of residence, for any reason other than following an occupation remunerated from within the country visited." The term visitor includes two distinct types of travellers:

- Tourists – Temporary visitor staying at least 24 hours in the country visited and the purpose of whose journey can be classified as leisure (i.e., recreation, holiday, culture, nature, sport, health, religion, or sport), business, visiting friends and relatives (VFR), mission and meeting.
- Excursionist – Temporary visitors staying less than 24 hours in the destination visited and not making an overnight stay (Inskeep, 1991: 19).

There is no widely accepted definition of domestic tourists. For the purpose of this study, a domestic tourist is defined as a person who travels from his home for a distance of at least 120 kilometres (one way) for business, pleasure, personal affairs, or any other purpose except to commute to his daily work, whether he stays overnight or returns the same day (Inskeep, 1991: 21).

6. Tourist Attractions

Chon (1990) describes the reasons tourists travel in terms of "push" and "pull" factors. Push factors are based on the principle that tourists travel with the aim of satisfying certain needs and wants. These needs could be explained using Maslow's hierarchy (Chon, 1990: 32). High order needs here include the need to acquire knowledge and to appreciate beauty. Pull factors determine whether a destination/product can satisfy the tourist's needs. Pull factors consist of aspects like scenery, climate, wildlife, cultural attractions, accommodation, catering and entertainment. To investigate how the community perceives pull factors necessitates an investigation of how community members perceive attractions, seeing that attractions are the key component "pulling" a visitor to go to a certain destination.

Attractions are generally single units, individual units or very small, easily delimited geographical areas or a single key feature (Swarbrooke, 1995: 7). According to Swarbrooke, a visitor attraction:

- Sets out to attract visitors to a destination
- Provides a fun and pleasurable experience and an enjoyable experience
- Is developed to realize this potential
- Is managed as an attraction, providing satisfaction to its customers
- Provides an appropriate level of facilities and services to meet and cater for the demands, needs, and interests of its visitors
- May or may not charge an admission for entry (Swarbrooke, 1995: 1).

Traditionally, Africans travelled for reasons such as labour, warfare, visiting family and friends or attendance of traditional ceremonies. Interviews revealed that community members in the Tshivhase area presently travel mostly in search of job opportunities, to visit family or friends and to attend traditional ceremonies. Tourists travel for other additional reasons like recreation, business, adventure, scenic beauty, and so on (Inskeep, 1991: 19). Determining community perceptions in this instance could indicate whether community members' needs to travel (push factors) correlate with tourists' needs. It is important for the community to have an understanding of tourist needs, since community awareness of tourist markets is essential for effective tourism planning. Moreover, identifying community perceptions of tourist attractions reveals whether the community realises the potential of natural and cultural resources in the area and how much they value these attractions.

7. The Concepts of Culture and Tradition

It is important to differentiate between the concept of culture and tradition, as field research in the Tshivhase area revealed that the community's perceptions of their culture and perceptions surrounding their traditions are not necessarily the same, as will be indicated in the subsequent chapter.

Culture is a multidimensional phenomenon that is difficult to define, and the hundreds of different definitions presented in the literature reflect this. Coetzee (1991: 21) documented that there are over 160 definitions of culture, indicating that culture is broad in its scope, which makes it difficult to arrive at one central definition of culture. In some cases culture is defined as the entire complex of ideas and material objects that the people of a society (or group) have created and adopted for carrying out the necessary tasks of collective life (Kammeyer *et al*, 1994: 61). As this definition suggests, cultures are individual human creations, but, of course, people inherit much of their culture from predecessors who created it. Kammeyer continues to explain that cultures are also capable of change, since the environments of people are continuously changing. Adams (1995) and Lord (1999) state that culture is usually defined as the result of human adaptation within an ethnos to the various environments, be it the natural, social, or supernatural environment, in accordance with man's unique nature or characteristics. All adaptations are individual creations, but they must be generally accepted before they become part of the accepted lifestyle – the culture. Traditions are defined as the handing down of opinions, practices, and customs from ancestors for posterity, especially by oral communication (Cassel, 1997). For the purpose of this study, I differentiate between the concept of culture and tradition in that people's culture is people's day-to-day lifestyle and a continuous adaptation to an ever-changing environment and therefore never static. It is perpetually dynamic, whereas traditions are cultural aspects that remain fixed to some extent. For example, cultural aspects of numerous black rural communities, such as clothing, language, behaviour, and settlement patterns are in constant flux due to socio-economic changes in the country. They do, however, possess certain traditions that remain moderately unchanged despite socio-economic changes, such as traditional dances, clothing and cuisine.

8. Marketing of Cultural Tourism

The identification of community perceptions about marketing aspects is underpinned in the deterioration and commercialisation of material and non-material forms of cultural expression, which has been a matter of major research concern.

Haralambopoulos (1996: 508) indicates that the marketing of culture appears to be worse in developing countries. Staging of contrived experience to compensate for the lack of authentic cultural experiences in a development has become an accepted outgrowth of contemporary tourism. Van Harssel (1994: 185) notes that elements of culture are often changed to appeal more directly to tourists or so that they may be more readily consumed by tourists. Indigenous culture can be inaccurately glorified and embellished in order to increase its attractiveness to tourists. Nash (1991: 19) is also concerned about the manipulation of 'culture' in the interest of tourism and questions the way in which Native American communities are depicted on postcards. He argues that marketers often reflect messages on postcards that they consider to be attractive to the touring public. The images on the cards emphasise the picturesque, exotic, and enchanting character of native people who are supposed to be living unspoiled in their traditional manner. These cards, however, seldom reveal the disturbing realities of recent Indian history, which included domination by whites and widespread poverty and social diseases like alcoholism.

Heath (2000) indicates that there are primarily two approaches to marketing, namely:

- Product approach: The underlying principle is that customers will choose products that offer features, performance and levels of quality that differentiate them from other products. This means an emphasis on product improvement on the part of the suppliers. In the Tshivhase area, this approach could result in the modification of the cultural product.
- Market-led approach: This claims that the key to achieving the organization's goals lies in identifying customer wants and needs in target markets and delivering to these people products that satisfy them more effectively than one's competitors. In the case of the Tshivhase area, this approach can lead to the commercialisation of cultural products in order to meet the demands of tourists.

The combination of a product and market-led approach is most effective. It is important to look at the needs of all the stakeholders involved in the tourism development, including the local community, and not to only focus on the customers' needs when planning a marketing strategy. In the sustainable development approach to tourism planning, the demand or market side should not be allowed to

determine the supply side to the extent that socio-cultural and environmental integrities are compromised and tourism resources degraded (Inskeep, 1991: 23). For example, if tourists should demand to see the *domba* dance in Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp, it should be explained that it can only be performed once a traditional leader has called such an initiation ceremony. Staging the sacred dance for the tourists can offend some of the local people and can lead to cultural commodification and degradation.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS IN THE TSHIVHASE AREA

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a better understanding of community conceptions and perceptions of tourism, tourists and their culture in a tourism context by discussing research findings that were identified in the study area during the field research. As indicated earlier, data gathering consisted of a participant observation phase that enabled me to detect the hidden qualities of social perception. Subsequently I conducted qualitative non-schedule-structured in-depth personal interviews with community members in three categories. This study investigates community perceptions against three broadly defined categories, but does not attempt, to compare or measure individual variations among these categories statistically. The introduction of tourism development will have different implications for each category, and these should be taken into consideration by tourism developers. Describing the results in terms of each category will illuminate the divergent perceptions expressed and will thus enable tourism developers to act accordingly. Community perceptions that are discussed in this chapter are in some cases supplemented by quotations from informants to illustrate typical responses to certain questions. Questions asked during the interviews are also specifically pointed out. In contrast to this study, most existing studies of community perceptions of tourism have been conducted in communities that are exposed to a much later stage in the tourism area life cycle and have been exposed to a number of tourism impacts. Moreover, interviewees in existing studies have had in general a higher level of education than community members in the Tshivhase area and as a result are more knowledgeable about tourism (cf. Brunt *et al* 1999; Haralambopoulos *et al* 1996; Dogan, 1989; King *et al* 1993; Tosun, 2002; Tsartas, 1992; Mason *et al* 2000; Korca, 1996). Due to the Tshivhase area's early phase in the tourism area life cycle, the majority of community members have not yet been exposed to tourism impacts, which makes it difficult to link the results of this study with existing studies. In addition, existing studies do not investigate community perceptions of CBT, tourists

or their own culture *per se*. Nonetheless, reference is made to existing study findings where applicable to this study.

2. Perceptions of Tourism

2.1 Conception of the tourism concept

In order to identify community members' comprehension of the tourism concept, they were asked what they understand about the concept of tourism, or how they would explain the meaning of "tourism" to a friend or relative in their own words.

Category A

Despite the lack of knowledge of an official definition of tourism, respondents comprehended that tourism is a concept that covers a wide spectrum of sectors including tourism businesses, accommodation, tourism facilities, attractions, transportation and tourists. One local tour operator explained: "When I hear the word tourism, I think of natural and cultural attractions to be visited, the movement of people and various opportunities for the local community to develop tourism businesses." An African Ivory Route employee defined tourism as "all the businesses that have to do with looking after the needs of tourists, such as transport providers, tour guiding and accommodation providers". The respondents' perceptions of these activities receive attention in the subsequent sections of this chapter. Knowledge regarding the tourism industry was predominantly centred on the local environment with little awareness of global trends in the tourism industry. This can be ascribed to limited opportunities to travel to other parts of the country or the world.

Category B

Community members in this category had a moderate understanding of the concept of tourism. Respondents associated the concept of tourism with people travelling to a certain place. Some of these community members confused the concept of tourism with a destination, as one respondent explained that tourism "is a place that people visit in order to rest". In other cases, the word tourism was confused with the

word tourist as the following interviewee response indicates: “Tourism is a person who moves from one place to another to learn about other cultures”. Respondents in this category demonstrated little awareness of the business, transport, accommodation and attraction sectors in their definitions.

Category C

An overwhelming majority of people in this category did not understand the word tourism. When they refer to tourism among themselves, they use the Venda words, *vhaendala mashango*, which means to visit a land. In some cases people linked tourism to Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp that had been built in the area, but showed scant understanding of the concept.

Research findings in relation to the conception of tourism are in line with Lea *et al* (1994) who found that residents’ subjective concept of tourism does not match up to the technical definitions in general use in tourism research. Only Category A was aware that tourism is a complex concept that can be seen as a system comprising of interrelated parts. Category B and C in most part, realised that tourism involves places and movement of people but showed very limited understanding of the concept. None of the respondents in any of the three categories made any mention of marketing aspects in their definitions of tourism.

2.2 Perceptions of the CBT concept

As black rural communities undergo a process of socio-cultural change in South Africa, communities’ viewpoints and values also change. As a result of changing socio-cultural environments, it is no longer necessarily accurate to assume that all community members value communalism more than individualism. Discovering the true effectiveness of CBT development among black rural communities calls for the identification of communities’ understanding and perceptions about the principles of the CBT concept.

Community members were asked what they understand about the CBT concept. Thereafter they were asked whether they feel/think it to be a positive or negative principle and then to motivate their reply. In addition, respondents were queried

about community strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the sustainable implementation of CBT and whether they have any suggestions in mind to overcome community weaknesses. Furthermore, they were asked questions relating to the ownership of tourism facilities and how they felt the money generated from tourism should be distributed.

Category A

Most respondents in this category had heard of the CBT concept and associated CBT with community empowerment and involvement in the project. The vast majority was sanguine regarding the principles of CBT and were aware that it allows the community to receive a fair amount of financial benefit and provides them with the opportunity to employ their own ideas when decision-making in tourism projects are made. One CTA member stated: “CBT is a type of tourism development that assists the community to develop mentally and physically”. Interviewees perceived a lack of education as the major community weakness and consequently proposed the introduction of long-term tourism education programmes, in particular programmes focusing on management and marketing, as a prerequisite for sustainable CBT in the area. It was strongly believed that outside assistance is essential in the initial phase to provide skills, expertise and financial support to the community. The respondents were divided in terms of whether outside assistance should be phased out once expertise is developed amongst community members. The majority felt that permanent partnerships should be created with outside tourism agencies and the government. To quote one informant: “The community will need continuous assistance from the government to maintain facilities and to ensure a substantial flow of tourists to the area”. Some respondents were convinced that CBT would not work due to the lack of professionalism and competency amongst community members. They stressed that even if training programmes were to be introduced, other problems such as jealousy and corruption would arise in the community, and that the projects would inevitably become bankrupt. In sharp contrast, a few community members preferred to be independent from the outset and felt confident enough that they could make CBT a success on their own initiative.

Respondents’ views were evenly split in terms of community ownership of tourism facilities. Some community members felt proud that the community owned the camp

and its facilities and predicted that the community would respect and take better care of facilities than if owned by outsiders. Other respondents, however, felt that tourist facilities and infrastructure would be better sustained if the government or the private sector owned it.

In terms of the distribution of earnings, people in the commercial sector of the tourism industry, namely curio providers and African Ivory Route employees, were persuaded by modern business viewpoints and tended to prefer income in the area to be distributed to the individuals directly involved in tourism. Members of the CTA, however, preferred that money generated from tourism should be paid into a community bank account for the benefit of the entire community. One CTA member said, "Money should be paid into a trust and at a later stage distributed to the community, because if small amounts of cash are paid to community members individually, it will be wasted".

Category B

Most of these respondents had not heard of the CBT concept. As a result of limited exposure to the tourism industry, people in this category tended to be uncertain whether the community itself could take full responsibility for tourism in their area. Consequently, they recommended permanent outside assistance from the private sector and government, mainly for financial and training assistance. They were, however, pleased with the principles of community involvement and community determinism in tourism projects. They pointed out that competent local residents should receive an advantage over non-residents in terms of employment in community tourism projects.

These respondents had mixed feelings about the ownership of community tourism projects. In contrast to respondents in category A, the majority of community members perceived that community ownership might create jealousy among community members and lead to deterioration of tourism facilities due to the lack of management skills by the community. Conversely, some feared that benefits could be lost to outsiders if the government were to own these facilities.

As to the distribution of money generated from tourism, the majority of these respondents felt that money should be paid into a communal bank account to ensure that the community as a whole would benefit from the tourism venture. Some respondents in this category felt that CBT would not work in their area. One respondent was adamant: “If we recall past black enterprises that went bankrupt soon after outside assistance withdrew, it seems obvious that black people are not good in financial management”. Another community member said: “CBT can be problematic as communities in the past have started tourism projects. After some time community managers developed their own interests and corruption appeared”.

Category C

The CBT concept was something completely new to this category. Once the concept was explained to them, most people had a propensity to be very insecure about the abilities of their community, which can be partially ascribed to former apartheid policies that engendered a dependence on the white government. For instance, one community member said: “We need to work together, because we cannot go anywhere successfully without the assistance of white people” and another community member declared that: “We cannot own these things because tourism is for white people”. Their low level of education and limited exposure to foreigners certainly also predisposed them to this limited vision.

The majority of respondents were convinced that black rural communities are incapable of managing tourism projects competently. Nonetheless, in numerous cases community members were pleased with the idea of community ownership, not necessarily because it would ensure better outcomes for the tourism projects, but rather because it exemplifies transformation and signifies a positive move away from their historically marginalised position, divorced from all decision-making. All people in this category who were in favour of tourism development, supported permanent outside assistance in community tourism projects, mainly the management of projects, tourism training of community members and financial support. All these community members preferred the idea of opening a communal bank account for everyone to share equally from the revenue generated by tourism, rather than making payments to individuals who are directly involved in the tourism projects.

This category was generally less concerned with financial gain than the other two categories.

As far as the perceptions of CBT are concerned, the majority of community members in all three categories welcomed the principles of community involvement and determinism in CBT. It became clear that level of education and occupation influenced the confidence levels of community members. Respondents in Category A felt confident to undertake CBT whereas Category B and C did not perceive the community as being able to successfully undertake CBT. As a result, community members strongly suggested the introduction of additional tourism education programmes and also perceived outside assistance as an essential prerequisite for the sustainable implementation of CBT in the Tshivhase area. It was clear that the majority of community members, with the exception of respondents who are directly involved in the tourism industry, place much emphasis on communalism in terms of the distribution of revenue generated from tourism projects. This is in line with Van der Walt (1997) who found that African people tend to place much more emphasis on communalism than individualism.

2.3 Perceived socio-economic impacts of tourism

To determine the view of community members in relation to the possible impacts of tourism on their lives and culture, the informants were asked whether they perceive tourism as positive or negative and what impacts of tourism they would anticipate on their lives. Thereafter, they were asked to justify their responses. Posing open questions allowing a wider range of responses, enabled the researcher to identify whether respondents were at all aware of tourism impacts and whether they perceived economic or socio-cultural impacts to be more important. In addition, community members were coaxed to air their views on an occupation in tourism and to indicate the various jobs created from tourism. Thereafter, they were asked if they would enjoy working in the tourism industry and if so, why? Community members already involved in the tourism industry were asked why they had decided to do so.

In terms of socio-cultural impacts, community members were asked to express their opinions about cultural tourism and how it might impact on their quality of life. The

conversations focused mainly on cultural activities that could be performed by the community, cultural exchange and education, and the preservation or loss of cultural identity by the community. During the field research it became clear that community members did not have much exposure to the sorts of social problems that tend to surface as a result of tourism development. This can be ascribed to the Tshivhase area's early phase in the tourism area life cycle and the resultant absence of notable impacts on the community at this stage. The researcher consequently had to suggest possible scenarios in order to investigate community opinions on potential impacts of tourism. A limitation of this sort of inquiry is that people cannot really gauge how they would respond to problems if they have never really experienced them. Nonetheless, this is why community perceptions – and not community attitudes – are investigated in this study. It was then inquired if and how those potential problems would surface in their area. Since begging has often been considered a particularly negative social impact of tourism, it was deemed appropriate to ask the community how they would feel about tourists offering money or other gifts to beggars.

Category A

The vast majority of people perceived tourism to be predominantly positive. They did however realise that tourism might well have negative impacts, despite its current absence in the area. Most community members in this category perceived tourism to be positive primarily because of its economic benefits, including job creation and business turnover. In some cases, CTA members recognised the most important benefits of tourism to be socio-cultural in nature, such as the manifestation of cultural pride, development of infrastructure and cross-cultural exchange. Various respondents also believed that nature conservation is a significant positive impact of tourism. In sharp contrast to Category B and C, this category had the tendency to value personal benefits over the development of the community as a whole. These findings coincide with Brunt *et al* (1999: 504) in pointing out that residents working in tourism have different perceptions of tourism from those hired elsewhere.

All the people in this category are either employed in the tourism industry or form part of community tourism structures, and were therefore informed as to the nature of tourism as an occupation. Most of the respondents in this category said that they

became involved in the tourism industry not only for financial reasons, but also because of their interest in working with people and enthusiasm to learn from people who come from foreign areas. Two respondents, however, explained that they took the opportunity to get involved in the tourism industry solely in light of the absence of other job opportunities. Community members in this category were inclined to have more confidence in themselves and therefore had higher expectations for themselves in the tourism industry. African Ivory Route employees explained that they enjoy their work, but indicated that the long periods of being away from home were unexpected.

In relation to cultural tourism and its impacts, most respondents were convinced that cultural tourism would sustain their cultural heritage. They perceived that cultural tourism could transform the youth's negative perceptions of their culture into positive ones, but did not infer that it would manifest in the adoption of a traditional life style. Respondents recognized that a certain degree of westernisation is inevitable, even in the absence of tourism development. Interviewees explained that tourists are often the role models of young community members and that the demonstration effect could weaken their traditional behaviour. Surprisingly, the majority of respondents in this category were aware of potential negative impacts of tourism, but convinced that tourism would not cause social problems like crime, prostitution or alcoholism in the community. They attributed this to the strong moral values that are an integral part of their culture and the custodian role played by traditional leaders in protecting the well-being of the community. It was observed that only a few community members anticipated that these social ailments would occur. They feared that money flowing into the area could be the source of various social problems including crime, greed and jealousy, but that these problems could be evaded if community members received the necessary education.

Some respondents explained that tourism could have a negative influence on the community since the community is in desperate need of money and could therefore start to commit crime. This perception coincides with Mathieson *et al* (1982) in concluding that tourism contributes to a perception of an increase in crime. As to the issue of begging, the community members in this category strongly believed that

tourists should not give anything to beggars, as it would only encourage people to beg more and would promote laziness.

Category B

Most of these respondents perceived tourism as a form of progress and development and consequently feared no negative impacts of tourism. In contrast to Category A, most perceived the key positive aspect of tourism - more than employment, business turnover and economic growth - to be cross-cultural exchange and the fact that people who had not previously visited the area, would come to learn about their culture. Numerous community members responded: “tourism is a good thing, since we can see other people and then learn from each other”, and: “I welcome tourism because it represents freedom of movement, something prohibited in our past”. A few community members in this category perceived the major benefit of tourism to be business opportunities for community members and were aware that tourism creates indirect job opportunities by means of the multiplier effect. Community members perceived tourism to be a satisfying occupation because you “learn many new things” and “you become friends with people from other parts of the world.” The people in this category did not perceive tourism to be strenuous work, which can be attributed to the perceptibly low work rate of African Ivory Route employees as a result of low tourist numbers in Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp. Respondents perceived tourism related jobs to be tour guiding, catering, traditional dancing and curio provision, but were aware that there are more advanced jobs such as working with tourism planning, involvement in attraction management, marketing or becoming a conservationist.

The majority also perceived cultural tourism as having a positive influence on strengthening cultural pride among community members and were very pleased to see tourists participating in some of their cultural activities. They were not worried about the demonstration effect and said that the community would inevitably undergo socio-cultural change even if no tourists were to visit the area. They considered that the impacts of the demonstration effect would influence younger people more than older people since the latter are strongly anchored in their traditional ways. Once the researcher informed respondents about some of the negative tourism impacts that occurred elsewhere, such as crime, prostitution, alcoholism and drugs, the majority

of community members responded that these impacts would not arise in their area because of the strong values that are part of their culture. They believed that these negative impacts would not occur. One respondent stated: “Most community members are happy to see tourists and want to support tourism promotion in their area”. Another respondent said: “It is difficult to commit crime in the area since people know one another, and this fact makes it difficult to hide any secrets from the rest of the people”. In a few cases respondents were of the opinion that tourism could cause moral values to deflate in future, but that it is not a problem yet. On the subject of begging, interviewees felt that tourists should not give anything to beggars, but rather compensate community members who offer actual services. Begging was generally perceived as a sign of weakness and low self-respect.

Category C

As indicated before, an overwhelming majority of people in this category had not been familiar with the word ‘tourism’, and consequently were unable to contribute much on tourism impacts. They did, however, have certain views about and concerns with regard to the change visitors might bring to them as a community. Most of them were generally in favour of tourism development, mainly because it provides the opportunity for them to present the Venda culture to other people. In a few instances, it seemed as if tourism is perceived positively simply because it is something new and exciting but there was little or no conception of what the possible benefits might be. Some respondents perceived tourism favourably due to its possible economic benefits for community members, who could produce curios or offer basic services to tourists. They hoped that tourism might benefit the community as a whole through the improvement of the infrastructure of their village. Respondents in this category perceived tourism jobs to be mainly culture and tradition related and were eager to find jobs that require skills that relate to their traditional activities, such as security services, curio provision, food supply or production, construction and maintenance. There was a low awareness of advanced job opportunities where a higher level of education is required.

Once the concept of cultural tourism was explained to them, community members were divided in terms of cultural tourism strengthening their cultural heritage, as opposed to the view that cultural tourism would cause their traditions to change. The

respondents who were in support of cultural tourism were aware that tourism could provide opportunities for the youth to see their cultural traditions being performed as something worthy of a spectacle. They felt that the youth might reconsider their negative attitudes towards Venda tradition once they could see the tourists' appreciation of and participation in cultural activities. This perception coincides with those of de Kadt (1979) who argues that the demands of tourists for cultural souvenirs can result in local arts and crafts being revitalised.

After some examples of social problems that had emerged elsewhere were explained to community members, most of them responded that these impacts would not emerge in the area, and explained that their certainty could be ascribed to the strong values held in the Tshivhase area and the influential role of the traditional leader. Moreover, respondents explained that negative impacts would not emerge because of the community's respect for their culture and also because the people are competent at subsistence farming and would therefore not need to steal money. A number of respondents explained that the children in these areas are brought up with strict moral values and taught to honour their superiors and that crime would not happen in the area because it had never happened before. On the other hand, some people, mostly older women, did not want any tourism development in their area. The headman of Mukumbani explained that: "Old people in the village take longer to adapt to changes and do not understand tourism", and, "they are not used to see white people and are in general scared to talk to strangers". Some respondents were afraid that tourism could attract criminals from outside if they were to hear that tourists with large amounts of money visit their area. Most of the people in this category hoped for tourism to improve their quality of life, but at the same time feared change and did not welcome dramatic alterations to their social or natural environment. It seems obvious that there is a serious need for the CTA to explain to the community why tourists visit their area and provide them with more knowledge about, and information on tourism. Interestingly, most respondents in this category did not find anything wrong with begging and believed that it is kind of tourists to give disadvantaged people gifts. One old man responded: "We only ask for a little and then it is up to the tourists to decide whether they want to give us something".

Research findings in respect of community perceptions of tourism impacts partially coincide with Brayley (1989), who found that respondents employed in the tourism industry view tourism first, as a positive economic influence and secondly as a positive social or cultural influence. On the contrary, however, community members who are not employed in the tourism industry perceived social and cultural impacts as the most important and economic impacts of secondary importance. The exception here is that young community members in Category B did not place much value on the Venda culture and tended to value economic benefits more than cultural benefits. The community perceptions of tourism impacts have revealed that support for the tourism industry is relatively strong among community members in all three categories. This finding is consistent with statements by Andereck *et al* (2000), Brunt (1999), Madrigal (1995), Mason (2000) and Johnson (1994) indicating that communities in an early stage of tourism development and in areas of lower or moderate levels of development are prone to positive perceptions of tourism and in most cases are ignorant of potential negative socio-economic impacts of tourism. It is doubtful whether cultural change in terms of a stronger culture dominating another as argued by Murphy (1987) has occurred in the Tshivhase area thus far. Rather, this study found that respondents who perceived an impact on local attitudes, viewed acculturation as a process of socio-cultural change the community would inevitably undergo even if no tourists were to visit the area. This view is recognised by Cooper *et al* (1998), who state that many researchers regard socio-cultural change as one of the evils of tourism development, but they do not realise that any type of economic development will, by definition, carry with it implications for social structure and cultural aspects for the host community. Respondents considered that the impacts of the demonstration effect influence younger people more than older people since the latter are strongly anchored in their traditional ways. This is in line with Brunt (1999: 506) who found that those most susceptible to the pressures of the demonstration effect are young people.

Existing findings pertaining to community perceptions of overcrowding, congestion, gambling, inflated prices within the community and seasonality of tourism (cf. Andereck *et al* 2000; Brunt, 1999; Madrigal, 1995; Mason, 2000 and Johnson, 1994) do not coincide with responses in this study as a result of the Tshivhase area's early stage in the tourism area life cycle and consequently the absence of these impacts in

the area. Further, the findings concur with Haralambopoulos (1996) who found in his study on the Greek island of Samos that residents perceived that the current level of tourism development had no effect on them in terms of morality, organised crime, prostitution and gambling. An unusual response that was raised by numerous respondents, and which does not appear to be widely mentioned in the literature, is that negative impacts of tourism would not appear in the area. They attributed this to the strong values in the Tshivhase area and the influential role of the traditional leader. As to the perceptions of tourism as an occupation, findings coincide with Haralambopoulos (1996: 513) who found that tourism-related jobs are perceived to be very desirable.

3. Perceptions about Tourists

3.1 Conception of the tourist concept

In order to identify community members' comprehension of the tourist concept, they were asked what the word 'tourist' meant or how they would explain to a friend or relative what a tourist is. They were also asked where tourists come from, if they perceive international tourists to behave differently from domestic tourists and whether they would prefer more international or domestic tourists to visit their area. Other questions relating to the identity of tourists and their level of income were also posed. To identify community perceptions relating to the perceived reasons why tourists decide to travel, I asked informants why, in general, they think tourists travel, and more specifically why they think tourists want to visit their area. In addition, perceptions of the leisure time concept were investigated, as well as perceptions of tourist attractions.

Category A

This category has had a relatively high level of tourist-host interaction and as a result had a good understanding of the tourist concept. They defined a tourist as any person who is travelling from one place to another, and that money is not a prerequisite for someone to be considered a tourist, this despite the wealth of tourists visiting the area. All the interviewees responded that tourists could originate

from anywhere. The majority of respondents preferred international to domestic tourists, as international tourists were perceived to have more money to spend and to be more interested in African cultures. Moreover, they explained that international tourists would place the area on the “world map” and would tell their family and friends abroad to visit them. On the other hand, some respondents explained that it is much easier to work with domestic tourists since it is easier to communicate with them. Some respondents feel that both international and domestic tourists alike should visit their area. The majority of this category did not differentiate between the nationality of international tourists’, which could likely be ascribed to the relatively early phase of the tourism area life cycle in the study area.

Respondents in this category conceived that tourists travel for various reasons, including learning about nature and other cultures and possible business opportunities. Only African Ivory Route employees were familiar with the adventure tourism concept. Most respondents in this category stated that business responsibilities and visiting family and friends form part of tourist motivations to travel. They were aware of these travel motivations, as a result of their tourism training and not because they had seen these types of tourists at Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp – tourists who have visited the camp so far have been travelling for leisure purposes.

This category realised that tourists want to visit their region due to the remoteness of the area and its rich cultural and natural heritage, and was also aware that tourists prefer to see cultural attractions, such as Venda homesteads, traditional dress and dances and curio in their area since modern man-made attractions are commonly found where they come from. They demonstrated a high awareness of the most significant attractions in their area, namely Lake Fundudzi, Tshatsingo Potholes, Phiphidi Waterfalls and the Sacred Forest. All respondents regarded nature conservation as essential, and explained that the protection of natural resources goes hand in hand with community education. Community members were familiar with the leisure time concept. To quote one respondent, “it is sometimes enjoyable to travel merely to relax and to enjoy the quietness of nature”.

Category B

This category has seen tourists visiting the area, but has had limited interaction with them. The community perceived tourists to be people who mostly come from overseas or urban areas and who visit the area. The majority tended to associate tourists with white people. This category has not benefited directly from tourism and was therefore not concerned whether international or domestic tourists visit the area, as long as tourists arrive.

Respondents perceived tourists to travel primarily to see natural and cultural attractions in their area. One respondent stated: “tourists travel to benefit themselves, to take photos and to enjoy their holidays”. To quote another, “tourists travel to see cultures and an environment which is different than where they come from”. The majority of community members had a high awareness of the most significant attractions in their area, such as Lake Fundudzi, Tshatsingo Potholes, Phiphidi Waterfall and the Sacred Forest. The community perceived nature conservation as highly important and also felt that education in this respect is of utmost importance. They stated however that deforestation is a difficult problem to overcome as community members find it problematic to afford alternative sources of energy. This category had divergent views on whether people who travel to visit friends and relatives or to do business could be regarded as tourists and as a result perceived not to have been tourists themselves on occasion.

Category C

Most of the respondents had no conception of the word ‘tourist’ and it had to be described to them through the word ‘visitor’. When they refer to tourists among themselves, they use the Venda words, *muendala mashango*, which means a person who visits a land. Once the concept of tourist was defined for them, the majority of people in this category perceived that tourists are white people who have lots of money and visit the area. In most cases, community members did not differentiate between international and domestic tourists. A few community members preferred international tourists to domestic tourists, as one respondent said: “International tourists buy more curios and show greater interest in our cultural heritage, and that makes me feel proud”.

Most respondents did not understand why tourists want to visit the area. The study area has been the subject of a number of research projects in recent years and consequently some respondents perceived research to be a major motivation to travel. Even though some had heard that tourists are interested in their natural and cultural heritage, it seemed strange to them that people are attracted to these features. Numerous respondents in Category A and B explained that this can be attributed to the tendency of older community members to view natural features as attractive in terms of their practical usage capacity and not because of its scenic appeal. Furthermore, the respondents were surprised that visitors view poverty-stricken areas as attractive and would have thought that visitors would prefer modern buildings and infrastructure. Despite these perceptions, this category said they enjoy the fact that tourists want to learn about their cultural heritage, in particular if tourists participate in traditional dances. Community members were not familiar with the leisure time concept, and said that a person needs specific reasons to travel somewhere, whether it be warfare, business opportunities, attendance of a traditional ceremony or to visit family who reside elsewhere. They did however not regard these travel motivations as tourism related, and were thus convinced that they had never been tourists themselves.

In general, informants' subjective concept of tourists was very simplistic and did not match up to the technical definitions in general use in tourism research, which concurs with findings by Lea *et al* (1994). Category B and C were in most cases unaware that a tourist can be *any* person, irrespective of his or her race and were not aware that a person's length of stay or distance travelled forms part of the tourist concept, as defined by Inskeep (1991). Category A demonstrated a fairly accurate conception of tourist, which can be ascribed to their tourism training. In contrast, Category B and C in most cases did not realize that the tourist concept includes people of all races and moreover were unaware of the various reasons tourists travel. In terms of the perceived reasons tourists visit the Tshivhase area, respondents in Category A and B revealed an understanding that tourists want to learn more about the Venda culture, whereas Category C did not perceive the Venda culture as a motivation for tourists to travel.

3.2 Perceptions about tourist behaviour

In relation to perceptions about appropriate tourist behaviour, community members were first asked to express how they generally feel about tourists in the area in order to investigate whether community members resent tourists or welcome them in their midst. Thereafter, they were asked about the way in which tourists behave and should behave, for example the clothes they wear.

Category A

All respondents were delighted to see tourists in their area, as they present numerous opportunities for the community to improve their quality of life. In terms of general tourist behaviour, most respondents were not concerned with tourists' cultural background, because they believe that a person should not allow his personal feelings to interfere in his work environment and they feel that it is good to appreciate diversity. African Ivory Route employees had a tendency to admire the clothes worn by tourists for their beauty and high fashion. A number of respondents explained that they respect tourists for their self-discipline and for being successful in life. Respondents also felt that personal conversations with tourists at the camp revealed that tourists are dedicated in their work and earn good incomes that enable them to go on expensive holidays. Community members added that this was not necessarily a feeling of jealousy that is harboured when they see wealthy tourists, but rather a source of motivation that encourages them to be successful in life. CTA members were more unfamiliar with tourist behaviour and felt that tourists should show their respect for the community by the way in which they behave. Important aspects here included the responsibility of female tourists to wear either long skirts or trousers when they visit homesteads. Men should remove their hats when they enter a homestead and wear a jacket should they attend a traditional gathering.

Category B

These respondents indicated that they are pleased to see tourists in the area and enjoy interacting with them. With regard to tourist behaviour, the majority of the people in this category were not concerned with the way in which tourists behave or dress, as long as they respect the community and its culture. The most important aspect was for tourists to be friendly towards the community and to greet them, even

if they do it in their own cultural way. Community members explained that tourists are from a foreign culture and would always do things differently and that it would not be fair to expect of them to change whilst they visit the area. One community member said: “We cannot expect of tourists to behave according to our culture, because even some of the people in our own community behave in a western way”. This does not necessarily mean that they approve of fellow community members behaving as tourists do, because they believe strongly that community members must respect their own culture. In some cases, respondents perceived the way tourists dress as humorous and impractical – particularly international tourists. Young community members in this category viewed tourists as role models.

Category C

These respondents were generally pleased to see tourists, mainly because it makes them proud to see others take pleasure in their culture. Other respondents welcomed tourists to their area because they seem friendly and are prepared to visit an underdeveloped area that no one had cared to visit in the past. However, they were not excited about too many visitors arriving since they believed that it would threaten stability in their area. Some of them, mostly older women, did not want any tourists to visit them or their area. They feared that tourists would take their land or force them to abandon their culture. In some cases, respondents were concerned because tourists could spread HIV in the area or that tourists could steal their belongings if they were to arrive at the homesteads when the people were out to visit family or friends. An old lady’s son explained, “My mother runs away and hides when she sees foreign white visitors”. This category has had limited or no interaction with tourists and therefore has very little first-hand experience of tourist behaviour. The majority of respondents considered it imperative that visitors respect important customs of their culture. This means that tourists should first meet with the traditional leader and request his permission to enter the area, after which a local guide should accompany them when visiting the homesteads. They explained that a local guide should make appointments with hosts in order to make the community feel comfortable when tourists visit them and the guide should then also inform tourists about the customs of the community.

Numerous respondents explained that they could not blame tourists if they behaved incorrectly, but nevertheless would feel honoured if tourists were aware of their customs and respected them. Moreover, the majority of community members expected that tourists should wear the appropriate clothing, and so prevent the community feeling uncomfortable or disrespected. Female tourists should dress tastefully to prevent the occurrence of any sexual harassment.

In terms of respondents' perceptions of tourist behaviour, the overwhelming majority of respondents in all three categories were pleased to see tourists visit the area, which can be ascribed to the absence of negative impacts of tourism, such as overcrowding, congestion and inflated prices. Brunt *et al* (1999) and McIntosh *et al* (1995) noted that often resentment and stress exist, but this is something to which only a few community members in Category C can relate. It is important to note that while the studies above concluded that overcrowding and congestion are the most commonly perceived sources of resentment and stress, in this Venda case study, the sources of resentment and stress are ascribed instead to misconceptions of tourists' motivations to travel and a general lack of education.

4. Portrayal of their Culture in Tourism Promotion

4.1 Own culture versus tourists' culture

It is important to determine how the community perceives their own culture in relation to the culture of tourists, because this influences their perceptions of possible cultural impacts. A community member who perceives his culture as inferior to western cultures is likely to perceive cultural change as a positive impact of tourism whereas a community member who is more proud of his or her own culture would be inclined to perceive cultural change as a negative socio-cultural impact of tourism (Dogan, 1989: 221). Despite the importance of such an investigation, preceding studies aiming to determine community perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of tourism have often neglected a proper investigation of community perceptions of their own culture (cf. Brunt *et al* 1999; Husbands, 1989; King *et al* 1993; Haralambopoulos *et al* 1996; Tosun, 2002; Tsartas, 1992).

To identify the perceptions of community members concerning their own culture, they were asked what they understand by the concept of culture, and how they perceive various social, political and economic aspects of their culture. Moreover, they were asked what they understand western culture to be and if they would prefer to live according to their traditional culture, a western culture, or a combination of traditional and western cultures. Finally, they were asked which aspects of their culture they value most.

Category A

Community members explained that culture is the way in which people live and demonstrated a good understanding of its various components, namely architecture and decorations, arts and crafts, cuisine, clothes and fashion, dance, music and song, theatre, language, literature and storytelling, village life and the like (cf. McCarthy, 1992: 2). Most of the respondents were proud of their traditions and realised the importance of its conservation, which can be ascribed to their first-hand involvement in cultural tourism. In this category, western cultures were perceived as modern and readily associated with material belongings such as cars, expensive clothing and large houses. The majority of community members felt that it is possible to live a modern lifestyle and simultaneously to be proud of your cultural roots (traditions). Traditional dances during ceremonies, such as traditional leader inaugurations and weddings, were most valued. Some community members in the CTA preferred to follow a traditional Venda lifestyle whilst promoting tourism in their area and considered traditional protocol to be very important. Members of the CTA had sharply contrasting perceptions to African Ivory Route employees in respect of perceptions of their own culture. The latter were inclined to view westernisation as progress, whereas members of the CTA are older and tend to be more fixed in their traditional ways.

Category B

Respondents explained that culture is the way in which people live, but in contrast to Category A, respondents had not given much thought to the concept of culture before. Most of these respondents coveted the material belongings of tourists, including their wealth, cars, clothes and houses, but not necessarily their non-

material culture, such as role division within family structures, family size, individualism and sense of time. They deemed it important to keep their own cultural traditions alive. Young respondents in this category had the tendency to regard the Venda culture as insignificant and wished to move to cities and adopt a western life style. These community members associated their own culture with poverty and saw it as hard work to live in the traditional way, whereas western cultures were perceived as fashionable, convenient and readily associated with wealth. One teenager stated: “I don’t want to live in the primitive Venda way like my grandparents do. There are modern ways of doing things that make life much easier, for example driving around in a car”. They were delighted about the decline of initiation schools and relieved that circumcisions nowadays occur in hospitals. In contrast most of the older respondents in this category are very proud of their traditions and as a result favoured the traditional African lifestyle. Nevertheless, they realised that cultural change is inevitable, but hoped that the youth would continue to respect their cultural traditions. It was in particular important for them to participate in traditional dances during ceremonies. Traditional dances are the cultural activity that is most valued in the Tshivhase area.

Category C

Respondents in this category were not familiar with the concept of culture, and so the researcher explained that it involves the way in which people live. The majority of respondents in this category feared drastic change and found security in the traditional ways of doing things – it is the only way they know. They struggled to understand the way in which teenagers in the community behave, and although they felt disrespected, they sensed that they could do nothing to change it. There was a feeling that it was much better in days past when they perceived young people to have taken good care of the elders in the community and to have showed the necessary respect to their superiors. Some attributed this kind of behaviour to the decline of initiation schools. The cultural aspects that were most valued by this category were traditional political organisation and protocol, such as the role of the senior traditional leader and headmen, and traditional food and dances. Due to limited or no interaction with ‘white’ people, community members were unfamiliar with western culture and perceived it to be a very strange way of living. Community members in this category rarely seek a combination of both own culture and western

cultures. No community member interviewed in this category wished to adopt a completely western lifestyle.

An overwhelming majority of community members interviewed in all three categories wished to either live a traditional lifestyle or a combination of both their own culture and a western culture. Only a few community members interviewed, those who were predominantly between the age of 16 and 26, desired to live an entirely western lifestyle. These findings indicate to us that respondents are strongly anchored to their traditional ways and that in most cases they do not desire drastic socio-cultural changes in the community. As far as the perceptions of their cultural traditions and views of a cultural lifestyle are concerned, the overall majority of community members are very proud of their traditions, but simultaneously desire aspects of western culture, in particular the wealth and comforts associated with it. In relation to the perceptions about the difference or similarity between themselves and tourists visiting the area, findings concur with Haralambopoulos (1996:512) who found that the host communities in Third World countries tend to perceive tourists as being very different from local inhabitants.

4.2 Portrayal of their culture in tourism promotion

In order to anticipate and avoid the deterioration and commercialisation of material and non-material forms of cultural expression, it was found appropriate to ask community members in the study area to explain how they would like to be portrayed in promotional material and the image they would prefer to create of their area. Furthermore, community members were asked to what degree the Tshivhase area should produce a product tailored to the market and to what extent tourists should accept community constraints and special conditions.

Category A

All the community members in this category were unanimous in their preference for an image that accurately depicted a traditional Venda community. As one informant said, "Our area has a unique cultural appearance if compared to cities and other parts of the world and this should be depicted in promotional material". To quote another, "The remoteness and traditional appearance of Venda homesteads are very

appealing to tourists and contribute to the attractiveness of the area. If we should tar all the roads and build modern buildings everywhere, fewer tourists would visit the area". This can be accredited to this category's training and experience in cultural tourism and the realisation that the area's cultural attractions and remoteness are major pull factors for tourists who have thus far visited the area. The overwhelming majority responded that it is important to consult the CTA when promotional material is designed, as it is the role of the CTA to represent the community and to prevent overexploitation of the Venda culture. The attainment of puberty and admission as a member of tribe are characterized by a number of training institutions, which are referred to as initiation schools (Stayt, 1968: 47). The various initiation schools are held at the village of the traditional leader. Boys have to attend the *vhutamba* *vhutuka* and *thondo* initiation ceremonies. The *murundu* has been adopted from the Sotho and is in the process of replacing the *thondo*. Daughters attend the *vhusha* and the *domba* at the village of the traditional leader (Stayt 1968: 48). Respondents felt that these ceremonies should not be staged at all, or even depicted in promotional material, unless the traditional leader or headmen granted people permission to do so. They explained that tourists are however welcome to attend the celebrations that follow the completion of the initiation school. If people should be represented in promotional material, this category would prefer to be portrayed in a professional way, with African Ivory Route staff wearing their work uniform and other men wearing suits. Male respondents were embarrassed to wear ethnic clothing as this had been replaced by western clothing when missionaries first arrived in the area. They proposed that women dress in ethnic attire, as it would promote the cultural image of the area. Female respondents were eager to wear their ethnic clothing and said that they would like to be depicted in an ethnic fashion in promotional material. The Venda no longer wear their ethnic dress of long ago, except at initiation ceremonies. Traditionally, the boys wore an oblong strip of leather supplemented by a cloak, especially in cold weather. A small square of skin taken from the stomach of a sheep, which hung down as a small apron, was worn by the girls. A much longer apron replaced this strip when the girls were older. All older women wore a skirt made from the skin of a sheep or goat (Stayt, 1968: 22-24). Nowadays, women wear a modern version of ethnic attire on a regular basis, for example to church or when they attend traditional ceremonies. The modern version consists of a colourful skirt and matching piece of linen that is placed over the right

shoulder. Respondents were of the opinion that tourists would accept community constraints and special conditions within the Tshivhase area. They explained that tourists who visit the area prefer rustic and off-the-beaten-track experiences and are aware of the local conditions, such as dirt roads and the rustic design of the camp, prior to their arrival.

Category B

The majority of these respondents felt that promotional material should portray their culture. It should include photos of Venda people wearing ethnic attire, traditional dances and traditionally decorated Venda huts. Moreover, they felt that the cultural route for tourists visiting the camp is an activity that will promote the cultural image of the area. They felt that an accurate reflection of the area should be portrayed, because they perceive tourists as seeking experiences that are different from what they are accustomed to. In contrast, however, some of these respondents did not believe in the attractiveness of their culture – they recommended the development of large-scale projects like hotels, nature reserves and shopping malls, as these would increase peripheral employment. These community members tended to feel ashamed of their poverty and did not understand how tourists could be attracted to an impoverished area. Interestingly, the majority of respondents did not foresee any problems if sacred dances should be staged for tourism purposes, as they deem it important to satisfy tourists' demands. They felt that tourists should be informed that it was not the "real" event and that an explanation should be offered to them on the necessity of having to stage the performance. Community members in most cases perceived no potential problems if tourists attended other ceremonies, such as traditional leader inaugurations, funerals and weddings. They did however concur with Category A that tourists should be prohibited from witnessing initiation ceremonies. Respondents were uncertain whether tourists would accept community constraints and special conditions within the Tshivhase area. They perceived that tourists demand good roads, preferably tarred roads. During interviews it became evident that the majority of community members did not understand that tourists who visit the area prefer rustic and off-the-beaten-track experiences. As one respondent said, "the government should tar the dirt road all the way to the camp and to Lake Fundudzi". It can be predicted that such an initiative will transform the image of the area and would thus lead to it losing its appeal for the 4x4 tourist market. It may be

possible that some respondents long for infrastructure to be upgraded because they themselves would also benefit from such developments.

Category C

All of the respondents in this category were unacquainted with the marketing concept. Once the basic principles of the marketing concept were explained to them, all the community members responded that a cultural image of the area should be created. Some were uncomfortable with the idea of being photographed for promotional material. The reason is largely related to a lack of tourism awareness and confidence, but also to severe poverty among these members; this makes them shy to be portrayed as indigent to the outside world. In contrast to Category A and B, some men explained that they would also like to be portrayed in ethnic attire, seeing that they grew up in times when it was still customary for men to dress in this way. The majority of respondents explained that their living conditions should be accurately depicted in promotional material as it might cause sympathy amongst tourists and this could result in tourists making financial contributions. All the community members in this category felt that strict control should be exercised to deny tourist access to ceremonies of a confidential nature, such as initiation schools and ancestral worshipping. Community members also indicated that tourist access should be denied to certain restricted areas within the royal capital of Kennedy Tshivhase and inside the Sacred Forest. Special permission has however been granted by Headman Netshidzivhe to drive through the Sacred Forest, but tourists have to stay on the road at all times. Respondents were unaware of tourists' demands and as a result were uncertain whether tourists would accept community constraints and special conditions within the Tshivhase area. In some cases, respondents explained that they are confused because they perceive tourists, who come from the cities, to demand modern infrastructure and are surprised when, despite this, they see them visiting the area.

With the exception of Category A, the vast majority of respondents have not given much thought to the concept of marketing, and as a result appeared to be uncertain regarding the image of the area that should be created. Nonetheless, there are general perceptions that should not go unnoticed. In relation to the perceived image of the area, findings coincide with Haralambopoulos (1996: 522) in that the majority

of community members believed that tourism has a positive impact on its image. The majority of respondents also suggested the continued creation of a cultural image in the Tshivhase area. Community members in most cases felt that strict control measures must be put in place to deny access to sacred sites, namely certain areas within the Sacred Forest, the royal capital of the traditional leader and initiation ceremonies. Also, respondents felt that these sites and initiation ceremonies should not be depicted in promotional material. Community members did however not foresee any problems if tourists attend other ceremonies, such as traditional leader inaugurations, weddings or funerals. The lack of cultural tourism awareness in Category B and C became evident in that most respondents demonstrated little understanding that tourists visit the area due to its remoteness and the uniqueness of the Venda culture. As a result, numerous community members in these categories proposed the introduction of large-scale developments, such as shopping malls in the area, not realising that such developments would hamper the remote and cultural image of the area.

5. Conclusion

This chapter has described community perceptions of tourism in the Tshivhase area. Research findings in relation to the conception of tourists and tourism are in line with Lea *et al* (1994). In general, informants' subjective concept of tourism and tourists was very simplistic and did not match up to the technical definitions in general use in tourism research. As far as the perceptions of CBT are concerned, the majority of community members in all three categories welcomed the principles of community involvement and determinism in CBT, but demonstrated a lack of confidence to take full ownership of tourism developments. Respondents in Category A felt confident to undertake CBT whereas Category B and C did not perceive the community to be able to successfully undertake CBT. Research findings in respect of community perceptions of tourism impacts revealed that support for the tourism industry is relatively strong among community members in all three categories. This finding is consistent with statements by Andereck *et al* (2000), Brunt (1999), Madrigal (1995), Mason (2000) and Johnson (1994) indicating that communities in an early stage of tourism development and in areas of lower or moderate levels of development are

prone to positive perceptions of tourism and in most cases are ignorant of potential negative socio-economic impacts of tourism. Existing findings pertaining to community perceptions of overcrowding, congestion, gambling, inflated prices within the community and seasonality of tourism (cf. Andereck *et al.* 2000; Brunt, 1999; Madrigal, 1995; Mason, 2000 and Johnson, 1994) do not coincide with responses in this study as a result of the Tshivhase area's early stage in the tourism area life cycle and consequently the absence of these impacts in the area. In terms of respondents' perceptions of tourist behaviour, the overwhelming majority of respondents in all three categories were pleased to see tourists visit the area, which can be ascribed to the absence of negative impacts of tourism, such as overcrowding, congestion and inflated prices. With the exception of Category A, the vast majority of respondents have not given much thought to the concept of marketing, and as a result appeared to be uncertain pertaining to the image of the area that should be created. Nonetheless, respondents did indicate certain views relating to the presentation of their culture in tourism, for example that strict control should be exercised to exclude sensitive cultural aspects from promotional material. In some cases, respondents proposed the introduction of large-scale developments, not realising that such developments will hamper the remote and cultural ambience of the area.

Research findings in this chapter illustrate the divergent, and sometimes surprising, views community members hold about tourism development. By extension, the responses in this study showed significant differences to the research done by others. This is because perceptions are influenced by a number of community and individual characteristics that fluctuate from one community to another. This brings us to the next chapter, which investigates why the community perceives tourism in the way they do, by discussing the factors that influenced the community perceptions in the Tshivhase area.

CHAPTER 4: VARIABLES THAT INFLUENCED COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS IN THE TSHIVHASE AREA

1. Introduction

The variables that are discussed in this chapter are based on both existing literature findings and my own research. To determine the importance of variables mentioned in the literature, I investigated the perceptions of respondents in different spheres of life. I also asked community members how they see fellow community members as perceiving tourism and the variables they believe influence fellow community members' perceptions.

Most of the studies investigating host perceptions of tourism have focused on differences in the perceived impacts of tourism among different types of local residents (Tosun, 2002: 231). These types have been identified on the basis of personal economic reliance on the tourism industry, the type and extent of resident-visitor interaction, cultural similarity, socio-demographic factors (such as age group, gender, education and occupation), distance of residence from the central tourism zone, and the overall level of tourism development in the community (Ap, 1990; Johnson *et al* 1994; Lindberg *et al* 1997; Madrigal, 1995; Mason *et al* 2000; Smith *et al*, 1998; Teye *et al* 2002). There is generally consensus on the following:

- Heavy tourism concentration on a destination area leads to negative host attitudes towards tourists and tourism in general (Pizam 1978);
- Hosts employed in the tourism industry were more favourably disposed towards tourists than those not employed in the industry (cf. Haralambopoulos, 1996; Husbands, 1989; Milman *et al*, 1988 and Pizam 1978);
- Host perceptions vary with distance of the resident's home from the tourist zone (Belisle, *et al* 1980);
- Residents strongly agree that tourism provides many economic and cultural benefits (Dogan, 1989; Haralambopoulos, 1996; Liu *et al* 1987).

There are certain factors, such as cultural aspects of the community and level of cross-cultural interaction that will be discussed here that do not appear in most

existing literature, since black rural communities of South Africa have characteristics that do not always coincide with community characteristics elsewhere in the world. Another reason for adding these factors is that most studies have looked at areas with relatively large, well-established tourism industries (Long *et al* 1990).

2. Level of Cross-cultural Interaction

2.1 Past cross-cultural interaction

Previous studies have concluded that the level of tourist-host interaction influences the host's perceptions. In this study, it is argued that interaction with any non-African culture can influence community members' perceptions of tourists and tourism – hence the word usage cross-cultural interaction and not tourist-host interaction. According to Reisinger (2003: 156), perceptions of culturally different people depend upon the degree of cultural similarity and the knowledge of the other's culture. The knowledge of the other's culture can be based on cross-cultural interactions these communities have had in the past, especially if these people had little exposure to other cultures in the meanwhile. The justification for the inclusion of this section is underpinned by the possibility that early interactions with western culture, such as that with travellers, missionaries and apartheid officials will still have an influence on the people's current perceptions of tourism, irrespective of whether those early encounters were tourism related or not. The possibility that community members associate tourists with early groups who visited the area is prompted by the fact that early groups who visited the Tshivhase area had been predominantly white, as are tourists who visit the Tshivhase area today. The influence of historical events on community perceptions of tourism will be moulded by the nature of the events that occurred and whether those events are associated with tourism or tourists in any way. The impacts of these historical events on community perceptions will now be investigated.

2.2 Historical overview of the Tshivhase area's people

Given that this study's main focus is not a historical analysis of the Venda, only a brief cultural historical overview of the Tshivhase area is given to determine the degree of cross-cultural interaction these communities have had in the past and thus anticipate its influence on current community perceptions of tourists and tourism.

The pre-colonial era showed the migration of the different groups to the present area, known as Venda, that was described in chapter 1. The colonial and apartheid eras orchestrated a reconfiguration of traditional leadership politics in Venda. A new form of local government began in Venda in 1913, when the government of the Union of South Africa demarcated specific territories as 'reserves' for black people. Given its obsession with ethnic difference, the apartheid government emphasised that each ethnic group or people was endowed with the inalienable right to become self-governing in its own territory and to mark out the path of its own historical destiny. In the light of this ideology, the Venda were recognised not only as distinct from non-Venda, but also as a single people, which should commence the process of becoming a political entity with its own territorial state. This led to several changes in the form of political representation (Fokwang, 2003: 39). Eventually, the homeland of Venda became nominally independent in 1979 but was not recognized by any other country except South Africa. Facing economic collapse, Venda authorities applied for readmission into South Africa in 1991. Their petition was essentially overtaken by the political negotiations and constitutional reforms of the early 1990s, which led to the dissolution of the homelands in 1994 (Hanisch, 2002: 368; Lahiff, 1997; Fokwang, 2003: 39-41).

There were severe socio-economic implications of the homelands ideology. The worst poverty in SA is concentrated in the former 'homelands', or bantustans, the thirteen per cent of the country reserved for occupation by black people. The homelands have their origins in the small areas of land left in the hands of African people following the colonial and settler conquests of the nineteenth century, but took on greater significance during the period of industrialization following the discovery of diamonds and gold. In the early decades of the twentieth century, these 'native reserves' were preserved and even expanded by the state, as reservoirs of

cheap labour for the mines, factories and farms of 'white' South Africa. Denied political and other rights in the white areas, black workers and their families were left to supplement their meagre wage earnings with whatever they could produce for themselves in the poorly developed and overcrowded rural reserves. Under the apartheid regime, from 1948 to 1994, millions of black people were forcibly removed from cities and farms and relocated in the ten 'homelands' designated for the country's various linguistic groups. These territories all acquired the trappings of self-rule and their own authoritarian regimes, and four of them – Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana and Venda – were granted the unlikely status of 'independent' republics (Gutteridge *et al* 1995; Lahiff, 1997).

Social and economic conditions within the black homelands were (and continue to be) extremely harsh, by any standards. Demographic structures were heavily biased towards women, children, and pensioners, due to the prevalence of male migrant labour. Nearly 70 percent of the men worked elsewhere in South Africa, however, and at least 40 percent of the homeland's income was migrant labour wages (Lahiff, 1997:2). Welfare services and infrastructure were poorly developed, and general standards of living were far below those in the rest of South Africa. Industrial development, other than mining, was virtually non-existent, and there were few formal employment opportunities outside the government service. Unlike other homelands, Venda actually drew most of the 700,000 people assigned to live there. Its economy depended on agriculture and small industry, and coal mining began in the late 1980s. Agriculture, with the exception of a number of large government projects and a small elite of private farmers, was poorly developed compared to the rest of the country, and was oriented mainly towards household consumption. Land in the homelands was almost entirely held under the system of so-called communal tenure, controlled by the tribal leaders and village headmen. These 'traditional' leaders were promoted by the apartheid regime as the principal form of local government in the reserves, and played an important part in the operation of the homeland system.

In April 1994, when all homeland areas were reincorporated into South Africa, their administrations were absorbed into the new provincial structures. In the Limpopo Province, which is composed of three former homelands, and one former 'white'

area, the task of integrating the multiplicity of institutions, and tackling the enormous social and economic problems inherited from the apartheid era, is proving particularly difficult. A system of democratic local government has been established within the former homelands only since November 1995, but at least in Venda, this was not yet operational by mid-1996. This has left the 'traditional' leaders, who have survived the transition to democracy with their powers virtually intact (Lahiff, 1997). Despite the hardships that were suffered in the homeland of Venda, apartheid was, however, compared to other areas in South Africa, less invasive and visible in Venda. Of all the homelands, Venda was one of the least compromised, keeping both its geographic and cultural integrity, and largely being left to mind its own business during the dark years of apartheid. Its boundaries have regained their former fuzziness, within Limpopo, but the region has retained its strong, independent identity (Gutteridge *et al* 1995).

One of the most significant impacts apartheid has had on the Tshivhase area is the reconfiguration of leadership politics, in specific terms the fact that the Mphephu dynasty emerged as the dominant lineage during the apartheid era. Respondents' disapproval of the former apartheid regime is largely associated with their resentment of Patrick Mphephu for having used his dominant role in the homeland government to attempt a revival of the ancient Venda Kingdom and to reunite the entire Venda territory under his leadership. During field research it was noted that negative feelings towards the Mphephu dynasty are much stronger than negative feelings towards the former 'white' government who implemented the homeland policies. This is attributed to the on-going contestation among the 25 tribal authorities (each of which constitutes a separate area of jurisdiction), especially between the Mphephu and Tshivhase tribal authorities, which are, in genealogical terms, the 'senior' Venda tribal authorities. During the 1980s, Patrick Mphephu co-opted almost all the major traditional leaders in the other dynasties including John Tshivhase, the regent of the Tshivhase tribal authority. Patrick Mphephu then declared himself president for life of the Republic of Venda (Fokwang, 2003: 42).

Fokwang indicates the Tshivhase tribal authority's dislike of early colonisers and the apartheid regime.

“One of the reasons for the rivalry between the Tshivhase and Mphephu is that the Tshivhase perceive the Mphephu as having been more accommodating to the colonisers than they were. This is a reference both to the Mphephu role in the wars against the Boers between 1867 and 1899 and to their collaboration with the apartheid regime. The Tshivhase also perceive the Mphephu group as more ‘acculturated’ owing to their geographical proximity to the white settlements of Louis Trichardt (Makhado) and Schoemansdal. In particular the Tshivhase resent the fact that Mphephu lorded it over their chieftdom in his attempt to revive the Venda kingdom during the homeland period...The Tshivhase continue to see themselves as the ‘embodiment’ of the fighting spirit of the Venda as expressed in their name – Tshivhase, meaning ‘one who burned and conquered the houses of the others’ (2003: 41).”

The true impact of the history of Venda on community perceptions of tourism is difficult to determine. It is possible that community members perceive some link between their oppressed past and white foreigners visiting the area these days. In the majority of cases, though, community members did not seem to associate historical events as described above with tourism and as a result these events do not exercise any noticeable influence on community perceptions of tourists and tourism. This can be partially ascribed to the fact that the first significant introduction of tourism development in the study area only occurred during 1998, four years after the formal ending of apartheid (Directorate Tourism, 2002: 2). During interviews with respondents it became evident that they had the tendency to perceive tourism as a new initiative and a development tool that is implemented by the African National Congress (ANC) government to uplift communities. To quote an African Ivory Route employee, “We cannot link our controversial past with tourism seeing that colonialism and apartheid are associated with oppression whereas tourism signifies progress and a bright future”. An elder in the community explained, “When I think of tourism I think of a new beginning for my children and a step away from previous years of hardship”.

Even though community perceptions of tourism do not appear to be directly related to perceptions of historical events, these events have had a major impact on the social and economic situation in the study area and these in turn influence

community perceptions of tourism (cf. Lahiff, 1997). Socio-economic variables that influence community perceptions are discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter. Older respondents' perceptions about CBT illuminated the damage apartheid caused on the psychological status of older community members. Most of them had a propensity to be very insecure about the abilities of their community as a result of former apartheid policies that engendered a dependence on the white government. Their low levels of education and limited exposure to foreigners certainly also predisposed them to this limited vision.

3. Level of Tourism Development and Economic Dynamics

The perceptions of tourism held by communities are closely linked to the level of tourism development, also referred to as the tourism area life cycle (Johnson *et al* 1994: 630; Van Harssel, 1994: 186; Pearce *et al* 1996: 17). Moreover, literature reveals a close relationship between level of tourism development and economic activity within the study area (Allen *et al* 1993). These aspects are therefore evaluated in order to determine the influence they exercise on community perceptions in the Tshivhase area.

3.1 The tourism area life cycle

The tourism area life cycle refers to the main stages in the life of a tourist destination (Bennet, 1995: 32). Tourist destinations are dynamic entities, which may undergo changes or evolve in either positive or negative ways. According to Bennet (1995), the life cycle of a destination can typically be divided into six phases (in some cases one or more of the phases may be absent). A brief overview of the tourism area life cycle, as outlined by Bennet (1995), is given in order to provide a better understanding of its different phases.

Initial exploration phase

During the initial stages, few people visit an attraction due to factors such as inaccessibility and the absence of tourist facilities. The tourists at this stage are

typically people who prefer to explore new areas and who love off-the-beaten track destinations. They often use existing local facilities and contact with the host community is usually high. These tourists usually travel in small groups and the area remains relatively unspoilt.

Involvement phase

As locals realise that there is money to be made, they usually start to promote tourism to their destination. As more people visit the area, facilities are upgraded and gradually a tourist season and market start to develop. At this stage, the local residents offer most of the facilities and contact between the host community and tourists is high.

Development phase

At the development stage control of resources, policies and development is often taken out of the hands of the locals and big developers start to move in. The number of tourists may become greater than the local population and the area's economy may become almost totally dependent upon the tourism industry. Fashionable new facilities replace the old ones. Unfortunately these new facilities may sometimes spoil the natural beauty of the environment. At this stage, host community members often find themselves in conflict with the aims of large developers.

Consolidation phase

In the consolidation phase, the number of tourists still increases, although not at the same high rate as before. An increasing advertising campaign is therefore usually started and all kinds of measures taken to try and lengthen the tourist season as much as possible. New tourist markets are also explored.

Stagnation phase

During this phase, the number of visitors reaches a peak and the area relies more on re-visits from tourists. The area is not as 'hot' or fashionable as it used to be. Environmental, social, and economic problems also now become more obvious.

Decline or rejuvenation phase

Only truly unique areas can anticipate an almost timeless attractiveness, which will withstand the pressures of time. In most cases decline eventually sets in and the destination loses an increasing number of tourists to other competing destinations. Destinations sometimes, however, avoid slipping too far into decline by launching a successful rejuvenation programme.

The perceptions of tourism held by communities are closely linked to the tourism area life cycle and changes over time (Johnson *et al* 1994: 630; Van Harsstel, 1994: 186; Pearce *et al* 1996: 17). Initially, the feelings and reactions of the host community are often positive; tourism appears to present exciting new opportunities. At this stage, tourism exposes the community to new opportunities, often increasing independence from religious and/or family environments and awakening confidence in technology (Van Harsstel, 1994: 187). In many cases, however, this enthusiasm decreases as the number of tourists increases and facilities become overstretched. Community members then develop negative objective perceptions. Johnson *et al* (1994: 630) noted that community members go through the following stages in the tourism area life cycle: welcome, development, resentment, confrontation, and destruction.

In order to fully understand the relationship between the tourism area life cycle and perceptions, we also need to differentiate between subjective and objective perceptions. The perceptions of communities who have never been exposed to the tourism industry (or have had very limited exposure to it), and whose perceptions for the most part, are created on the premise of past cross-cultural experiences or oral tradition, may differ from the perceptions of communities who have had first-hand exposure to tourism. In the absence of experience, the product is assessed on the basis of *subjective perceptions*, not reality. Once the community becomes more exposed to tourism, it develops *objective perceptions* – also referred to as attitudes. Therefore, subjective perceptions will convert into objective perceptions as a destination moves through the phases of the tourism area life cycle or as tourism awareness programmes are introduced (Reisinger, 2003: 150-151). Once negative tourism impacts appear in the host community, positive subjective perceptions can transform into negative objective perceptions.

The level of tourism development in the Tshivhase area is probably the most significant factor that influenced community perceptions of tourists and tourism. The first significant tourism project in the Tshivhase area came with the African Ivory Route concept that was initiated by the Tourism Directorate of Limpopo Province in 1998. Prior to the initiation of the African Ivory Route camp in the Tshivhase area, this area was relatively unknown to outsiders. The Tshivhase area's greatest tourism potential is believed by the developers of the African Ivory Route to be the fascinating cultural practices and beliefs of the people and the cultural significance associated with natural features in the area, such as the mysterious Lake Fundudzi, the Sacred Forest and Tshatsingo Potholes (Fairhurst *et al* 1999: 31). Despite the interest shown by tourism practitioners in the unique cultural and natural features of the study area, tourism development has remained in an early stage.

Given that the African Ivory Route aims at the empowerment and upliftment of disadvantaged communities, implementation of the concept was far slower than tourism initiatives undertaken by the private sector. To date 9 of the intended 12 camps have been developed and are operational – most of them since November 2001. The camps are currently operating at an average occupancy level of 23%, with the wildlife camps receiving significantly more visitors than the cultural camps. In 2002 for example, occupancy of the African Ivory Route *cultural* camps were a mere 2.93% (African Ivory Route office, 2004), which indicates the study area's early phase in the tourism area life cycle. In the light of these figures, the Tshivhase area falls between the initial exploration phase and involvement phase of the tourism area life cycle. The study area's early phase of the tourism area life cycle is the principle reason for the prevalence of subjectivity of conceptions and perceptions in the study area.

3.2 Economic dynamics within the community

The significance of tourism impacts on community perceptions depends on the type and intensity of tourism developed and the characteristics of the host community. Long (1990: 64) and Johnson *et al* (1994: 631) argue that the economic dynamics of the community should be taken into account when community perceptions of tourism impacts are identified.

Economic benefits are often the motivating factor for many communities' involvement in tourism (Van Harsseel, 1994: 151). If the community receives economic benefits, they will most likely develop positive perceptions about tourism. Accordingly, Van Harsseel (1994: 186) states that communities often welcome tourism because of the promise of economic benefits. Thus, the idea of potential economic benefits, before they have been received, can create positive subjective perceptions. On the other hand, the community will develop negative perceptions of tourism if they perceive tourism to create negative economic impacts, such as economic and employment distortions. Also, local resentment can sometimes be generated if many tourist facilities are owned and managed by outsiders (Inskeep, 1991: 371). Van Harsseel (1994: 189) continues to say that resentment of tourism can be based on a feeling of loss of control over the community. This is very often the case when mass tourism threatens community determinism in CBT.

A study undertaken by Allen *et al* (1993: 31 – 32) proposed the following relationship between the level of tourism development and the total economic activity. Residents from rural communities with low economic activity and low tourism development have high hopes and/or expectations for future tourism development. Further, residents from rural communities with high economic activity and high tourism development have actually realised some benefits from tourism development. Thus, residents from these types of communities have more favourable attitudes toward tourism development. However, those communities with high economic activity and low tourism development are economically stable, so their residents do not see the need for tourism development. Additionally, those with low economic activity and high tourism development are discouraged because they have not realised the economic benefits they anticipated from tourism development.

The Tshivhase area is situated in one of the poorest provinces in South Africa and has low economic activity, which certainly would affect community perceptions of tourism. A census undertaken in 2001 revealed that Limpopo Province has a labour force of 1 296 808 people between the ages of 16 and 65. Only 663 847 (51%) of its labour force was employed, whereas 632 961 (49%) people were unemployed. Of its total population, 1 627 751 were not economically active (Statistics South Africa, 2001). Moreover, Lahiff (1997) points out that much of the worst poverty was concentrated in the former 'homelands' which were established under the South African system of apartheid. He continues that being denied political and other rights in the white areas, black workers and their families were left to supplement their meagre wage earnings by whatever they could produce for themselves in the poorly-developed and over-crowded rural reserves. These findings serve as a good indication of the economic status of Limpopo Province and more specifically, the Tshivhase area. This, however, does not necessarily reflect the respondents' perceived quality of life. Rahman (1993: 205) indicates that potential economic growth resulting from tourism development has however not always resulted in the creation of positive perceptions among community members. This can be accredited to certain qualitative dimensions of life, such as communalism and strong family ties, to which ordinary disadvantaged communities give considerable importance. This may not coincide with western ideas. Research findings of this study strongly coincide with Allen *et al* (1993: 31-32) that rural communities with low economic activity and low tourism development have high hopes and expectations for tourism development. The interviews disclosed that the majority of older community members were content with being subsistence farmers, despite being 'poor' in monetary terms. The general view was however different among economically active and younger community members. In their case, low economic activity generated high hopes and expectations for personal upliftment, and consequently for tourism development. In some cases it was observed that older community members had high expectations that tourism would create employment opportunities for young community members, but not for themselves *per se*.

4. Socio-demographic Variables

The majority of studies (cf. Husbands, 1989; Perdue *et al* 1990; Reisinger 2003) recognise that perceptions and attitudes are bound up with social structure and that those socio-demographic variables that have the greatest bearing on social status distinctions are the ones most likely to be associated with differences in perception among community members. Literature reveals that education, age, and occupation are the most important socio-demographic factors in this regard, and that there are underlying relationships between these factors (Husbands, 1989; Teye *et al* 2002; Reisinger, 2003).

4.1 Age group and level of education

A study undertaken by Husbands (1989: 242) in Zambia revealed that age group influences community perceptions and that it is closely associated with occupation and education.

Age groups, in conjunction with level of education, have been found to be the most important variable associated with community conceptions and perceptions of tourism in the Tshivhase area. Low education levels of community members are evident in the census findings of 2001, which revealed that more than 800 000 people in Limpopo Province are without any schooling, 300 000 received some primary education, 120 000 completed primary education, 650 000 received some secondary education, 350 000 finished grade 12 and 180 000 received tertiary education, the last category being primarily situated in urban areas (Statistics South Africa, 2001).

In the Tshivhase area, respondents' age is related to level of education in that younger community members (roughly between the age of 16 and 24) have obtained a much higher education than older community members (roughly 50 years and older). During interviews with older community members it became apparent that they have low status jobs and very low levels of education (in the region of grade 4), which greatly influence their perceptions of tourism. This can be attributed to the unswerving neglect of the education of Africans while colonialism held sway (Husbands, 1989: 248) and in the South African context, the elaborate involvement of apartheid. During the apartheid era, welfare services, education and infrastructure

in the former homelands were poorly developed, and general standards of living were far below those in the rest of South Africa (Lahiff, 1997).

Respondents with a relatively high level of education (grade 10 and higher) demonstrated a good understanding of the outside world and therefore developed more acute conceptions and perceptions of tourists and tourism. Since tourism has not been introduced at school level, they have not learnt about tourism as such, but merely obtained an awareness of other cultures and places in the world. In recent years, the South African public and private sector have funded numerous tourism awareness programmes in an attempt to enhance local economic development in black rural communities. Some of these programmes have been introduced in the Tshivhase area and have influenced communities' perceptions of tourism giving rise to a better understanding of the tourism industry.

Analysis of interviewee responses revealed that a major gap exists between the values and behaviour of the younger and older generation in black rural communities. The majority of older community members was still anchored to their traditional way of life and relied largely on subsistence farming for survival. The younger generation on the other hand had the tendency to move away from their cultural roots by adopting a 'western attitude' and migrating to the cities. Reisinger (2003) indicates that differences in cultural values create differences in people's perceptions. For instance, aesthetic values of the young generation, being more 'westernised', develop positive perceptions in respect of tourists' clothing, whereas the older generation with different values, perceive the clothing of tourists as disrespectful. An attitude of rebelliousness among the youth further prompted this substantial generation gap.

4.2 Occupation

Studies undertaken by Husbands (1989: 245) and Teye *et al* (2002: 679) revealed that when perception is evaluated in terms of social status, occupation emerged as the most important variable. The findings of these studies are, firstly, that individuals who have attained secondary education, and who have tourism-related jobs, attribute greater importance to tourism. Secondly, persons of the lowest social

status and who do not have tourism-related employment, are indifferent to tourism. Thirdly, persons of the highest social status, who are to some extent non-tourism workers, either view tourism as relatively unimportant, or in an unfavourable light.

Conversely, in the case of the Tshivhase area, respondents' occupation was found to be a less important variable than age and education. Responses during the field research did not concur with the findings mentioned above. Numerous respondents favoured tourism, irrespective of whether they held tourism-related jobs or not. Respondents' occupation did however influence community perceptions of tourism in the following respect. Not surprisingly, respondents who have formal tourism-related jobs, namely African Ivory Route camp staff and in some cases CTA members, demonstrated a better comprehension of the tourism industry than community members who have non-tourism jobs, which can be ascribed to their interaction with tourists as well as tourism training that they have received.

Occupation as a variable is related to age in the sense that older community members in the Tshivhase area are in most cases subsistence farmers. Older community members who have been subsistence farmers for most of their lives demonstrated little understanding of tourism. In the past century, and up until today, numerous community members left rural areas in search of job opportunities. These people (including older community members who have been working in urban areas but who are currently retired) became more exposed to the 'outside' world, even tourism, and as a result developed more objective perceptions of tourism. Certain traditional activities (jobs) that have been performed over the years, and pre-date the introduction of tourism (such as the manufacturing of clay pots and wooden spoons) can be directly applied to tourism. Community members who manufacture and sell these artefacts to tourists are directly exposed to tourism and have developed more objective perceptions than community members who are, for example, cattle herdsman.

4.3 Gender

People with high status might influence the perceptions of their subordinates. In the Venda culture, men possess the authority within a homestead. As such he represents his family at political and economic events. The status of women, on the other hand, is substantially lower than that of their husbands (Eloff, 1968: 55). A woman can still occupy highly influential positions within a community, such as the special status of the principle wife of a traditional leader who is herself the daughter of a tribal leader. A man's father's sister (his aunt on his father's side, referred to in Venda as *makhadzi*) also plays a significant role in his life and assists him in certain decisions he has to make (Stayt, 1968: 122). In contrast to the traditional African way, women are increasingly given more authoritative positions in South Africa and are therefore provided with the opportunity to raise their own views and ideas. This manifests in the founding of the Women's League of the ANC which resolves to organise women and encourage their role in the reconstruction and development of South Africa by promoting a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist society. Moreover the league declares that women shall participate in all political structures of the ANC, in leadership structures and all programmes designed for the socio-economic development of the country (African National Congress Women's League Constitution, 2003). Through observation in the field, it became clear that older community members did not recognize this 'new status' for women, as they continued to perceive men as the authoritative figures in the homestead. This can be ascribed to the tendency of older community members to be fixed in their traditional ways. Younger female respondents demonstrated a realisation of their new status and are beginning to play an increasingly prominent role in community projects.

Field research revealed that men did not influence women's perceptions of tourism in the study area. Both men and women in the study area explained that despite the authoritative role a husband plays, women still have the right to hold their own worldviews. Gender does however play a significant role in that it is closely linked to occupation, particularly in historical terms. Demographic structures in black homelands were heavily biased towards women, children, and pensioners, due to the prevalence of male migrant labour during the colonial period and apartheid years. Women, on the other hand, remained in the rural areas to take care of the children and household duties (Lahiff, 1997). Older women thus had a lower

awareness of other places and cultures than their male counterparts which in turn influenced their perceptions of tourists and tourism. Younger respondents on the other hand did not demonstrate notable differences in perceptions on the basis of their gender.

Age, education and occupation emerged as the most important socio-demographic variables associated with community perceptions of tourism. Respondents in the Tshivhase area with similar socio-demographic characteristics in terms of education, age and occupation demonstrated similar perceptions, which enabled me to categorise community responses in chapter 3.

5. Cultural Aspects within the Community

According to Reisinger (2003: 164-166), perceptions depend on people's value orientations, expectations, experiences, and interests that are culturally determined. Black rural communities in South Africa are more exposed to other cultures and westernisation than before and consequently their culture changes in response to their environmental changes. The changes in the 'material' or 'visible' culture of communities, such as clothing, food production and housing are most visible and readily observable. It is of utmost importance to understand that changes in the outside appearance of the community and its people do not necessarily reflect the people's 'non-material' culture, such as their beliefs, the way they behave and view things, and most importantly for this paper, how they perceive things. Thus, there are factors unique to indigenous Venda communities that influence their perceptions of tourism.

5.1 Socio-political factors in the community

The characteristic indigenous authority system of South African black communities is retained in most rural areas in South Africa up to the present day. This is true in spite of the process of cultural change to which these people have been subjected, and regardless of the fact that they have been under the administrative control of white authorities for many years. The survival of the indigenous authority system

seems all the more remarkable when it is taken into consideration that only a limited segment of it has been statutorily recognised (Lahiff, 1997).

The indigenous authority system is characterised by a political and administrative component on the one hand and a complementary socio-political component on the other. The political and administrative component consists of a central decision-making tribal government (the traditional leader-in-council) that delegates some of its powers and functions to the heads of smaller administrative units. Since their social status gives them the right to issue orders, to hear court cases, and to participate in the political organisation of the tribe, they are termed socio-political authority figures (Coertze, 1973; Kuper, 1947). The importance of socio-political aspects in the community for this study is underpinned by the influence that people with authority exercise over their subordinates. People in a subordinate position can easily feel obligated to perceive things, such as tourism, in the same manner as their superiors, irrespective of whether their superiors' perceptions are objective or not. This happens either out of respect for their superiors or due to the lack of first-hand knowledge to determine their own perceptions of tourism.

The most significant cultural influence on community perceptions is the way in which the senior traditional leader, Kennedy Tshivhase and tribal headmen in the study area influenced the perceptions of commoners, in particular the perceptions of older community members. Respondents reported that Kennedy Tshivhase and the headmen of Mukumbani, Makwarani and Tshidzivhe had spoken to the community about tourism development in the area on several occasions. Since the majority of old community members have not had exposure to the tourism industry, they tended to respect and follow the perceptions of the more informed community members, in particular the traditional leader and headmen.

As indicated before, respondents perceived tourism as a development tool that is implemented by the African National Congress (ANC) government to uplift communities. It is therefore appropriate to indicate Kennedy Tshivhase's relationship with the ANC government as his affiliation with the government influences his people's confidence in government initiatives. Fokwang (2003: 51-52) observed that Tshivhase has become involved in regional and national politics, as

the late Mphephu was during the homeland period, and that he gained prominence and prestige in the ANC. He continues that both the military leader, Gabriel Ramushwana and the ANC stalwart, Walter Sisulu were conspicuously present at his installation in Mukumbani. By 1993 it became clear that Kennedy Tshivhase was an ANC member who had played his cards cleverly in the 1980s. During my period of research, headmen and other commoners in the Tshivhase area frequently referred to Kennedy Tshivhase as “King” although the government has not given recognition to a king in the Limpopo Province. The Tshivhase people did not only speak with extreme pride about their numerical strength as compared to that of other tribal authorities, but also about their senior traditional leader. The point that has to be made here is that respondents’ sanguine perceptions of tourism, in particularly older community members, are to a large extent ascribed to their loyalty to Kennedy Tshivhase and consequently their approval of ANC initiatives, such as tourism development. To quote the headman of Mukumbani, “The community strongly values the views of headmen and our tribal leader, Tshivhase” and “both Kennedy Tshivhase and myself have encouraged the community to welcome tourism, which definitely influenced their perceptions of tourism in a positive way”. The fact that the African Ivory Route is a government-initiated project further soothes perceptions of tourism in the area, which coincides with Dogan (1989: 227) who explains that the attitudes of the governing political group are important in determining the formal efforts to cope with the results of tourism. Whether the tourism development is encouraged or blocked, and whether the effects of tourism are effectively dealt with, depends very much on the policy of the government.

5.2 The level of cultural pride within the community

The degree to which community perceptions are influenced by cultural impacts depend on the community’s perceptions of their own culture – whether the community prefers cultural change or whether they are proud of their traditional culture. Conservation of cultural heritage might not have a significant influence on community perceptions at first, but once the community starts to realise the importance of cultural traditions as a resource for tourism, the perceptions of their own culture become positive and as a result they welcome conservation of their cultural heritage.

In the Tshivhase area, community perceptions of their own culture exercised a major influence on perceptions of cultural tourism. Field research revealed that respondents who have a high sense of cultural pride are in favour of cultural tourism, cultural exchange and cultural conservation, whereas community members who tend to move away from their cultural roots are indifferent about cultural tourism. Community perceptions of their culture were strongly related to age in the sense that old community members are still anchored in their traditional ways whereas younger community members are inclined to move away from their cultural roots. This is in line with Dogan (1989: 224) who found that some sections of the host societies may not object to the disintegration of traditional culture under the impact of tourism and in fact they may display an active effort in the demolition of the traditional social structure and for the adoption of Western culture symbolised by tourism. He continues that such a strategy to cope with the effects of tourism has been generally observed among the youthful and educated sectors of the Third World countries.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS OF COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE CBT DEVELOPMENT

1. Analysis of Research Findings

Several conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study on the significance of variables that influence community perceptions of tourism. Firstly, study findings suggest a strong relationship between community feelings towards their culture and the perceptions of cultural tourism. The vast majority of community members interviewed were proud of their cultural heritage and were in favour of cultural tourism development, as it was perceived to conserve the community's cultural heritage.

Secondly, the study findings confirm that community perceptions of tourism are influenced by the community's stage in the tourism area life cycle as well as its economic status (Husbands, 1989: 239; Madrigal, 1995: 86; Mason 2000: 392; Johnson, 1994: 630; Tsartas, 1992: 524). The results of this study indicate that support for the tourism industry is very strong among community members, and these findings are consistent with statements by Andereck *et al* (2000), Madrigal (1995), Mason (2000) and Johnson (1994) that indicate that communities in an early stage of tourism development tend to be prone to positive perceptions of tourism. It was noted that poverty in the area boosts community members' aspiration for tourism development. In most cases, respondents were ignorant of the possibility of negative socio-cultural impacts appearing in the Tshivhase area in future.

Thirdly, study results verify statements by Andereck *et al* (2000), Husbands (1989) and Madrigal (1995) that education is a crucial indicator of social status and, together with age and occupation, emerged as the most important variables associated with the perceptions of tourism in the Tshivhase area. Respondents' age is related to level of education in that younger community members (roughly between the age of 16 and 24) have obtained a much higher standard of education than older community members (roughly 50 years and older). During interviews with older respondents it became very clear that they had low status jobs and very low

levels of education (in the region of grade 4), which greatly influenced their perceptions of tourism. Respondents with a relatively high level of education (grade 10 and higher) demonstrated a good understanding of the outside world and therefore developed more acute conceptions and perceptions of tourists and tourism. Analysis of interviewee responses revealed that a major gap exists between the values and behaviour of the younger and older generation in the Tshivhase area. The majority of older community members is still anchored to their traditional ways of life and relies mostly on subsistence farming for survival. The younger generation on the other hand tends to move away from their cultural roots by adopting a 'western attitude' and migrating to cities. Reisinger (2003) noted that differences in cultural values create differences in people's perceptions. For instance, aesthetic values of the young generation, being more westernised, develop positive perceptions in respect of the clothing of tourists, whereas the older generation with different values often perceive the clothing of tourists as disrespectful.

Fourthly, it became clear that certain aspects that are particular to African communities exercise a significant influence on community perceptions. It was noted that the traditional leader, Kennedy Tshivhase, and headmen exercise a notable influence on the perceptions of subordinate community members, in particular older community members who have had no first-hand exposure to tourism. Dogan (1989: 227) explains that the attitudes of the governing political group are important in determining the formal efforts to cope with the results of tourism. Whether the tourism development is encouraged or blocked, and whether the effects of tourism are effectively dealt with, depends very much on the policy of the government. Tourism cannot develop without an active encouragement of the government (Dogan, 1989), and more specifically the traditional leader and headmen in the case of this study.

2. Expectations from Tourism

In summary of the research findings, it can be said that community members in the three categories have the following expectations of tourism development in their area.

Category A

Dogan (1989) noted that youthful and educated sectors of the Third World countries might not always object to the disintegration of traditional culture under the impact of tourism. However, despite this category's relatively high level of education, community members regarded their cultural traditions as highly valuable, which can most probably be ascribed to their involvement in cultural tourism. Community members were quite realistic in their expectations of tourism and realised that tourism can create jobs for some community members. They understood that tourism development would not completely eradicate poverty because of the small scale of tourism development in the area. They expected tourism to provide employment and improved infrastructure and facilities in their village, for both tourism and general services. In some cases, people awaited tourism and environmental awareness programmes in the hope that their introduction would ensure sustainability of their socio-cultural and natural environment. Community members predicted a bright future for tourism in their area if training programmes are properly introduced.

Category B

The community's expectations in this category tended to be more unrealistic. In contrast to Category A, community members in this category tend to adopt a more modernistic outlook on life and to move away from their traditional way of living, a tendency that has generally been observed among the youth and educated sectors of host communities (Dogan, 1989). In some cases, community members expected large numbers of tourists to visit their area and welcomed the idea of large hotels and shopping malls being built to optimise economic growth. Numerous community members were keen for a nature reserve to be developed in the area to attract even more visitors. People felt that the money generated from tourism should be used to

improve living standards of the community as a whole, by for instance building health care centres and schools. Most of the people in this category are employed in other sectors, still attending school or retired and were therefore generally not concerned about job opportunities.

Category C

The little understanding this category has of tourism is mostly derived from their own observations of 'white visitors' and tourism infrastructure in the area. People in this category tended to be sceptical and uncomfortable when asked questions, probably because of their lack of tourist-host interaction. The majority of community members did not really understand what tourism entails and therefore did not have expectations of tourism. In some cases, community members expected tourism to provide job opportunities and more importantly, for their children. Old people in the community were very concerned about the well-being of their children, many of whom are unemployed and thus prone to criminal activity. There was a general feeling that tourism would provide jobs to ensure a better future for their children. Most of the people in this category long for the benefits mentioned above, but simultaneously fear change and do not wish for severe transformation of their social and natural environment. In some cases, old community members did not want any tourists to visit them or their area, because they feared that tourists would take their land or force them to abandon their culture.

It seems evident that respondents in each category had contrasting expectations of tourism. On the one hand, the findings suggest that there is a high degree of agreement among respondents with regards to the positive economic and socio-cultural impacts of tourism on the area. Despite their very favourable disposition towards the industry, some respondents recognised the possibility of some negative social impacts. In most cases, however, respondents were convinced that these negative consequences of tourism would not emerge in the area as a result of distinct African characteristics, such as the custodian role of the traditional leader and generally strong morals and values within the community. Respondents are strongly anchored to their traditional ways and in most cases did not desire drastic socio-cultural changes in the community. Simultaneously they desired aspects of western culture, in particular the wealth and comforts associated with it.

Respondents' naivety about the potential manifestation of negative tourism impacts on their culture and social life is a point of concern if one considers Dogan's statement, that, "the disruption of intimate and personal relations is often associated with commercialisation and materialism in human relationships, which is perhaps one of the most common consequences of tourism" (1989: 218). Another important conclusion is that certain socio-demographic characteristics played a significant role in understanding significant perceptual differences between Category A, B and C. The most crucial and explanatory socio-demographic characteristics were education, age, and occupation. Category B and C, in particular, demonstrated little understanding of the tourism industry as a result of low levels of education.

3. Recommendations

Two major shortcomings of existing CBT projects are the lack of appropriate marketing strategies and also the lack of long-term training programmes. Moreover, it has been observed that community members in the Tshivhase area have not observed the negative consequences of tourism and seem ignorant of its potential manifestation in the area. It is therefore recommended that the following issues be considered.

3.1 Community Education Programmes

Education programmes are the key to ensure community empowerment and participation in CBT, in particular when one deals with a community that has not been exposed to tourism before and which has generally very low levels of education. Inskeep (1991: 404) and Rahman (1993: 27) argue that the first step in CBT is to conduct a survey of community characteristics and then to design programmes that are in line with these characteristics. It should be presented in a manner that is educational but also interesting to the community members. Furthermore, the content of the programmes should be in line with the level of education that the audience has achieved in order to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. Determining the education level of the community is the responsibility of the project leaders since the community members might not

necessarily have the confidence to admit when they do not understand. Once awareness programmes have been introduced, it should be ensured that community members have realistic expectations to avoid disappointment. The length and intensity of respective programmes will vary.

In the light of the research findings in this study, the following are different types of training programmes that can be considered for the Tshivhase area.

- Tourism employee training programmes

These education programmes have already been introduced in the study area and are directed at community members who formally work in the tourism industry, such as African Ivory Route camp staff. Additional training can be introduced to educate non-African Ivory Route employees on various aspects of tourism like hospitality management, entrepreneurship, field guiding and the impacts of tourism. This will ensure that they understand what tourism entails, and they can then equip themselves to perform their duties satisfactorily, which will also enable them to participate in strategic decision making. According to Pleumarom (2002: 3) most local communities initially do not have the required skills to participate in tourism and are often viewed as incapable of contributing more than cheap labour. Their potential as unique nature guides and cultural interpreters is most often not realised by tourism developers and as a consequence tourism ends up not benefiting local communities. Another major shortcoming of existing training programmes is that they are short term in nature. It is recommended that training facilitators shift towards long-term training programmes and also make use of partnerships with experienced tourism employees or volunteers who can assist communities at their tourism ventures on a long-term basis.

- General tourism awareness programmes

Research findings in this study clearly revealed that the majority of community members who have negative perceptions of tourism fall under Category C. This can be attributed to their low level of education and limited resident-visitor interaction that results in their misunderstanding of the nature and scope of the tourism industry. They mistakenly believe that tourists visit their area to take their land. Community

members who have a relatively high level of education (Category A and B) have predominantly positive perceptions towards tourism development. In light of the above, it is recommended that general tourism awareness programmes be introduced and directed towards older and uninformed community members. The introduction of tourism awareness programmes might reduce fear of tourism and tourists among Category C, as they will develop a better understanding of tourists and the industry. Moreover, Pleumarom (2002) observes that local communities who get involved in tourism development are often kept in the dark, and the lives of thousands can easily be ruined when the project fails. Since the overall majority of community members perceive tourism to be only positive, it is essential to also explain the potential negative consequences of tourism to the community during awareness programmes. This will enable the community to make informed decisions regarding tourism development and consequently help with the development of objective perceptions amongst community members.

- Community mobilisation programmes

Research findings illuminated that the community won't be able to take full responsibility of CBT by merely obtaining knowledge about tourism. For example, in relation to community perceptions about the management of CBT projects, some respondents stated: "We need to work together, because we cannot go anywhere successfully without the assistance of white people" and: "We cannot own these things because tourism is for white people". These responses emphasise the psychological damage that was caused by apartheid policies. This lack of confidence would certainly influence the success of any kind of community development project. The primary objective of a community mobilisation programme will be to assist individuals to make personal gains in self-understanding, confidence, problem-solving ability, and insight into both personal and community factors affecting the well-being of their community.

- Indigenous knowledge programmes

Environmental and cultural degradation of indigenous communities is evident all over the world. Case studies on the Aborigine in Australia (James, 1999) indicate that jobs that require traditional skills and knowledge should be provided in order to keep

the culture of a host community alive. These jobs enhance cultural pride and encourage the relearning of certain traditions, such as dances and stories. Research revealed that the younger generation in the Tshivhase area tend to turn their backs on their own cultural heritage and opt instead for a western lifestyle. Indigenous knowledge programmes can easily be incorporated into school modules or even as a supplementary subject during weekends. The objective of such a programme would not be to force young people to adopt a traditional lifestyle, but merely to engender a sense of cultural pride among them. As Dogan (1989: 221) points out, “to understand the relationship between tourism and culture, we need to recognise culture as internally differentiated, active and changing. We must also recognise that cultures are not passive, and must become more sensitive to the cultural strategies people develop to limit, channel, and incorporate the effects of international tourism”. Older respondents stated that they struggle to understand the way in which teenagers in the community behave, and feel that this is disrespectful, but realised that there is little that they can do to change this. Introducing these programmes might engender a better understanding between older and younger community members in the Tshivhase area.

- Tourism youth awareness programmes

In Baguio City, in the Cordillera Region of Northern Philippines, the indigenous knowledge of forest and watershed management practised by the Ifugaos in ensuring the sustainability of their terraces, became the model for a child environmental awareness programme, named “Eco-Walk”. They saw the need for experiential learning to strengthen classroom learning through simple hikes to and exploration of the city’s endangered watershed. Child participants have succeeded in reforesting the vital water source, whereas earlier ambitious and better-funded efforts by adults have failed (Dacawi *et al* 2002: 4). This case study indicates the need to involve the youth in tourism and allow them to make their contribution. Some of the ways in which children can become involved in the Tshivhase area are for example through performing in cultural dance groups, producing arts and crafts and participating in ‘anti-pollution programmes’ to keep their areas clean and attractive.

3.2 Boundary Maintenance

Perceptions of the socio-cultural changes resulting from tourism generally lead to some reactions on the part of the residents to adjust themselves to the new conditions. To the extent that the impacts of tourism are perceived as positive, their reaction takes the form of acceptance of the change; to the extent that it is perceived as negative, their reaction becomes more akin to resistance (Dogan, 1989: 220). Community responses in the Tshivhase area revealed that tourism is in most cases accepted by the community without any resistance or negative feeling. With the exception of initiation ceremonies, the majority of respondents in all three categories did not foresee any problems if tourists attended ceremonies such as traditional leader inaugurations, funerals, weddings or visits to their homes. This might not be a problem at this stage, but as tourist numbers increase to the Tshivhase area these ceremonies could potentially lose their true meaning or local resentment might surface as a result of loss of privacy. This scenario has occurred in several communities elsewhere in the world. Dogan (1989) noted for example that the weakening of traditional ceremonies under the impact of tourism has led to hostility against tourists and tourist facilities. A major pull factor to Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp is that tourists have the opportunity to interact closely with the host community. The point that has to be made here is that the formulation of well-defined policies to protect the community's privacy and culture, but at the same time allow tourists some degree of interaction with community members, will be a definite prerequisite for the sustainable implementation of tourism in the Tshivhase area.

As to avoid a situation where the host community resents tourism, Dogan (1989: 223) proposes a process referred to as boundary maintenance. This process involves establishing a well-defined boundary between the foreign and the local cultures and presenting the local traditions to foreigners in a different context so that the effects of the foreigners on the local culture are minimised. A good example of this process is reflected in a study by Buck (1978) on the reaction of the Amish communities to the effects of tourism. Buck notes that among the Amish – a religious and traditional community in the United States – a distance between the tourists and the residents is maintained; the tourists are discouraged from forming close relationships with the residents by emphasising that it is difficult for them to

understand the local life; and it is stressed that they should show respect for Amish lifestyle and traditions. By employing these strategies, the local culture preserves its coherence and integrity, does not experience disorder and psychological strain, and at the same time, benefits from tourism economically. Another example of a society which has accepted tourism and has protected its traditional culture, is the island of Bali. On this island, traditional dances presented to tourists are changed imperceptibly so that they assume a different meaning in a different context, and consequently their authentic meaning as religious rites is preserved since they are not presented to tourists in their true religious context. Therefore, it is argued, tourism has strengthened the culture of Bali rather than impairing it (Dogan, 1989: 222-223). James (1999) also suggests that strict control measures should be put into place that may enhance the standards of cultural integrity. Cultural activities and information need to be approved by the CTA, tribal councils and senior community members prior to inclusion in the tourism itinerary.

3.3 Appropriate Marketing Approaches

The findings of this study indicate a number of important conditions essential to the understanding of host communities' perceptions toward marketing of their area. Firstly, the majority of respondents indicated that the number of tourists to the Tshivhase area should significantly increase. Thus, high expectations of tourism as a vehicle for the economic development of the Tshivhase area have not yet been met. Because community members have these high expectations the maintenance of positive perceptions calls for urgent and appropriate marketing to be undertaken in the study area. Secondly, it is proposed that the African Ivory Route reconsider their current marketing strategy, in particular the target markets for their cultural product. Currently, the African Ivory Route predominantly attracts the local 4x4 market that seeks adventure and remote wilderness areas, but not necessarily cultural experiences. Community members, understandably and quite correctly, favour international tourists, as "they seem to be more interested in our culture and spend more money on local services and products". Thirdly, community members have certain views pertaining to the image of their area and the way in which certain cultural aspects should be marketed – or for some aspects not to be marketed at all. These views are important marketing and policy considerations for the successful

development of tourism in their area. If community members' views like prohibiting tourist access to sacred sites and ceremonies are not respected and incorporated into the marketing strategy, negative perceptions towards tourism development will increase. This will result in a decrease of satisfaction levels for both tourists and the host community (Reisinger, 2003). In some cases (Category B and C) community members demonstrated expectations pertaining to the image of the area that could jeopardise the area's current attractiveness, for example the introduction of large-scale developments. This, once more, illuminates the need to introduce tourism awareness programmes among the members of the community that fall into these two categories.

As to providing a shared marketing vision for the future, this study proposes that an internal marketing strategy should be conducted within a socially conscious framework that is designed to serve the needs of the community rather than members of the mainstream business sector, also referred to as the growth machine. Most existing tourism public relations programmes are organised and financed by members of the growth machine and are often designed to modify residents' behaviour and perceptions (Madrigal, 1995: 100). It makes little sense for the Tshivhase area to develop and promote tourism if some residents' lack of support for development manifests itself in negative perceptions about tourism, as some respondents in Category B and C disclosed. Rather, the first step in the Tshivhase area's internal marketing programme should be to involve all relevant and interested parties, including the CTA, in a participatory marketing design process aimed at heightening awareness of the consequences of tourism development in the community. It has been observed by Keogh (1990) that residents who were more familiar with the positive and negative aspects of development proposals tended to view tourism development in their community more favourably than those who were less informed. Rather than merely trying to convince residents that tourism is good for them, the CTA of Fundudzi-Tshivhase camp should attempt to address the needs of the various constituencies existing in their community. This suggests the need for developing an internal marketing process that involves segmenting the local community into distinct groups on the basis of their perceptions about tourism, tourists and marketing of their area. The results of this study clearly indicate that these segments, or categories, do exist and that each group has different

expectations about tourism development and marketing of their area. Tourism marketers should therefore help minimise conflict and encourage harmonious relationships between hosts and guests by developing some understanding of the diverse community expectations regarding tourism development and to design marketing strategies that are in line with the Tshivhase area's community needs and expectations.

4. Final Remarks

Tourism is an inseparable part of modern life with positive and negative aspects. People affected by tourism will try to maximise positive aspects and minimise the negative aspects. The studies that have been conducted on community perceptions of tourism, including the present one, undoubtedly point to an important conclusion: community perceptions about tourism are never universal. Clearly, which results of tourism would be considered positive and which negative, as well as strategies to cope with these results, will depend entirely on the specific characteristics of the host community and the level and nature of tourism development. Communities affected by tourism will attempt the maximisation and minimisation of certain aspects in terms of their values, interests, and cultures. The socio-cultural characteristics and political position of these communities will determine the strategy required to cope with the changes induced by tourism; these may turn from active resistance against tourism to the active adoption of it and the western culture it represents.

Another aspect that has been highlighted in this study is the complex nature of community perceptions about tourism. Reflecting and acting upon diverse community views will not be a simple task for those involved in the planning of tourism in such areas. However, it is essential that this process takes place to ensure that negative impacts of tourism on communities can be minimised and positive impacts are maximised. As tourism develops in a community, changes will occur in the responses of the people affected by it. Those changes depend on the level of tourism developments and whether the community is positively or negatively affected by it. Thus, it is proposed that a similar research project should be undertaken in the Tshivhase area in the future to evaluate how the community

perceptions have changed as tourism arrivals increase (longitudinal research). Obviously, more studies of host perceptions of tourism in developing countries should be undertaken if local host communities are to benefit from the lessons learnt from those destinations that preceded their stage of development.

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