QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE EMPOWERMENT OF BIRD GUIDES, THEIR EXPERIENCES AND EXPECTATIONS RESULTING FROM TRAINING RECEIVED AS PART OF A CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

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In loving memory of my Son, Johan,

a conservationist at heart and a keen birder.

A child who lived to love and loved to live!

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Abstract

This report presents the findings of an exploratory study into the perceived benefits and subjective experiences of Local Bird Guides along the Zululand Birding Route, an avitourism project, sponsored by Rio-Tinto, managed by BirdLife South Africa (BLSA), one of the largest conservation Non-Governmental Organisations in South Africa.

The report explores the impact development and empowerment, through training, offered by BLSA as part of a conservation initiative, has had on the every day lives of Local Bird Guides.

The findings are based on research generated by conducting qualitative, semi-structured interviews with eight Local Bird Guides operating along the Zululand Birding Route. Recorded interviews were transcribed, and analysed using theory led thematic analysis.

The results of the study provide insight into the perceived benefits and expectations of participants, their experiences, perceptions, expectations and disappointments in respect of the project.

Introduction

"Men must feed themselves, wrest from nature the conditions for their survival; and can do so only by taking account of the environment that characterizes their habitat. History shows us, however, that their productive practices are not necessarily in functional accord with this environment, but are equally determined by rites, symbols, ideas – in brief, by a worldview....every productive practice is immediately a symbolic practice of appropriation of the world... a way of responding...to a determined environment"

(Duby (1986) as cited by Gagliardi in Clegg, 1996:570)

A significant feature of contemporary society is the increasing concern for the natural environment. These concerns are expressed in anxieties surrounding the quality of life, current and future, economic prosperity and more generally the future of *Homo sapiens sapiens*. The state of our natural environment is a consequence of the way in which society is structured, increased urban and materialistic life styles, large population growth in less developed nations and industrialisation together with organisations' pursuit of self interest. To counter this we have the emergence of environmentalism.

Environmentalism is "concerned with the interactions between the biosphere and the technosphere and sociosphere" (Egri & Pinfield in Clegg, 1996:461). Environmentalism focuses not only on the conservation, protection and preservation of the natural environments, but also the human hopes and aspirations

for a better life through personal and social achievements. In many cases conservation efforts, such as the Zululand Birding Route, are increasingly combined with outdoor recreation (birding), social development and empowerment (Egri & Pinfield in Clegg, 1996).

Local Bird Guides operating along the Zululand Birding Route are empowered through training to promote the preservation and conservation of habitats occupied by birds while at the same time using the opportunities avitourism offer to develop career paths for themselves.

> Open systems theory directs us to view organizations and the biosphere as dynamic phenomena which are constantly adjusting to changing environments. Systems compromise subsystems and individual units which are also in states of dynamic change in relation to each other. However, the linkages between individual action and system-level consequences (the micro-macro relationship) and the linkages between system-level changes and individual consequences (the macro-micro relationship) remain largely unexplored by social scientists.
> (Ashmos and Huber 1987; Coleman 1986; Namboodiri 1988 as cited by Egri & Pinfield in Glegg, 1996:476)

The exploration of these relationships (consequences and actions) require a holistic approach that is multi-faceted (individual, group and societal), cross-disciplinary (natural and social sciences) and controversial (replete with conflict among societal actors proposing alternative courses of action) (Egri & Pinfield in Clegg, 1996).

There is increasing evidence that changes in the biophysical environment will bring about social change. Biophysical and social change is imminent and inevitable. "Businesses may be the only mechanisms strong enough to reverse many of the social problems that currently exist" (Hawken (1993) as cited by Parker in Clegg, 1996:498). "As NGOs play business roles, expectations increase for them to be more business-like in managing money and even people" (Parker in Clegg, 1996:498).

This study was inspired by a concern for both, the environment and its custodians, their aspirations and hopes for personal growth and social achievements as a result of training received as part of a conservation initiative.

Background, Focus and Aim of the Study

BirdLife South Africa (BLSA)

BLSA is the partner organisation in South Africa for BirdLife International. BLSA is one of the largest non-governmental, non-profit conservation organisations in South Africa and has grown rapidly since 1996 with annual budgets growing from about R300 000 to over R7 million in 2006.

BLSA aims, amongst others, to improve the quality of people's lives through integrating their conservation efforts (conservation of natural resources, that are essential for sustainable human living) with sustainable livelihoods in rural communities. Importantly, BLSA through its Avitourism Division will ensure that products used and promoted are socially, environmentally and economically

responsible. BLSA's Avitourism Division aims to create jobs and develop skills "particularly within the previously disadvantaged communities by adding value from birds and the habitats they occupy" (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007:8). This is achieved through projects run by the Avitourism Division as well as various other divisions within BLSA. A graphic representation of where the various divisions fit into BLSA's organisational structure is attached as Appendix 1.

The relevant focus areas of the Avitourism Division are:

- Birding Route Development and Bird Guide Marketing

This is achieved through developing Birding Routes which combine existing resources into avitourism destinations such as the Zululand Birding Route (ZBR) at the same time creating job opportunities for Local Bird Guides. Birders (avitourists) are channelled through birding routes supporting Local Bird Guides while creating income generating opportunities for them.

- Bird Guide Training and Development

This is achieved through the training and development of Local Bird Guides (LBGs) to operate along the birding routes, focusing on skills development as well as business opportunities for them within their communities along the birding routes.

More than 200 persons from previously disadvantaged communities throughout South Africa have been trained as LBGs on the Guide Training Programme, 90 of which were sponsored by SASOL (http://www.birdlife.org.za;http://www.birdingroutes.co.za).

The Zululand Birding Route

The Zululand Birding Route (ZBR) held its inaugural meeting in July 1997. The ZBR and the BLSA Guide Training programme were the first tourism based projects initiated by BLSA and laid the foundation for the development of the Avitourism Division. With corporate sponsorship the ZBR has extended beyond its initial base of Eshowe and Melmoth. Currently the ZBR has 70 birding spots on 14 different self-drive routes covering the entire Zululand area from Amatikulu in the south to Ndumo in the north and Paulpietersburg in the north-west.

The management of the ZBR is currently co-funded by the BLSARio Tinto Avitourism. The BLSA-Rio Tinto Avitourism Project has been a major sponsor of Local Bird Guide training, with 35 to 40 guides having completed the training, and has pledged ongoing support for these Local Bird Guides through marketing and mentorship. It is estimated that Local Bird Guides earn an average monthly income of R2 240 (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007). These Local Bird Guides have, over a three year period, earned in excess of R500 000 in direct income. One of the aims for the ZBR during 2006 was to grow their market in order to increase income for the Local Bird Guides. The success of a birding route depends on four factors, these are: good birding sites (Important Birding Areas); infrastructure such as roads, boardwalks, bird hides and resources such as maps and bird lists; birder-friendly accommodation; and the availability of qualified Local Bird Guides along the route.

Figure 1

Map of the area that the ZBR covers

(as adapted from http://www.wheretostay.co.za/kzn/zm/index.php)

Birding sites are the Local Bird Guides "product". Community level involvement is essential in order to ensure that these "products" remain in existence. Local Bird Guides are encouraged to create conservation awareness and to "adopt" a school within their communities ensuring that communities understand the value of the natural assets within their communal areas. Conflict prevention between Local Bird Guides and the communities in which they operate is essential. BLSA Travel (BL Travel) works in conjunction with the ZBR preparing customised birding itineraries

incorporating facilities such as boardwalks, birder-friendly accommodation, hides and Local Bird Guides for travellers (http://www.zbr.co.za/special-projects/index.htm; ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus).

Local Bird Guides are not BirdLife employees and are either self employed, have other full time employment and do freelance guiding or are employed as full time guides with various establishments such as hotels, lodges and conservation areas (boardwalks, etc). The rationale is that once Local Bird Guides are trained and accredited they will be able to generate their own income from the skills they acquired during their training and subsequent birding activities. Some of the biggest challenges Beginner Local Bird Guides are faced with are the development of confidence to deal with tourists especially from different cultural backgrounds and experience in where to find birds and skills relating to bird identification.

Avitourism has the ability to address social, economic and environmental issues and as a result appeals to a broad base of supporters. It is however recognised that "many Local Bird Guides and community projects fail in their early years due to a lack of support and resources for marketing, managing, raising funds, developing relationships and general overall lack of tourism background" (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007:11).

'The Project'

Avitourism projects such as the efforts put into the ZBR comprise a significant portion of BLSA's conservation efforts and include BirdLife Travel and the Guide Training programme. The Project has had numerous sponsors and funders and people assisting on a voluntary basis.

Such projects have three components. The first component relates to the individual and involves the selection, training, development, coaching and mentoring of bird guides. Individuals are selected from communities neighbouring IBAs after which they attend a month-long training course offered by BLSA. Guide development takes place in three phases:

Beginner - less than 1 year's experience

Intermediate - 2 – 4 years experience, and

Expert - 4 and more years of experience

Training is followed up by ongoing mentorship, workshops, and casual access to advice and experiential training leading to accreditation with the THETA (Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority) as a Local Bird Guide. It is important for this ongoing experiential learning to take place consistently that Local Bird Guides be members of local bird clubs to draw on the experience of skilled birders (mentorship and coaching).

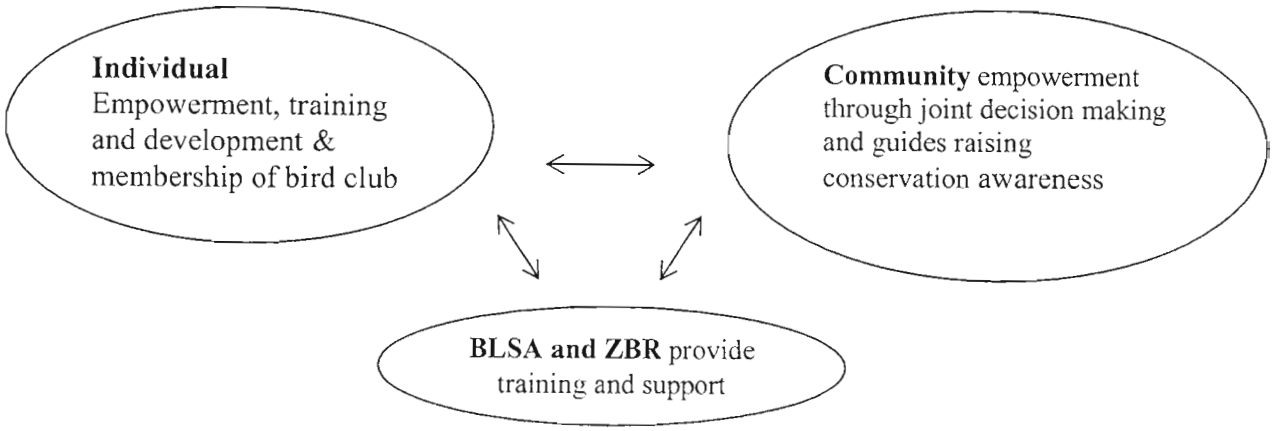
The second component relates to the community. Local Bird Guides are encouraged to create awareness of conservation within their communities and are

expected to "adopt" a school and run education and awareness programmes. Local communities are also encouraged to participate in development opportunities by participating in "management committees".

The third component involves the support offered by BLSA, the ZBR and various other sponsors. Birding routes such as the ZBR will source funding to provide a support structure for Local Bird Guides and community based tourism developments.

Figure 2

Graphic illustration of the project, parties involved and their relationships



Rationale for the Study

The conservation of IBAs, rather than individual empowerment, is one of the primary goals for BLSA. Achievement of primary goals does however, depend to a large extent, on 'secondary' goal achievement, that is, the availability of trained and accredited Local Bird Guides along birding routes. Local Bird Guides provide a service to tourists and are also essential to the conservation of IBAs. Local Bird

Guide training and development is an expensive exercise with sponsorship required ranging from between R10 000 for a Beginner Guide and R25 000 for an Experienced Guide (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007). Overall project success depends on ongoing support and resources (such as sponsorship and willing and able mentors and coaches) as well as the availability of enthusiastic Local Bird Guides along birding routes.

Bird-watching, as a hobby, has become increasingly popular. Birders make up the single biggest group of Eco-Tourists globally, increasing the income potential from avitourism dramatically. BLSA has an Avitourism Division dedicated to putting bird-related travel itineraries together for local and international birders while promoting sustainable tourism through:

- creating and developing skills, within previously disadvantaged communities,
- by adding value from birds and the habitats they occupy,
- supporting 'birder friendly' enterprises and local bird guides.

Empowerment and development through tourism has escalated in rural communities over the past few years. Local Bird Guides earned "in excess of R500 000 in direct income in the past 3 years" (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007:15). According to Turpie and Ryan (1998) (as cited in Biggs, 2006) it is estimated that South African birders spent between R80 and R170 million in 1997, while between 750 and 1500 international birders visiting South Africa, in the same year, spent between R10 and R25 million. The average tourist spends R700.00 per day when using the ZBR, the estimated value of this to the local economy is at least

R15 million per year and based on current market trends these figures are predicted to double by 2010 (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007:15).

The income potential cannot be questioned and as McLaren (1998:5) puts it "thousands of communities around the world are attempting some form of tourism development." What is apparent, though, according to McLaren (1998:5) is that "most of the communities are going through almost entirely the same process: fairly well defined cycles of expectation and disappointment."

Programme and project success is often considered in terms of money, however project success also needs to be evaluated in terms of the impact it has on the individuals involved if projects are going to be truly people centred and empowering. Herrick (1995) makes the point that although they are different phenomena, objective and subjective realities are related, therefore subjective reality is important as subjective reality can make a difference to objective results and outcomes.

In using quantifiable measures, such as money, the role of the community becomes minimal. According to Lee (1994:175) "there are serious limitations in using research methodology, particularly quantitative methodology, to capture the central themes and essence of empowerment practice." The starting point of assessing change in terms of empowerment has to be the individual, although Lee (1994) argues that it is the power relations that need to be researched rather than individual change as individual change is not the primary interest in empowerment

practice. However, larger social change and empowerment starts with the individual. Empowering individuals is merely working towards empowering the people. Very often it is the observation of change by the individuals involved in projects that is most empowering (Lee, 1994).

Through the conservation of natural resources and individual empowerment the community will benefit from BLSA's and the ZBR's social development efforts. These development efforts include:

- Individual empowerment
- Creating career paths for black South Africans by training them as Local Bird Guides, creating jobs and developing skills (particularly within the previously disadvantaged communities)
- Developing alternative employment options and involving the broader community (a high priority activity for the birding route)

(ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007:16).

The ZBR aspires to making a positive, tangible, impact on the daily lives of the people along the route. The impact the project has on the Local Bird Guides is a subjective reality relating to changes in perception, consciousness and enlightenment, which is related to objective reality (measurable results and outcomes) but is "measured" differently.

There is enough literature to support the importance of the individuals' perceptions of self, their lives and other experiences, in respect of their involvement

in projects aimed at empowerment (Thekaekara in Eade and Ligteringen, 2001). People involved in projects are the beginning and the end of the process. These projects become a part of their daily lives and they, more than others, experience the impact of these projects. Yet scientific research, with its notions of methodological standards and rigor, influences the world in which NGO policy development takes place (Eade, 1998).

According to McLaren (1998:78)

> All forms of development are based on economics. The promise of economic gains are potent rationalizations for tourism development. The word 'development' presupposes agents that engineer change: change in the natural environment, changes in social structures… These changes are supposed to generate improvements in the quality of life of the people involve… The idea of development is very much a concept from the north.

The question in this regard and one posed by Van Rooy (in Eade & Ligteringen, 2001:30) is whether these projects make "a significant difference to the sustainable improvement of the lives of people living in 'the south'?" Does capacity building really mean anything to anyone?

Qualitative research into Local Bird Guides individual experiences in respect of the project should provide information relating to their subjective experiences. This includes perceived benefits and expectations prior to and after the training.

Individual experiences, perceptions, expectations and disappointments in respect of the project and the impact the project has had on their daily lives and the evaluation thereof is what this study attempts to explore. Such information is valuable to NGO's, in this case BLSA, engaged in empowerment of individuals through training and development if future projects are going to be truly people centred and "successful".

It is envisaged that research results will provide feedback on the subjective component of the project, that is, the experiences of individual Local Bird Guides in respect of the tangible impact the project has had on their daily lives. These results could be used for future community based developments aimed at linking natural resources to empowerment and capacity building.

Literature Review

Capacity Building and Empowerment are seen as a core activity of NGOs in the south and is an essential element in development programmes. "Simple, human concern for other people as individuals and in very practical ways is one of the hallmarks of NGO work" (Edwards & Hulme, 1992:14). For development to be sustainable, programmes need to be centred on people, as individual empowerment will facilitate group empowerment. When development programmes are not based on people's own efforts to work for change, these programmes may be disempowering.

"Traditional societies were self-sufficient before "development" came along. Introduced development ideologies, technologies, and outside influences, such as tourists and the media, represents consumerism's most exaggerated features. "Development" undermines self-esteem and eventually becomes "essential"" (Norberg-Hodge as cited in McLaren, 1998:78). This leads to powerlessness, a situation according to Solomon ((1976) as cited in Lee, 1994:110), characterised by "the inability to manage emotions, skills, knowledge, and/or material resources in a way that effective performance of valued social roles will lead to personal gratification."

The focus of this study is on individual experiences of a project aimed at achieving individual empowerment and ultimately community development through the preservation of IBAs. Empowerment is about "gaining the strength, confidence and vision to work for positive changes ...individually and together with others...woman and men become empowered by their own efforts" (Eade and Williams (1994) as cited in Eade, 1998:4). "Empowerment embeds individual change and capacity development within a recognition of a need for broader change within groups and communities" (Arai, 1997, para. 8). Capacity building is about individuals gaining the strength, confidence and vision to work for positive changes in their own lives through their own efforts (Fowler, 1997).

Empowerment is not about creating dependency or structures that are crafted onto the local context. Herrick (1995) makes the point that marginalised groups become

dependent on free things (charity and welfare) because they lack access to needed opportunities for self-sufficiency. Empowerment therefore needs to include and encourage the development of skills for self-sufficiency eliminating the need for future charity or welfare.

From the above it is clear that both empowerment and capacity building are approaches to a developmental process. The terms empowerment and development will be used interchangeably throughout the text and will refer to the efforts made by individuals to work towards positive change in their lives.

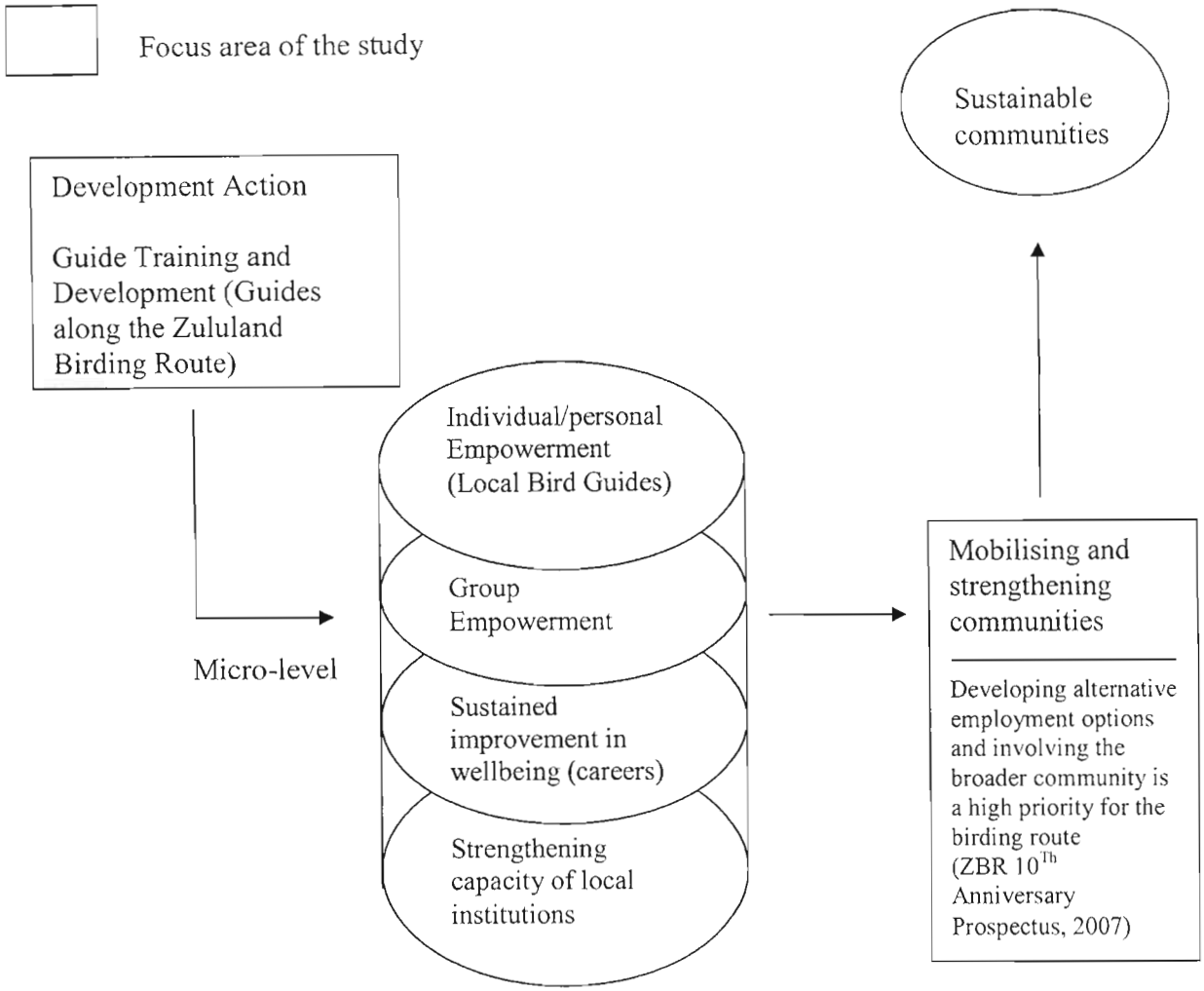
Conceptual Frameworks

Development Action Framework

Fowler (1997) proposes a Framework of development action concentrating on Macro-Level and Micro-Level Development actions. As it is the Micro-Level Development action component this research is concerned with, only this part of the framework will be used to create a conceptual understanding of what the Project aims to achieve. This framework together with the conceptual framework, the Empowerment Approach to Social Work Practices, will be used to guide research as to gain insight into the subjective experiences of local guides along the ZBR.

Figure 3

Micro-Level Development (as adapted from Fowler, 1997)



"Social development consists of six types of practice: personal empowerment, group empowerment, conflict resolution, institution building, nation building and world building" (Lee, 1994:220). Micro-Level development can be seen to form part of social development. Effective Micro-Level development rests on; improving people's livelihoods and physical well-being in sustainable ways; strengthening capacity of local institutions and; empowering individuals and groups in such a way that they are able and willing to use the development process as well as instigating

processes of their own. This requires a change in human behaviour as people, rather than money, technology or materials are the starting point. People must embody what development is about, "since they are both its means and ends" (Fowler, 1997:9).

Parsons (1989) identifies three kinds of empowerment: "A developmental process that begins with individual growth and may culminate in larger social change; a psychological state marked by heightened feelings of self-esteem, efficacy, and control; and liberation, resulting from a social movement that begins with education and politicization" (Lee 1994:16). Education and training according to Eade (1998:77) "represent an investment in people, and so are important ways to put a capacity-building approach to development into practice."

It is recognised that individual growth and empowerment may culminate in larger social change which is the intention of the ZBR, that is, to conserve IBAs, requiring individual participation in order to facilitate larger social change. Awareness activities conducted by Local Bird Guides have resulted in the development of a broader understanding for the value of natural assets within communal areas. It is estimated that 20 000 school children and 36 000 people from communities surrounding IBAs have participated in awareness activities initiated by bird guides (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007:15). Bird guides form part of a social system, they both affect and are in turn affected by that system.

Empowerment, according to the TC Research Report (July, 1999), is multi-level in nature implying that individual, organisational and community level empowerment is concerned with different factors and therefore they need to be measured differently as well. The conceptual framework selected for this research, although intended for social work practice, is based on individual, group and societal empowerment principles and can therefore be used to guide research activities.

The Empowerment Approach to Social Work Practices as proposed by Lee (1994) will be used to guide research within the development action framework.

The Empowerment Approach to Social Work Practice

According to this conceptual framework it is necessary to understand that oppression is historically created, includes realities of racism and classism as well as oppression experienced by vulnerable groups. It includes an ecological view, which requires:

- Knowledge of individual adaptive potentials.
- Knowledge about power.
- A critical perspective of oppression and development strategies, linking the individual to social change.

The Conceptual Framework:

The empowerment Approach to Social Work Practice proposed by Lee (1994)

- Professional Purpose

Concern for people and environment (social environment) – the purpose is to assist people to empower themselves, to enhance their adaptive potentials and to work towards positive change.

BLSA, through its Avitourism Division provides individuals from previously disadvantaged communities with skills empowering them to create job opportunities for themselves. This is done by adding value from birds and the habitats they occupy providing individuals and communities with sustainable alternatives to destructive development.

- Value Base

"Preference for social policies and programmes that create a just society where equality of opportunity and access to resources exists" (Lee, 1994:37).

The ZBR aims to create opportunities for local community members to use existing resources to address past inequality. BLSA recognises the fact that these natural resources (Important Birding Areas) are situated in areas where the community is the custodian and protector of the resource. These communities, through their Local Bird Guides and their involvement in conservation, can benefit in the long term from the natural resources in their area.

- Method - Principles, Processes and Skills

  The most important principles, relevant to this study, are:

  - Self-empowerment, this goes beyond the principle of self-determination and recognises, not only people's rights but also their responsibility in the process of human empowerment (Lee, 1994).
  - People should be encouraged to speak their own words.
  - People should be treated as victors rather than victims.

The method may be used in community, group or one-on-one relational system and rests on empowerment values and purposes. The most important empowerment principle is that people empower themselves (Lee, 1994).

- Knowledge Base

"Theory and concepts about person…knowledge about individual adaptive potentials…and the ways people cope (ego functioning, social and cognitive behavioural learning and problem solving in the face of oppression); empowering of individual…so that we may assist people in empowering themselves on the personal, interpersonal, and political levels" (Lee, 1994:38).

Empowerment

Empowerment is a lifelong process, a developmental construct, during which the individual will move through various phases, according to Simon ((1990) as cited by (Lee, 1994:13) it "is a reflexive activity, …initiated and sustained only by (those) who seek power or self-determination. Others can only aid and abet in this

empowerment process" or as or as Herrick (1995, para. 30) puts it "they have to do it for themselves – albeit with external help for a while." Empowerment recognises that there is "interconnectedness among the various aspects of a person's life and well-being" (Aria, 1997, para. 7). It incorporates aspects of work, psychological wellbeing, leisure and other domains.

Empowerment, according to Beck ((1983) as cited in Lee, 1994:13) has three interlocking dimensions and moves, according to Arai (1997) through various phases.

The interlocking dimensions are:

- The development of a more positive and potent sense of self.
- The construction of knowledge and capacity for more critical comprehension of the web of social and political realities of one's environment.
- The cultivation of resources and strategies, or more functional competence, for attainment of personal and collective goals.

The development of a more positive and potent sense of self.

The development of a more positive and potent sense of self is marked by heightened feelings of self-esteem, efficacy, and control (Beck (1983) as cited in Lee, 1994:13).

- Self-esteem

Self-esteem, is an effective evaluation of the self, that is, feelings of self worth or self-liking. According to Robbins (1998:58) self-esteem is an "individuals' degree

of liking or disliking of themselves…and is directly related to expectations of success."

Self-esteem is acquired through experiences of relatedness (the ability to form attachments to other human beings), competence (capacity or mastery) and self-direction (the ability to maintain some freedom from internal demands and environmental pressures).

It is important to note the difference between self-efficacy and self-esteem. Self esteem according to Gist & Michell (1992, para. 8) "usually is considered to be a trait reflecting an individual's characteristic, affective evaluation of the self (e.g., feelings of self-worth or self-liking). By contrast, self-efficacy is a judgment about task capability that is not inherently evaluative."

- Efficacy and Self-Efficacy

Efficacy refers to the competence or power an individual has to produce an effect or outcome while self-efficacy is a belief, whether accurate or not, in one's ability to organise and execute a desired outcome.

"Self-efficacy is a construct derived from social cognitive theory – a theory positing a triadic reciprocal causation model in which behaviour, cognitions, and the environment all influence each other in a dynamic fashion" (Gist & Mitchell, 1992:184).

Self efficacy is a sense an individual has over the control of events that affect their lives. It involves judgement "of their capacity to use their skills effectively in performance" (Schreuder & Theron, 1997:60). Self-efficacy according to Bandura (1994, para. 1) can be defined as:

> people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes. They include cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes.

Self-efficacy has three dimensions:

Magnitude: Refers to task difficulty and an individuals feeling in respect of task accomplishment.

Strength: Relates to a conviction regarding magnitude, that is, a strong or weak conviction relating to task accomplish (magnitude). Individuals "who possesses strong expectations of mastery will persevere in their coping efforts despite disconfirming experiences" (Bandura, 1977:194).

Generality: Refers to a generalised perception of strength and magnitude across situations.

(Bandura, 1977; Gist, 1987)

The four sources of self-efficacy are:

- Enactive mastery (experience)

Enactive mastery refers to repeated successful performance accomplishments. Gradual performance accomplishments lead to the acquisition of the necessary skills, coping mechanisms and exposure needed for task performance. Success enhances mastery expectations (Bandura, 1977; Gist, 1987).

Mastery experiences facilitate the attainment of coping skills and instil a belief that one has control over the environment (potential threats). Control refers to the ability a person has to direct behaviour in order to secure a desired outcome. Mastery experience is a powerful vehicle for instilling a sense of coping efficacy in people (Bandura, 1994).

- Vicarious experience

Vicarious experience refers to the observation of people, similar to oneself, referred to as social models, succeeding through sustained effort. This observation raises the beliefs of the observer that he or she too has the capability needed to master comparable activities successfully. Social models do more than provide social standards against which people measure their own capabilities. They are selected in accordance with the level of proficiency to which the observer aspires, as well as providing social standards against which the observer judges his or her own capabilities. Modeled behaviour that meets success and has clear outcomes conveys more efficacy information than actions that remain ambiguous (Bandura, 1977;1994).

- Social or verbal persuasion

People are persuaded verbally that they possess the capabilities to master given activities. This boosts perceived self-efficacy and results in greater efforts made by the individual (such as acquisition of additional skills) to succeed, leading to a sense of personal efficacy (Bandura, 1994).

Verbal persuasion may lack information that is task specific and may primarily focus on convincing an individual through emotional or cognitive appeals that task performance is possible. Such appeals can have an impact on efficacy judgements, this will however depend on the credibility, expertise, trustworthiness and prestige of the person doing the persuading. Efficacy beliefs obtained through verbal persuasion not linked to task performance are weakly held beliefs, as less is learned about task performance requirements. People who receive social persuasion in addition to performance aids for effective action are more likely to mobilise greater effort than those who receive performance aids only (Bandura, 1997; Gist & Mitchell, 1992).

- Physiological / emotional factors

This refers to the somatic and emotional states by which individuals judge their capabilities or vulnerability. A positive emotional state (mood) will enhance self-efficacy. It is however not the physiological state or mood that influences self-efficacy but rather how they are perceived. Persons with a strong sense of self-efficacy are likely to be energised by mild states of stress and tension (Bandura, 1994).

> Self-efficacy plays a central role in the cognitive regulation of motivation. "The stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal challenges people set for themselves and the firmer is their commitment to them" (Bandura, 1994, para. 14).

A strong sense of efficacy is required to remain task orientated in the face of pressing situational and/or environmental demands. Individuals who are beset by self-doubts about their efficacy experience lowered aspirations and a deterioration in performance quality. Individuals who maintain a resilient sense of efficacy use good analytical thinking and set challenging goals which lead to performance accomplishments (Bandura, 1994).

- Control

Mastery experiences facilitate the attainment of coping skills and instil a belief that one has control over the environment (potential threats). Control refers to the ability a person has to direct behaviour in order to secure a desired outcome. Mastery experience is a powerful vehicle for instilling a sense of coping efficacy in people (Bandura, 1994).

The construction of knowledge and capacity for more critical comprehension of the web of social and political realities of one's environment.

The word liberation rather than development more accurately encompasses the aspirations of poor people. Empowerment is a process that may generate unexpected outcomes (Eade, 1998). "The Latin root of the word 'power' is 'posse',

meaning "to be able" (Lee, 1994:113). Power comes from having access to resources needed or by virtue of personal resources or institutional connections (Weick, 1982 as cited in Lee, 1994:113). This power includes the power an individual possesses as a result of knowledge, information or skills in a valued area as well as the knowledge of the right to access to resources. This knowledge creates a responsibility to participate in the creation of resources and to eliminate inappropriate or ineffective use of resources. It is about seizing opportunities created by structural dimensions (resources) or by creating new opportunities in the environment (Herrick, 1995). A sense of power therefore is essential to self-esteem (relatedness, competence, self-direction) and survival.

"Knowledge is power [and] to be kept from knowledge is oppression" according to Lee (1994:34). Therefore knowledge aids liberation or the freedom from (various forms of) oppression.

The cultivation of resources and strategies, or more functional competence, for attainment of personal and collective goals

The cultivation of resources and strategies, connected to a more positive and potent sense of self and a comprehension of the web of social realities in the environment, moves through various phases with outcomes associated with each phase.

The phases, together with outcomes, identified by Arai (1997) are:

- Awareness

  Created by a desire for change – an awareness of and tension between where the individual is and where the individual wants to be. It is about creating alternatives between "what is" and "what ought to be" (Herrick, 1995).

  The outcome of this phase is that individuals are "ready to accept and develop new directions for themselves" (Arai, 1997, para. 10).

  According to Arai (1997, para. 10) "the development of a clear vision of goals and desires in the awareness stage has been found to lead to more success in dealing with the frustrations that arise later in the empowerment process and therefore to greater amounts of empowerment in the end."

- Connecting and learning

  Action during the phases will depend on the individuals needs. Connecting and learning is a process through which resources are used to gather skills, knowledge and information, allowing individuals to expand their opportunities and choices.

  The outcome of this phase is that "individuals begin to increase their social network, decrease feelings of isolation, and increase self-esteem and self-concept" (Arai, 1997, para. 12). Social networks do not only provide support but enable the expansion of resources through the sharing of information.

- Mobilisation

Refers to individual participation in the desired change area leading to increased feelings of competence and self-esteem (outcome) and may encourage further growth and development. Increased opportunities for participation and increased feelings of competence increases self esteem (Arai, 1997).

- Contribution

Contribution refers to the integration of previous stages, knowledge, skills and resources into everyday life. In this stage people experience feelings of being able to make meaningful contributions to the community (Arai, 1997).

In addition to the phases through which empowerment is obtained there are various underlying assumptions according to the TC Research Report (July, 1999). These assumptions are that; all people have the potential for empowerment (empowerment is possible for the most disenfranchised but at the same time it is not automatic for the most resourceful); some people are more capable of being empowered than others; empowerment is not the same for all people or settings; and measures of empowerment must be sensitive to the degree or phase of empowerment as well as the settings in which individuals find themselves.

Career Paths

One of the goals of the Avitourism Division is to encourage Local Bird Guides to develop career paths by providing them with training and ongoing development and then marketing the services they offer to tourists (ZBR 10Th Anniversary Prospectus, 2007).

A career path in the traditional sense, according to Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalh (2000:204) "is a sequence of job positions, usually related in work content, through which employees move during the course of their careers. A career can be defined as "a pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of a person's life" (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalh, 2000:9).

Work related experiences broadly include objective events, such as job duties and activities and subjective interpretations of work-related events such as aspirations, expectations, needs and feelings about work experiences. In managing a career a person can change objective environments or modify subjective perceptions of a situation. Both objective and subjective experiences are necessary to manage a career. New organisational designs have, however, made it difficult to rely on traditional definitions of a career path. 'New organisations' do not offer employment they offer employability through opportunities for continued growth and development with the organisation offering the developmental opportunities or other organisations (not offering the developmental opportunities).

Careers are becoming less structured and more unpredictable as a result an alternative approach to the development of career paths is suggested, defined as "paths based on similarity in required job behaviours and knowledge and skill requirements" (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalh, 2000:204).

Career management

*R*esearch suggests that "a traditional approach to career decision making can be very useful and that a proactive, self-confident orientation to career management can reap benefits for the individual" (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalh, 2000:36). One of the activities included in effective career management is exploration, that is, self-exploration and environmental exploration. Self exploration includes an assessment of personality, values, talents (aptitudes, capacities, developed skills/proficiencies) and interests (expressions of what people like to do). Environmental exploration involves exploring skills necessary for specific jobs, job alternatives, company alternatives, types of occupations, types of industries and impact of family on career decisions (Greenhaus, Callana & Godshalh, 2000).

Although proactive career management is beneficial various other factors such as social class, geography and political events all influence career decisions. Social background can stimulate or suppress interests, talent, skills and values. According to Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalh (2000:137) "social class has been found to be related to beliefs about one's ability and control over a situation, as well as the importance of work to one's identity." However, "the role of "accidents" in career decision making must not be forgotten...these kinds of "random" accidental events

occur all the time and can easily influence the course of our lives" (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalh, 2000:137).

Post-modern Theories of Career Development

Post-modern theories focus on subjective experiences of individual career development. According to these post-modern theories "a career is seen as a process that provides social meaning to the individual's life" (Schreuder & Theron, 1997:64). Post-modern theories according to Brown (2003:25) "depart radically from theories based on positivist philosophy" as they are not concerned with scientific research to verify theoretical propositions (Schreuder & Theron, 1997). The assumptions underpinning these theories are that individual perceptions are important and that narratives are legitimate sources of data. The role of 'random, accidental' events and the subjective experiences of them, as relayed by participants, can therefore be accepted as legitimate sources of data. The post-modern approach to career development will be used to guide the exploration of the subjective experiences of Local Bird Guides in respect of the development of their careers and career paths.

In a discussion regarding career development for economically disadvantaged populations a question raised by Fizgerald and Betz ((1994) cited in Brown, 2003:167) is:

> whether career development is a meaningful term in the lives of a majority of the population? They make the point that, for many people...who teeter on the edge of poverty, work is not psychologically central to their lives. However, most of these people realize that meaningful employment is a way out of their current existence.

> The term "disadvantaged" here is used to describe persons with unfavourable economic or social circumstances. Miles ((1984) as cited in Brown, 2003: 167) states that "typically, the circumstances of two subgroups often land them in this category: those with limited education (either in quantity or quality) and those caught in geographic dislocation (often the rural poor)."

The Community-based avitourism project aims to "take someone from a financially poor, rural community and over time and [*sic*]develop them into a self-sustaining successful Local Bird Guide" (Biggs, 2006:86). Training is often designed to raise incomes based on the assumption that with new and marketable skills people will be able to set up enterprises of their own or find work. Efforts to improve livelihoods by enhancing the earning capacity through self-employment or informal sector micro-enterprises are known as income-generation projects (IGPs). These income-generation projects are a major source of employment for poor people worldwide (Fowler, 1997). Empowerment, even where it does include productive power (the skills and opportunities for people to become a valuable part of the working population) does not guarantee that individuals or groups, once empowered, will use their new capacities to their benefit, "and experience shows that it is unwise to assume that they necessarily will" (Eade, 1998:26). Some individuals may learn new skills or increase their earning capacity as a result of these structures and projects but it is recognised that training provided does not create jobs or markets and it is not synonymous with financial self-reliance and in some cases may not even be welcomed (Fowler, 1997; Lee, 1994). Biggs (2006) for example found that Local Bird Guides "indicated a strong preference for being employed, or having clients

sent to them as opposed to having to start up their own businesses or micro-enterprises and create demand for their services on their own" (Biggs, 2006:88). This raises the a question in respect of the expectations Local Bird Guides have in respect of their employment and income opportunities as a result of training and development received through BLSA and the ZBR.

How individuals experience something, more often than not, is totally different from objective reality. It is therefore possible that project success or failure will be perceived differently by different people. In addition Local Bird Guides may perceive the impact the project has had on them in different ways. These perceptions need further exploration as objective and subjective realities, although related, are different phenomena and empowerment connotes both. Subjective reality relates to perception, enlightenment and consciousness while objective reality relates to results and outcomes (Herrick, 1995).

People base their behaviour on a perception of reality and not reality itself. "The world as it is perceived is the world that is behaviorally important" (Robins, 1998:90), it is therefore necessary to take into account, not only what NGOs, in this case BLSA, have in mind in terms of objective realities that result from projects such as those managed under the ZBR banner but also what the subjective realities of these projects are for participants.

Research Methodology

Methodology, according to Terre Blanche & Durrheim (1999:6), "specifies how the researcher may go about practically studying whatever he or she believes can be known." One of the principles of the Conceptual Framework proposed by Lee (1994) is that people should be encouraged to speak their own words. Career paths for Local Bird Guides will be guided by post-modern 'career theories'. These theories assume that individual perceptions are important, and that narratives are legitimate sources of data (Brown, 2003).

This study focuses on perceptions and experiences of Local Bird Guides and research methods were selected accordingly.

Semi-structured interviews, conducted with Local Bird Guides along the Zululand Birding Route, were recorded on audio-tape, transcribed, and analysed using qualitative thematic analysis methodology.

Research Design

The study is qualitative. Qualitative data is collected and recorded in the form of written or spoken language. Qualitative research allows for studying "selected issues in depth, openness and detail as they identify and attempt to understand the categories of information that emerge from the data" (Durrheim, 1999:42). Qualitative research is naturalistic, inductive and holistic providing rich information and a deeper understanding of the topic being investigated and reflecting the

complexities of human experience more accurately. Theoretical frameworks are used for making sense of situated events (Hayes, 2000; Kelly, 1999).

Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research emphasises validity. "The researcher acknowledges that the uniqueness of human beings means that the research findings are unlikely to be replicated" (Hayes, 2000:169). It is expected that participants will tell what they consider to be the truth. This does not mean that the 'truth' given is the "truth that others share or that will be the whole truth" (Rosenblatt in Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:896), but then qualitative data is not concerned with the 'truth', it attempts to provide an interpretation or understanding of the social world as it is experienced by participants. As such, qualitative research methods have validity but not reliability.

Sampling

Sampling involves decisions about people, settings, events and behaviours to be studied. The size of the sample depends on the type of study that is being conducted. As qualitative research is exploratory and not concerned with statistical accuracy various types of purposeful sampling, rather than large and/or random samples, may be used. Researchers are often forced to settle for convenience samples, based on the availability of participants. It is appropriate to select samples based on the researchers' knowledge of the population, its elements, the nature, purpose and aims of the study (Babbie, 1998; Durrheim, 1999: Lindegger, 1999).

Data Collection

One of the main goals of qualitative research according to (Johnson in Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:111) "has always been to capture the words and perceptions of informants." "An interview occurs when a participant is asked questions which have been designed to elicit particular types of information" (Hayes, 2002:113). Three kinds of questions are normally used for interviewing, main questions (used to begin and guide the conversation), probes (used to clarify answers), and follow-up questions.

Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative interviews are flexible and dynamic, "a kind of guided conversation (Kvale, 1996: Rubin and Rubin, 1995) in which the researcher carefully listens "so as to hear the meaning" of what is being conveyed" (Warren in Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:85), directed towards obtaining thick descriptions of a given social world, to be analysed for patterns and themes in order to gain insight into participants "perspectives on their lives, experiences or situations as expressed in their own words" (Taylor & Bogdan (1984) as cited in Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:40). This approach places limits on standardisation and the relevance of existing literature. Literature reviews are however, used to generate research questions.

In-depth Interviews

In depth interviews are used to obtain information from participants relating to knowledge they have gained through participation as members of a group or to explore multiple meanings of or perspectives on some actions or events. In-depth interviews are used in situations where the knowledge sought is taken for granted yet rarely articulated by members, or where different individuals involved in the same line of activity have different perspectives of it. In depth interviewing assumes that meaning is held by those who participate in some everyday activity and the purpose of the interview is to explore the contextual boundaries of the experience or perception. It allows for the articulation of multiple views, meanings and perspectives of activities and events (Johnson, 2002).

The advantages of using personal interviews are that:

- In-depth information can be derived from semi-structured interviews and probing.
- Respondents can ask for clarification if they do not understand any of the questions.
- Personal interviews are the only option in rural areas, where a lack of telephones and illiteracy are still prevalent.
- Interviews normally have high response rates.

(van Vuuren & Maree in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:281)

The disadvantages of personal interviews are:

- The high cost, such as travel expenses
- The Possibility that the interviewer may influences responses.

(van Vuuren & Maree in Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999: 281)

Obtaining and Recording Data

Research that attempts to make sense of experiences, social situations and feelings, needs to study these phenomena in their 'natural settings' or in the 'real world'. This simply means that individuals are not studied under artificially created conditions. The researcher engages with participants in an open and empathetic manner ensuring that as much of the information as possible is obtained verbatim. This is done by recording interviews. The advantages of recording interviews are that it provides a full record of the interview and the researcher is not distracted by detailed note keeping. The disadvantage is that participants may perform for the tape recorder rather than interacting with the researcher detracting from the intimacy of the encounter (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999).

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis involves the identification of particular themes that occur in the material being studied. Themes are "recurrent ideas or topics which can be detected in the material which is being analysed" (Hayes, 2000:173).

The stages of theory-led thematic analysis as described by Hayes (2000) are:

- Identify theoretical themes being applied in the analysis

Identifying themes applied in the analysis can be obtained in two different ways. Themes can emerge from the data as it is analysed, taken from recurring statements, or themes can be identified prior to the analysis commencing. In this case analysis will consist of the identification of statements that relate to pre-determined themes. Thematic analysis can be a method that works both to reflect reality and to unpick or unravel the surface of 'reality'. It is however important that the theoretical position of a thematic analysis is made clear (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Hayes, 2000).

Thematic analysis, because it does not require the detailed theoretical knowledge of other approaches and offers a more accessible form of analysis, "is not wedded to any pre-existing theoretical framework, and therefore it can be used within different theoretical frameworks (although not all)" (Braun & Clarke, 2006:81). "Depending on where we place our interpretive method on a continuum, from experience-near (contextually driven) to experience-distant (theoretically led), the account will have different achievements and different shortcomings" (Kelly, 1999:405).

Theory-led thematic analysis is a form of qualitative analysis that can be used in conjunction with existing psychological theory providing qualitative insights into the ways particular predictions may have meaning for human beings.

- Prepare data for analysis by transcribing interviews or notes

It is easier to refer to different parts of an interview when it is on paper, rather than having to find it on an audio-cassette. "Transcribing is best done directly onto a word processor to facilitate moving around of data and searching for particular words later on" (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999:131). Reliability of the transcription is ensured by reading through the interview while listening to the recording.

- Read through each interview, noting items of interest that relate to themes.

This stage involves searching through the data, identifying information relating to each of the selected themes. It is possible that the same chunk of information may fit into two themes, according to Hayes (2000:180) "this isn't really a problem: it gets included twice, bit with a cross-reference between the two."

- Sort items of interest themes

Themes are sorted one at a time, looking for meaning "and implications of what people actually seem to be saying with regard to that particular theme" (Hayes, 2000:180).

- Examine themes

As research is theory led, there is already a prediction about what themes are likely. The sorting process here will involve examining the data to see how well "what has been said concurs with what was predicted" (Hayes, 2000:180).

- Select the relevant illustrative data for reporting the theme

In the analytical process all of the quotations relevant to a topic have to be identified, however, reporting every single quotation is impractical. In reporting

qualitative analysis a few quotations that most clearly reflect the theme will be reported, in this way the problem of "person" and "location" can also be avoided (Hayes, 2000).

One of the disadvantages associated with theory-led thematic analysis is that it does not allow for the identification of new or unexpected bits of information. One of the advantages of this approach is that it can be used as a method of analysis in its own right. It can be used to supplement other forms of research or provide enriching qualitative material relating to existing theories. It also allows for the comparison of different views of participants relating to the same topic. "The use of predetermined themes to structure the analysis means that a researcher can deal with quite large amounts of data….reducing these to manageable portions" (Hayes, 2000:180) although this is quite a task. Perhaps the greatest disadvantage associated with this method of analysis is that it almost always is a long and tedious process (Hayes, 2000).

Ethical considerations

"As with other kinds of research involving human subjects, qualitative interviewing requires researchers to deal with professional ethical codes" (Warren, in Gubrium & Holstein, 2000:88) and principles. Three ethical principles, described by Durrheim & Wassenaar (1999) and that were considered are; autonomy, nonmaleficence and beneficence.

- The principle of autonomy

The principle of autonomy, according to Durrheim & Wassenaar (1999:66) "requires the researcher to respect the autonomy of all persons participating in the research work, requiring the researcher to address issues such as", voluntary and informed consent, freedom to withdraw from participation at any time and participant's right to anonymity should research be published.

- The principle of nonmaleficence

The principle of nonmaleficence requires that no harm is done to research participants or any other person or group of persons. This requires that the researcher consider potential risks in respect of emotional, physical or social harm Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999).

One of the greatest strengths of the interview as a method for gathering data is that it allows for the investigation of personal experience (Hayes, 2000). The disadvantage is that "emotional costs are particularly relevant in qualitative interviewing because of its open-ended, exploratory character" (Warren in Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:86). The use of in-depth interviews will elicit information that could be highly personal and may include personal feelings, reflections or perceptions of others. It is therefore, essential that, when commencing an in-depth interview, the interviewer act in a friendly and interested manner in order to build rapport and develop trust (Johnson, 2002).

- The principle of beneficence

The principle of beneficence requires that research should benefit, "if not directly to the research participants then more broadly to other researchers and society at large" (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999:66).

The aim of this study is to obtain information in respect of subjective experiences Local Bird Guides have in respect of their experiences and expectations resulting from training received as part of a conservation initiative. It is envisaged that research results will provide BLSA with some feedback that could be of benefit to them when considering future community based avitourism programmes.

Procedure

Permission, in writing, to conduct the study was requested and obtained from BLSA's Avitourism Division Manager. The Zululand Birding Route Manager was approached and he together with the researcher identified participants. Where Local Bird Guides were employed, on a full-time basis, the establishments employing them were approached telephonically by the researcher in order to explain the purpose of the study. Written permission to interview guides was subsequently requested. Two of the three establishments approached granted permission, in writing, for the interview to be conducted and guides were interviewed at these two establishments only. It was not necessary to obtain permission from other employers as interviews with free-lance Local Bird Guides were conducted at their convenience outside of their normal working hours. Self-employed Local Bird

Guides were interviewed at their convenience on a date and time agreed to, based on the understanding that should they be requested to guide on the day agreed to, their guiding activities would take preference. Interview appointments with Local Bird Guides were set up through liaison with the ZBR manager.

Participants

Sampling was both purposeful and convenient. It was purposeful in that the experience of a specific group of people (Local Bird Guides along the Zululand Birding Route) was to be explored and therefore only Local Bird Guides along the ZBR were selected. Sampling was convenient in that Local Bird Guides who were available, that is they were not guiding on the days on which the interviews were scheduled, were asked to participate.

Biographical Data

Eight participants were interviewed.

Of the eight participants interviewed three were female and five were male.

Female participants were all employed on a full time basis. Two were employed on a full time basis by organisations involved in the conservation and/or travel and tourism industry. One was employed on a full time bases by an organisation not involved in travel and tourism.

Of the five male participants, two were self-employed entrepreneurs, one was employed on a full time basis by organisations in the conservation and travel and tourism industry, and two were employed on a full time basis by organisations not involved in travel and tourism.

All participants were 'active' Local Bird Guides, that is, they were guiding on either a full-time or free-lance basis.

Guiding experience post NQF level 2 training ranged from between one and five years.

Age of participants ranged from 22 to 36 years of age.

Seven of the eight participants were not married.

Two of the eight participants did not have any children.

All participants had a *fair command* of the English language. This was important as it was necessary for participants to speak their own words.

Materials

Informed consent

Establishing trust and rapport is necessary where data to be obtained during the interview relates to personal experiences. These interviews are normally clearly defined and require a high degree of interaction between the researcher and participants (Hayes, 2000). Rapport was established prior to the interview commencing by advising participants of the purpose of the study. Participants were encouraged to ask questions relating to the study prior to the interview commencing, they were also provided with the researchers' contact details should they have a) any questions relating to the research or b) want to withdraw their participation. Participants were informed that:

- Their participation was voluntary.
- They could withdraw from participating at any stage.
- They were not obliged to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable with.
- The interview would be recorded on audio-tape.
- Their identity will not be made known. Where quotations are selected that may indicate location or person, identities and location will not be revealed. Any reference to an area in which participants, may live or guide in will be withheld. Company names will also be withheld.

Participants were handed an informed consent form and asked to read through it prior to consenting to participate in the study. The informed consent form was

translated into Zulu and printed on the back of the English version of this form. Once participants agreed to participate in the study an informed consent form was signed after which the interview commenced with short simple questions intended to break the ice and gather demographic data before easing into the key questions.

A copy of the English Informed Consent form and the Zulu Informed Consent form are attached to this document as Appendix 2 and 3 respectively. These forms contain details relating to the purpose of research as well as ethical considerations that were addressed with participants.

Interview Schedule

A semi-structured interview format was used, in that a set of questions was prepared and all participants were asked the same questions, phrased in such a way that it allowed participants to answer them openly and freely.

The interview commenced with some closed questions providing demographic information. Open ended main questions were then asked based on information relating to the objectives of BLSA and the literature review. Some probing questions were put to participants where information was not voluntarily articulated by participants. Follow-up questions, not included on the interview schedule, were asked only where clarification of an answer by the participant was necessary. A copy of the interview schedule is attached to this document as Appendix 4.

Recording Equipment

An audio recorder, which was carried with the researcher, was used to record the interviews.

Data Analysis

Data was transcribed verbatim from the recordings onto a Word Processor and analysed using theory-led qualitative thematic analysis.

Step 1

The first step was to analyse the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guided the study. Fowler (1997) proposes a Framework of development action concentrating on Macro-Level and Micro-Level development actions. The Micro-Level action component of the development programme has been used to create a conceptual understanding of what the Project aims to achieve in respect of empowerment of the individual within a rural community. The three interlocking dimensions proposed by Beck ((1983) as cited in Lee, 1994) in the conceptual framework of the Empowerment Approach to Social Work Practice proposed by Lee (1994) together with the phases and outcomes of empowerment proposed by Arai (1997) will be used to gain an understanding of the subjective experiences of Local Bird Guides in respect of what the Project aimed to achieve. The 'themes' or concepts relating to the theory that were to be explored were copied and pasted as headings onto separate pieces of paper.

Step 2

Each interview was read. Themes in the data relating to different theoretical concepts were marked by underlining them and making notes next to identified themes.

Step 3

These themes (sentences or paragraphs) were copied from each interview into a document with sections containing the relevant 'heading' based on the identified theoretical concepts.

Step 4

Interview data was then analysed in order to determine how well what was said by participants concurs with what was predicted in the theoretical frameworks used.

Step 5

Results of analysed data are reported using the 'themes' or concepts relating to the theory used as headings during the data analysis process.

Presentation of Results and Discussion

Expectations Prior to Training

Participants' expectations in terms of what the project (as defined) entailed and what they could expect from it were diverse. While some reported that they did not know what to expect others indicated that they had some expectations as a result of the training received.

"To be really honest, I didn't know about ZBR at all."(M4)

"...honestly I, I didn't know what they can do for me, ... I didn't know ZBR before. I started to know about the ZBR while I in the course." (F1)

"I wasn't have much knowledge about them but they tell me that they gonna train me as a bird guide" (M3)

"I thought that ...ZBR will just ... give... me ... free training..."(M2)

"I knew they were going to help me to become a recognised guide ...." (M1)

"...getting education...getting something on my hands and to be able and to qualify to do something..."(F2)

"…to tell you the truth I didn't even know that it was going to work because it was a first thing to me and there was no body else that I knew doing that so didn't think that it was going to work …maybe just one of the course that I'll come back to waste my time on that."(M5)

Empowerment

Results of the exploration into Local Bird Guides perceived empowerment will be reported using the three interlocking dimensions of empowerment according to Beck ((1983) as cited in Lee, 1994:13) and the phases of empowerment according to Arai (1997).

The development of a more positive and potent sense of self

- Self-esteem

All of the participants indicated that they had an improved sense of self worth post training.

"I think I have become a good example to many of my fellow communities even…to my family" (M1)

"…now they take me as their role model …even at school the teachers will tell them if you want advice they do come to me…"(F2)

"Yah, I feel better than that because when I'm going to town I know now I have my bank I have my everything so I have a money, yes and I'm still alive by this money and I'm just supporting my…our family." (M2)

"Wherever I go, you want to see, they call me as a birdman. Someone who is looking for birds, everybody they respect me… the way they respect me now they not used to respect me the way… they respect me a lot…" (M4)

"I'm one of those people who are, are known, who may proceed to promote our country…" (M5)

"…I'm well known, Germany, England and some other places, they know that there's [name withheld] at the [name of place withheld] once we would like to get a guide she's … the best." (F3)

"I feel great, …, I happened to meet more different people and there also other people who become aware of me…" (F1)

"I can say I'm proud of the … work I'm doing, yah, because it's …different…strange job, yah, so see, by that yah, I'm proud of it." (M3)

- Self-Efficacy

Self efficacy determines how people feel, think, behave and motive themselves. It involves judgement in respect of one's capacity to use skills effectively in performance. The strength of an individuals' conviction in their effectiveness is likely to affect whether they will attempt to cope with a given situation. Individuals will avoid threatening situations whereas they will get involved in activities in which they judge themselves capable (Bandura, 1977).

Some of the participants expressed initial fear in respect of various aspects relating to guiding, they do however, report, overcoming these fears and becoming involved in activities in which they now judge themselves to be capable of performing with confidence.

> "… I think I'm more confident about …meeting people now but like firstly I was just sitting there sometimes I had to meet people like tomorrow,…, I don't try that thing, maybe, I can't make it, but now I know, if I meet people then I know what to do, what they expect from me…. in Wakkerstroom I learnt that if we talking, like with a white, like having face-to-face in the eyes…I used to be one of the shy one looked down,… in our community you're not supposed to look someone face-to-face especially if he's older than you… I learn that, that if you want people to, …trust you, you have to face on the face and stand up straight, you don't put your hands in your pocket. If you want people to see that you trust yourself it's either you put your hand at the front or at the back…that I learnt from Wakkerstroom."(M5)

"...my self-esteem was improved I have confidence even if I am in front of the public.... not actually the tourists but in the public. I can stand in front of them and introduce myself. So I was a shy person actually but now working in tourism it make me to be proud of what I am." (F3)

"...when I started this job (guiding) I think sometimes cannot afford to do it, sometimes, so I think It's...just encourage me, because now I'm feeling very, very comfortable and condiment to do this job...much...is...changed...I did not know before but now I know it. It's how to communicate with clients, how to spot nature...how to plan my itinerary...I'm feeling very, very, very successful guide because now I've been on the course. And just afraid to be, to guide. But now I'm feeling very comfortable so I'm on the successful..." (M2)

- Enactive mastery (experience)

Enactive mastery is the gradual and repeated successful performance accomplishments that lead to the acquisition of necessary skills, coping mechanisms and exposure needed for task performance. Enhanced self efficacy tends to generalise to other substantially different situations and activities (Bandura, 1977).

Participants provided evidence of gradual and repeated successful use of skills, obtained during training, enhancing performance, and self efficacy.

"... but then it depend on you, if you really want to be a good guide ... but it take, hey wise man...it take long for sure, ... like now I can, I can hear something behind me I can tell you without see it... It's crowned hornbill." (M5)

"...you know when you like, when you grew up... and you don't know what you capable of doing, and when you get the training and doing lot of things your hands are all over and then you get to hold something, and then oh, wow, I can do this..."(F2)

Some participants provided evidence of the transfer of skills based on past successful performance, through work related experiences, into the training situation.

"...I found the other guys ...in a class they relied on me because I was already working and I had to get involved with ...helping here and there because I... knew a lot when I was going ...everybody go, hey, you seem to know these can you help us and all that and then I was just collaborating on what I... had before I got there (Wakkerstroom)." (M1)

"...training helped us a lot, especially like in communication when we went to the training we were a bit scared about speaking English, we learnt English at school, but we didn't practice to speak English very well, but to go to the training it also helps us to communicate easily in English, ...where you must work that, is when you gain more experience and you know how to communicate with the people..." (F3)

Many of the participants expressed that they were able to transfer skills obtained at the Guide Training Programme to other areas of their personal lives, jobs and interpersonal and inter-group relationships (interaction with the community).

> "there was also … a section to learn about how to solve conflicts…the way I learnt there, it also taught me even to have a control…to myself … I can't say I'm solving this problem but I can't solve myself, so it's better to start from me and see … this is conflict looking at myself and then I go out, I know this is what I'll have or it's what I don't have to do, I can use some of those things for myself as well." (M1)

> "…I was a quiet person even if I have a problem, I… was not having that power to speak to somebody else, but as I started to work as a bird guide, so now if I have a problem in my community, …I know how to approach a person and tell him or her that okay this is my problem how, how can I solve this problem. Then we talk, then we find a solution. So now I think it's psychologically … it helps me a lot…" (F3)

> "…[name withheld] I've got the family problems [name withheld] someone did that and that and that, how will you sort it out …so they look me differently…"(M4)

- Vicarious experience (provided by social models)

In many cases participants had a 'role model', a person who provided them with the motivation to, get involved in tourism and /or bird guiding, to remain active, and in some cases they provided participants with standards and goals they aspire to attain.

> "it's not that I know everything but also going out with…experienced a birders you also learn a lot from them…usually they will come for specific birds which is very rare to find that's our aim to be here that we take them to where we know it's settled, this is what they will find in this particular areas so it's interesting, it's, it's a challenge and it means a lot." (M1)

> "… there's one person who's like guiding and who's like travelling…like the whole of this world. He's travelling and doing like guiding and my dream is also to get there because now I'm doing communication and I think tourism and communication it links, so I think one day I'll be able to pursue a career in guiding not only locally but internationally. (F2)

> "… I have that idea… because I've seen other people as well, like the guy that I mentioned earlier, [name withheld] used to come with a big group. One time as I saw him …okay I'll be like him … that will really make me someone in the world…" (M4)

Participants also felt that they are or could be role models for others.

"...maybe he will ...have to start going out with us...that's where everybody learns. If you've got a child, you taking a trip to Kruger, you're driving around your sons and daughters will be able to learn a lot from you, so it's starting from like that. I don't know if he will follow myself and his mother ...but I think it's one of the thing I will really appreciate if he will...because it's a new thing. By the time his 18 I think it's going to be going well in this ... tourism industry..."(M1)

"I'm at home everyone will be like oh can you help me I want to do what you are doing... I think it's, it's a matter of becoming helpful and example to other youth..." (M1)

"I'm ... teaching some ... school groups... how to become a tour guide, how to become a bird guide and ...others they like this job in fact because they ask me a lot of questions...People they saw me, as I said, there's some child, school child, they will say [name withheld] I say you in a magazine, yah, so they're , that's they have that interest for doing my job" (M2)

"...like most of the kids I grew up with and the kids that are around my community they going the school that I was going in and ... now they take me as their role model..." (F2)

- Social or verbal persuasion

People are persuaded verbally that they possess the capabilities to master given activities. This boosts their perception of self-efficacy resulting in greater efforts by the individual. Verbal persuasion may lack task specific information and may consist of emotional or cognitive appeals that task performance is possible. Such appeals can have an impact on efficacy judgements especially where the person doing the persuading is considered to be credible, trustworthy or have some prestige. Participants did indicate that verbal persuasion was present and that it did lead to greater performance related efforts on their part.

> "I will be explaining more on birds and many people were like, oh, why don't you do birding courses so that you just do…guiding and I was like ah, no still go there, then I realised I had to do this so that's why I went to do this." (M1)

> "… my community … encourage me, but if you want to do this job you must have your business, you must have your good spotting, you must have your information centre for birding just to find up all information about birding, so, they just encouraging me and they like this job, also like and the Inkosi, they are approaching me and encouraging me, the Inkosi." (M2)

> "…unfortunately my brother passed away, he was the one who was pushing me, hey just do this, I want everyone to understand nature and all that…he motivated me a lot…" (M1)

"I said…that's not gong to happen, I can not know all the birds in South Africa and some of the other countries, that's impossible and then [name withheld] said you know,…just do this and then see if …"(F2)

- Physiological / emotional factors

Individuals who maintain a resilient sense of efficacy use good analytical thinking and set challenging goals which lead to performance accomplishments. Some participants maintained a strong sense resilience in the face of situational and environmental demands. These participants have indicated that they have benefited and are reaping the rewards of this resilience in their performance accomplishments.

"…my father who's is like a lion his a man…he knows himself, you know, he didn't want me to, to do major studies because he …wanted me just to go to school to learn how to write a letter and all that so I, I decided not to allow him to do that …I became who I am now without his support" (M1)

"…people they just discourage me when I on the course, that, where did you, what do you finish your course, and I said 'let me finish' as …time goes on … they see I'm … doing something successful…. when they just seeing me walking with clients they just afraiding me now, so you are highest man now" (M2)

"I was, although I was positive about life but I was not as I am now through to their training… whatever I have today nobody gave … it to me… it was through my hard work and perseverance and…being responsible …everybody in my

community thought that I was crazy when I was like looking at birds and going to the forest…theywere like gee, she is just stupid looking after the birds. Can you just believe a human being chasing after the birds. Is she, is she crazy or what? It was like that and but now they know and they realise that I'm capable of doing something and I'm made changes….when I came back from Wakkerstroom it's where I realise that life is like very difficult outside there and in order to get on top you have to use your hand and your brain and when I came back from Wakkerstroom I used to go in the forest and I was working hard to get my … practical level two training so that I can be able to earn money and yah, I was working like very, very hard and sometime I will just have to walk from town to the bush and didn't have money, didn't have food to go, to eat but I said one day I know there is something big after this walk in the forest, yah." (F2)

- Control

Control refers to the ability a person has to direct behaviour in order to secure a desired outcome.

"…when things are going very, very good…be…more famous,…yah, a confident guide…that will be my career. Yah, sometimes I'll be driving my car next time." (M2)

Participants, did indicate that when the "going gets tough", they did *not* feel that they had the ability to direct behaviour in a way that would lead to desired outcomes.

"...it's very difficult but I don't understand whether it is because of our municipal, as they said before,...your municipal doesn't want to cooperate, you know we don't know how to get your sponsorship." (M1)

"...we don't have money...if you want to go tourism Indaba to market yourself ...you have to pay ...R500 for the accommodation...R300 for the stand to be with BirdLife..." (M4)

"...it's seasonal...when the seasons like this people they quit...they're not doing that part of the training that they provide...is end up being not useful, because people they quit....they start to do this thing and they say 'it's difficult there's no money in this industry because there's no market..." (M4)

"I would say they did well to send me to the course but time to carry on registrations and all that...I gave him all that, he hasn't come back, I don't know when it's going to come..." (M1)

"the guide they won't be survive by guiding just guiding because client, especially if it is raining or if it's windy, there's no guiding, so no income....it is busy especially in summer, in winter it's quiet, so that's why other people they just take other job different from what they've been training for and then they stick on that job because it's a daily job..." (M3)

However, where participants indicated a perceived ability to direct behaviour toward gaol attainment it is possible that these participants possess a stronger sense of resilience in the face of situational and environmental demands, than those who indicated that they felt they had no control over their goal attainment.

"...as I was thinking of quitting, but I can't quit because I have a vision..." (M4)

"...it means to grow my knowledge, sometime to be...driving a car next time, to be my ... own business next time..." (M2)

"...although birding is seasonal you know, is, is not busy ...throughout the year but it help me a lot in summer. There are a lot of people who come for birding. Before I get this job I was relying on it, and it's changed my life...there are a lot of people who are aware ... of this area, a lot of birders they, you know, they come to this area." (F1)

The construction of knowledge and capacity for more critical comprehension of the web of social and political realities of one's environment

The word 'political' could perhaps be substituted for the word 'cultural' realities as participants confront different cultural groups on a regular basis.

Participants indicated that they had an understanding of their social realities. They also indicated, in most cases, an understanding of how to, and a willingness to, use or deal with these social structures (realities).

"...Wakkerstroom... it's one of the grassland places. They've got special birds that we don't have here in our site like the cranes, some of the larks we don't have here,...and the people, you have the maBuna there, but yah they are very kind to people there also, yah. I liked Wakkerstroom ..." (M5)

"...sometimes we take people from Germany, you take people from France, take people from South Africa, obviously ...that's where ... anybody who's a guide will feel that pressure." (M1)

Empowerment is not about creating dependency or structures that are crafted onto the local context. Empowerment is about equipping people to use these structures and / or institutions in a responsible and sustainable way.

"...it's how to communicate with some centres, like Wakkerstroom and ZBR and Johannesburg, and yah." (M2)

"...right now, I'm not...getting any support from them. I think they played their role and it was quite a big role in my life and I think they have set me free and, I'm...a big girl now I can look after myself ...I know that if I didn't get this job at [name withheld] and get where, where I am today ... they will still... support me... in every way because the job that I have...it was through BirdLife South Africa and ZBR." (F1)

"...that job on that poster I wasn't know about that poster it was there in [name of company withheld] and then they (ZBR) heard about it and then ... I get a call from them and then they said there is a poster this side here looking somebody ... I went to ... the job that I'm doing at the moment..." (M3)

"...I haven't expected a job, ... because when I've been in, in training there is some...studies they taught me...that ...students you need to have your own business...I been finish...in the college...with that mind that ... I should have my own business, so that why...hasn't problem." (M2)

Empowerment is about enabling people to use the development process, as well as instigating processes of their own, in order to improve their livelihoods and physical-wellbeing.

"Yah, I've been to [name withheld] reception discussing with the management and I've been to reception ... see some tourist coming in ... to introduce myself ... I am doing this and this and this so if you want to see me you've got to contact me at this and this and this phone numbers and if you not find me just contact the office ZBR." (M2)

"... we started to market ourselves through these locally guest houses here... we were having, what do you call, bed and breakfast tourism association meeting...I went to do a presentation ... to them I said guys I'm [name withheld]...I'm just interested in birds. I can take your guests before breakfast while you're still

preparing the breakfast…to the bush for almost two hour and after that they come back the breakfast will be ready. But firstly I would like I would like just to show you what I'm going to do to your guest, and I take all of them and they were, they became very happy…" (M4)

"…think of the trees… what if …lets say Woodwards' Batis come and breed there, what if the Southern Banded Snake Eagle come and nest there, so everybody looking for that bird, so that will be great for me because I'll tell BirdLife, hey, that guy is nesting here now so that will bring a lot of people but what if you chop down the tree…" (M4)

"… I also go to the farms, like [name withheld]… the owner of the farm…said he just allow me go even all the farms. Farmers around here they allowed me to go any time. They say I must feel free …" (M5)

"…ZBR do the basic needs for you as a guide. How to deal with your career or what problems are you going to solve…the ZBR it's done, so now it's, the job is up to us, ho, how are we going to hand this career and how are we going to push the way forward." (F3)

"…you will get some guides that they feel like ZBR hasn't done something for them but it's, it's up to the person to receive the knowledge. If you don't want to receive the knowledge and …turn your back to the knowledge you won't receive

it and if you're not there they can not go out and look for you… I think it's up to the…individual." (F2)

"…I think maybe it was money that was wasted on the new guides…it's only a few guides who are really doing their job now, others they don't care…" (M5)

Some authors do argue that introduced development with its ideologies, technologies, and outside influences, such as tourists and the media, represents consumerism's most exaggerated features and undermines self-esteem. Tourists are consumers with economic power, the power to purchase 'rights' and 'services', they are not invited by local people (members of the community) who often have little say about their role (McLaren, 1998).

The majority of participants, did, however report the communities that they were guiding in were not supportive of them bringing tourists into the community. No reason for this was provided, although participants did report that attitudes towards tourism has or is changing.

"…it's better now, now most of them understand but at first…they give you problem, 'cause they ask, 'what are you do these people here'? …I can say even now there are some who don't understand, you know, but it's better now…" (F1)

"...it was up at [name of place withheld] where, they were not really complaining but they just fund us in the forest there doing the birding. Then they stopped, 'hey, what you doing here you are standing our place?'..." (M5)

"...it's changed...some members of the tribal authority they had that negative attitude, yes, that to bring clients here you want to take our land...they don't know what are you doing...I think ...the attitude has changed already in the community but ...they were ...negative...when I started this job." (M2)

One of the participants reported that communities used what was freely available to them (natural resources) to generate an income from tourism, however, they also report on their efforts to cease these environmentally degrading practices and replace them with more sustainable options, still relying on tourism.

"... they have an idea that tourist they come here and they buy. The reason why they cut everything, anything, they are trying to sell to the tourist. So they have an idea that tourist that's people that have got money. So I went to them and I explained to them, okay, in which way we have to attract this tourist and make money, as well not like cutting everything because it will get finished and then there will be noting to sell anymore, so let's bring them, ...here and stay here, and walk here, and that's how we're going to make money. So they did understand that and they said to me... that's a good idea." (M4)

The cultivation of resources and strategies, or more functional competence, for attainment of personal and collective goals

Education and training "represent an investment in people" and are important for putting capacity-building approach to development into practice (Parsons ((1989) as cited in Lee 1994; Eade, 1998). Many of participants acknowledged that they, as children, killed birds to eat, these participants reported that they had, through training and education, realised the importance of birds. They have realised and understood that birds are a source of income for them and that the protection of birds and their habitats are important.

Empowerment is a developmental process requiring changes in human behaviour starting with individual growth that may culminate in larger social change. All participants reported that they were in some way involved in education and training community members in the protection of and economic value of birds and their habitats.

"...remember myself back while I was young ...we killing a lot of birds, braaing them eating them so now I'm taking that information back to the young generation ...imagine if there were no birds around I shouldn't be what, all of what I have right now, but because of birds I'm, I'm surviving little bit. So became involved with the school groups ... last year I did 22 school groups ... in environmental education and protection of wild birds with their...habitat." (M4)

"...the first thing that you see if you see a bird, you don't even have to identify what bird is that, why is it there, is it a special or what. The only thing you think is just kill the bird and have a braai but not now. I can't even kill a bird, I know that that thing is also part of my life, because having the bird there is also doing a lot of job, it's controlling the insect and controlling a lot of ... disease that we get from insect and like frogs, they also come around, snakes, so they are controlling that like on the food chain. Yah, so, yah, I much more ... know now that birds are very important in my life." (M5)

"...go to the schools and teach the schools about...how to conserve the... birds, they mustn't kill them, so we teach them ... about ...nature conservation especially ... the birds that needs to be conserved, because people, specially black people they were not having that information. They know that once they see the bird they must kill them and cook them...." (F3)

"...at first it wasn't easy ... people were just killing birds and you're walking with guests they will see they killing birds, but what is going on here, you know, it was not easy to make them understand and I can say even now there are some who don't understand, you know, but it's better now..." (F1)

"...people who, who will come and catch the birds for, for eating, you know, ..., we able to just talk to the people, after I go to the course, and that it is wrong, you can't kill birds just for eating them, and teach them how important it is to have this thing in your area, 'cause there are people who don't, ... have these,

who will come all the way to see these in your area, you know, it just makes that relationship with the community although it wasn't that easy..." (F1)

Empowerment, as a developmental process, moves through phases, these phases together with outcomes of each phase as identified by Arai (1997) are listed below together what participants reported as relevant to each phase.

- Awareness

Awareness refers to a desire for change, the outcome of this phase is the individuals' willingness to develop new directions for themselves. All of the participants indicated that they were aware of their need for further developmental, they were also willing to make suggestions in respect of further development while others were actively involved in 'further' training and development.

Awareness

Participant (M1)

"... I thought I am qualifying well now and .um. it's time I started doing things related to birding as well so that I don't look at what I did as something that was useless to do but something that is progressing ...I saw myself have crossed the first bridge that I had to cross it was always something I said I am owing myself to do this now its over I have to take more step forward." (M1)

Participant (M2)

"I want to work for myself…yah, more training like from level 2 up to level 4 …level 4 is a, I think it's a national, it's a provincial one….So I need to travel all this region because now I know everything in my site…I don't want to see just same thing, same thing, all of this, get to see another things new…" (M2)

Participant (M4)

"I notice some old French people they don't speak English, the old French people …it is difficult, you can't communicate." (M4)

Outcomes

Participant (M1)

"… business management skill that's very important because I believe everyone is doing this courses with the intention of starting his or her own company in the future, saving money so that when the time comes, maybe you can go out and I am getting this Kombi I need to start my own tours but you can't do all that without a business management skills. So I'll say maybe business skills is very important." (M1)

Participant (M2)

"I think it's a must skills…how to run a business, like how to, how to draft a business plan. I thinks it's another challenge because if you want to …find the funds to do my own business, so how to draft my own business, all of these

things they need improve it. I think to draft a business plan is very difficult." (M2)

Participant (M4)

"...but if with [speaks French to the researcher] it is easy,...now I can get someone who can speak my language, talk about a tree, talk about a bird, talk about the area little bit, that can help, maybe ZBR can try to organise sort of a course...that can help." (M4)

- Connecting and learning:

Refers to a process through which resources are used to gather skills, knowledge and information.

The individual begins to increase his or her social network this decreases feelings of isolation and increases self-esteem and self-concept" (Arai, 1997). Social networks do not only provide support but enable the expansion of resources through the sharing of information.

Participants either expressed that they appreciated social interaction with other individuals who share similar interests, or indicated a need for such interaction. While one of the participants indicated that he used socially available resources to gather information.

"...I wish them to, to unite all the bird guides...to allow them maybe come here to come...that relationship so that we, to teach ...to work in different areas...to gain more experience..." (F3)

"...see it's successful also that those guides, that they train'... network of guiding. Then they also get more people coming for the guides... I happened to meet more different people, and there also other people, who become aware of me like, there also guides, birding ... company, who also aware of me so they can also contact me without even contacting ZBR." (F1)

"Okay I did my own research I went a lot of libraries there were no bird books around here even tourism centre. I went to libraries I get another very small book, now I saw the Woodwards Battis looks like this..." (M4)

- Contribution

Contribution refers to the integration of previous stages as well as mobilisation (discussed below), knowledge, skills and resources into everyday life. It is also characterised by feelings of acceptance and belonging, of being able to make a meaningful contribution to the community. Many participants felt that they were making a meaningful contribution to the community as a result of the training received.

Family related contributions

"...birding is a part time things for me...it changed my life because I got something from nothing and it can boost me so much...I've got children...three boys so they need a lot of support from...when I've got nothing then it's something that comes in my pocket to support my family...but that's not something I rely on, something that comes one day and tomorrow it's gone...sometimes you find that they have to go on a weekend out and I've got no pocket but from birding, birding then I've got ...something that comes then I have something for him to give and go, yah." (M5)

"...my family they like this job already because they know that all what I am doing at home, I got money from the ZBR so I give them a support so what I know, they know that when I'm going to the bush I know I'll be back with something that they can give them stay alive." (M2)

"...personally...it helped...because I was unemployed when I came here...I got employment so I got money to support my family..." (F3)

Job related contributions

"... I was also shy, I couldn't speak like in front of people... the first time to go up and do presentation that was in Wakkerstoom and to be able, like when we're are doing the practical... taking groups and the clubs...around and show them the bird that's where you first started to, to show all those professional skills ... that's where I started to do that, and now if I'm taking a group of people around

the[name withheld] I, I still use those skills and it's, it's working me …I know that they don't know and the reason why they're here it's because they don't know …from there I learnt to stand in front of the people and, and talk to them and control the group, …if you talk people must listen to you, we also gained that skill and I still use it today … I know how to control the group of, the big group of people." (F2)

"Let us just say about birds,… it's helped me a lot sometimes a there's a student come from the university coming down here and there wasn't know about birds maybe they coming to learn more we doing…bird and then from there I'm helping them a lot to teach them this species, that species, this species that species so that knowledge I know I only get it from the training I did in Wakkerstroom. So it's helping me now, I'm not keeping it but I'm using it on my job what I'm doing at the moment….like, like birding stuff, yah I'm using it yah, … I'm using the experience I have got that side…" (M3)

"…it helped me a lot 'cause from there I'm, … what I am now because of that skills that I learn there. I'm now working, although I'm working something else different, but … most of the skills that I'm using …, here is the one that I've gain in the course. Also to, to communicate with other people to understand other people's needs, you know…" (F1)

Community related contribution

"…I think the community now, they are feeling very happy, because everything that's happened here, they are calling me to interpreting, translating them and everything, so…I'm now helpful in the in my community…" (M2)

- Mobilisation:

Mobilisation refers to individual participation in the desired change area resulting in increased feelings of competence and self-esteem.

"…maybe if I needed to start my own business, I have to look the community needs first, that this community needs this thing and this thing…the community like the rural area…the needs of the rural area it can't be like the urban area so you have to differentiate the community you are living with …" (F3)

"it's just promote me into a higher…position, because I respect by the whole community now with my job so that why the ZBR just gave me a lots of information due to my course that I've done….there is something that I did not know before but now I know it." (M2)

"to get that knowledge…it push me to the point where I am now, and all things that I've got it's linking to that point because now I can, I know much more about trees…all that is linked to the training…" (M3)

"I don't look at what I did as something that was useless to do but something that is progressing. So I see myself … one day working on my own doing things related to birding…birding itself it gave me a relief, I, I saw myself have crossed the first bridge that I had to cross it. Was always something I said I am owing myself … I have to take more step forward." (M1)

Career Paths

A career is a pattern of work-related experiences while a career path is based on similarities in knowledge, skills requirements and job behaviours that an individual is likely to acquire and apply during the course their careers. Research suggests that "a rational approach to career decision making consisting of self and environmental exploration, can be very useful. "New organisations" offer employability, rather than employment. This is done through creating opportunities for continued growth and development with the organisation offering the developmental opportunities or with other organisations. Other factors that have been found to influence career decision making include; beliefs about one's ability and control over a situation, the importance of work to one's identity, and the role 'accidents' play in career decision making these kinds of events can easily influence the course of life (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalh, 2000:137).

Many participants expressed that bird guiding could become or has become a career while others indicated that it was a job opportunity only.

"Yah…that will be my career." (M2)

"You can make a career out of guiding." (F1)

"at the moment it's a job opportunity, but I can change my career as the time goes on, if maybe I see that it's not working for me …" (F3)

There was a difference in approach to careers amongst participants based on their relationship with BLSA, that is, depending on whether they were free-lance guides, self employed guides or guides working for other organisations. However, all of the participants, except for one, indicated that their careers as bird guides came about accidentally.

"… I finished matric at … then after that I didn't have anything to do. I didn't have money to pursue any studies …there was this community thing that was …facilitated by [name withheld] … he chose …people who just finish matric and didn't have anything to do, so I was one of those people… we did tourism…in the middle of BirdLife South Africa was introduced to us… Most of us chose to do the birding and then we did birding …four of us got the opportunity to go to Wakkerstroom to study birding." (F1)

"…I've been working as a tour guide in a [withheld] farm…they were keeping some… exotic birds on the cages and I was responsible on that…the boss saw me that I was so interested in animals, so and then from there I meet [name withheld] he was looking people who was interested in nature… he said I have to write the recommendation letter to see why I like to be a bird guide and then I

wrote that letter and from there I went to …Wakkerstroom for the training." (M3)

"…I was just taking through the walking trails and telling them about trees, medicinal uses. I wasn't involved with birds …until I met one guy from Cape Town and then he introduce me to [name withheld] and he started to arrange me a bird guiding course in Wakkerstroom." (M4)

Some participants indicated that they had an interest in nature and or conservation prior to attending training. In many cases participants employed in fields related to conservation or the environment in some way. While some participants indicated that they had no interest in nature or conservation prior to the training received.

"… I finished my matric in [withheld]… I was involved in environmental club." (F1)

"I was interested in nature as I finished matric. I come and join [name withheld] as an honoury officer. So was just volunteering to work with them." (M4)

"…all I love nature, I love every thing, animals trees, birds, actually I love the nature." (F3)

"I used to … be a member of the environmental club at school." (M1)

"...the training that I received from them, I think it did change me because I was, I was a totally different...person before then because I didn't care about the environment." (F2)

"...I wasn't so interested ... in environment but ... that training make me so interested now in environment..." (M3)

Participants did not indicate that any self analysis or evaluation was done in order to access their interest. However, from the data gathered it is evident that there is a link between some of the participants' current job tasks and training received even in occupations that are not related to conservation or tourism. It would appear that most of the participants were interested in nature and / or conservation and that they have 'accidentally' ended up in jobs or work related activities and fields.

"...if we go onto [withheld] do inspection...we've got birds that are coming out of the [withheld]...came to [name withheld] and asked, hey, what are the birds doing in the [withheld]? He asked me if I would like to learn more about birding or birds and I said 'yes'...oh, birds are also controlling the caterpillars that we are looking for in the [withheld]...I'm very keen on knowing more...I was lucky to get the sponsor ... went to Wakkerstroom for a course...then I came back started guiding as a qualified guide...I've moved up on now..." (M5)

"...since I was like a baby I wanted like to get close to the birds...I cannot sit in my office like for a whole day ...every now and then, I'm not in the office I'm in the bush....when we went for training in Wakkerstroom, [name of company withheld] was sponsoring that... programme and then when we came back we were doing the practical training and then through my performance and stuff then I was chosen to come here in [name of company withheld] for an interview for the guiding... I got the, the job." (F2)

"I was started to be keen in birding ... I get the post in [name of company withheld] but under the [name of institution withheld] they were needing the somebody who got the knowledge of birds because they were doing the birds on the, on where [name of company withheld] is [activity withheld] so by that because I was having that qualification already and then I go through with that qualification... opened the opportunity that qualification for me." (M3)

Career development for economically disadvantaged populations has been questioned. Fizgerald and Betz ((1994) cited in Brown, 2003) argue that career development may not be meaningful for the majority of the population who teeter on the edge of poverty. Most of these people realise that meaningful employment is a way out of their current existence and work is not psychologically central to their lives.

Some participants indicated that guiding was an employment opportunity only, while it would appear that for the self employed participants the development of a career (work) is psychologically central to their lives.

'Accidental' / Entrepreneurial career opportunity and career progression

Participant M4

"...I look myself as a businessman,...involved in tourism, okay, running my own business, getting other people involve, that's really take me away...getting in that track that I'll run my own business...starting to promote birding tourism around and South Africa as a whole if possible...I am doing the walking trails...I'm acting as a director of that because I know tourism is growing...I have to market myself first, you know, because I don't think of going somewhere else now and looking for a job...some tour operators they want me to come and work for them. But how if someone book me because I made brochures...before...and he phone me while I'm not here or else I'm at [name withheld] or Johannesburg wherever guiding there so my business will be down again...I want to grow something bigger. Yes, and get other people involved ...as a career opportunity...because even now as well I still want to go ahead for education to get and learn at least tourism management sort of, yah, such things like that ... help as a bird specialist, as a part of is an advantage in a way. If you're a tour guide okay, you say I also have this certificate, okay, I've been trained as a bird guide as well. That's also act as an advantage, yah, as a bird specialist, I can be the nature tour guide but as a bird specialist on the other side....this is going to take long, but I have a belief that really one day I'll make it." (M4)

Participant M2

"…I've become aware of ZBR as [name withheld] training initiatives …[name withheld] just heard about a post in Zuluand. This people want people who's want to train to Wakkerstoom and [name withheld] said there's some people that I know that they can do it very well this job and that where I got this training for BirdLife into Wakkerstoom…. I am a guide I'm doing this, I'm doing this, I'm specialising in this birds and bird and that one… I'm feeling very, very, very successful guide because now I've been on the course ...ZBR just gave me some bookings, and help me with some marketing and all of that some, just employing some people going to assess me… That will be my career... there are some companies that they want to use me, but I'm just telling them that I'm doing my job, so others they like my job because they want to use me just to be a big management at the company, so that I'm just telling them that, 'no I'm doing my job I don't want to ee.. to, to do it a job for any company I have my company… I think the positive impacts now is …keep me busy and … create me more performance like information, new information, more knowledge and attitude for my jobs… I think it's a must skills others is how to run a business like how to, how to draft a business plan I thinks it's another challenge because if you want to see the, want do the co-ops in my area, lets say that I want to, to find the funds to do my own business so how to draft my own business all of these things they need improve it." (M2)

'Planned' career progression

Participant M 1

"if I remember well there is a guy from [name of place withheld] his name is [name withheld] his works as a community conservation officer …he told be about birding…and then few years later he came up with an idea of the guys involved in the ZBR…we were told to form a special group, that was going to attend the courses with BirdLife. I think that was 2000, 2001 somewhere there…unfortunately I was working so my girlfriend and my colleague they took part in the course …they went there. I think it was between 2001 and 2002. Then when they came back, then they had full understanding of all these things 'cause they did a training at Wakkerstroom, and then they came back. I knew my turn would come because if I was not working I'd go together with them… that's when we had fully understanding of ZBR after they came back…they had to get their assessments in progress with the ZBR people, then that's where I knew them …Some people will come and say we just need only birds…nothing else, so which means it came as a challenge. You know, maybe it's better to, to become a recognised bird guide rather than being a game ranger where you just know everything but people are not happy to travel around with you while they know that you are not …recognised as a bird guide." The training "it means a lot … I've already taken one step forward because I couldn't afford to go to these course on my own paying all the cost myself…it means a lot because I know …I've got an additional skill above what …I've had before. So now I've got a little bit bigger qualification so it's, it's helping me a lot and besides …it's a gateway to avitourism because obviously avitourism is, seems to be going,

growing, it's growing well. I believe in the future we will be running short of a…a bird guides because not many people have been trained for this and yah it's just a big challenge. I'm still looking forward to do more qualifications related to bird guides, but it did means a lot … I haven't done all my assessment yet but you can't believe how many people I'm getting coming, coming and coming even the birding companies …they do bring their people here…they will come for specific birds which is very rare to find, that's our aim… it really helps because otherwise I wouldn't be known by anyone that I can do birding. Well even though it's, it's not highly appreciated, because many people still not understand what we are doing. But coming to youth, youth will understand … because this is like a hidden career. Many people don't have chances to do things like this it's too expensive to do it and you can't pay it on your own. But the more we appear ourselves in the community the more people we gain to know this kind of career. We've even tried to introduce tourism subject at school so that people will say oh, who started this because of this man. So things like, I think I am coming right, even though it's not highly appreciated. But … parents who's children have gained out of this will be the first people to say, 'this is a good thing we like what you're doing' so that's it's like that." (M1)

Guiding as an employment opportunity only

Participant F3

"before I was just doing the part time job like working on the stores…temporary jobs something like that.. I was doing… radiography at [name withheld] hospital…working there voluntarily…my friend ,…she was already working here …so she told me about that there, if I'm interested in birds, I can join them by coming here learning more from them about bird watching then that is where I got interested…at the moment it's a job opportunity but I can change my career as the time goes on if maybe I see that it's not working for me…… it helped… they helped me a lot because I was unemployed when I came here ….first … I got employment so I got money to support my family. Also they helped me to … make my mind to have a progress and to think deeply about the things that's happening around our societies…… I thought I…can take the bird guide as my career, but maybe if I see that...there are some problems I can take other career and then I can do it as part-time job.... Yes… it can be a career... it depends on how much money do you have…'cause actually I love the job but you know sometimes if financially you are not satisfied sometimes you can change your career for to where you can get more money then you are at the moment, so it depends, that's why I said it would depend… for me the ZBR do the basic needs for you as a guide. How to deal with your career… how are we going to handle this career and how are we going to push the way forward."

Post-training Perceptions

The effect training and the resulting career opportunities has had on the development and empowerment of participants is important. How individuals experience something often is different from objective reality. It is therefore possible that project success or failure will be perceived differently by participants and the impact the project has had on them will be reported in different ways. It is however, imperative to understand that what participants report is their 'reality'.

Participants, in general reported that the project has had a positive impact on their lives, others reported that the project had no impact on their lives while one participant indicated a negative perception of the ZBR .

"…I know how to deal the problems, I know how to speak nicely with the public so they help me so much…" (F3)

"…I don't see any impact…" (M3)

"…ZBR, in fact I won't talk a lot about ZBR because I don't understand … what is really doing…I just said 'no' I don't want …them much because I don't know what's going on there and they are difficult…I do think …they achieving of they wanted to do…" (M4)

Limitations On The Study

The focus of the study necessitated a methodological approach, seeking validity rather than reliability, often criticised for its lack of statistical accuracy. The study also focused on subjective experiences (perception, consciousness and enlightenment,) of participants and has not explored the objective realities, that is, the measurable results and outcomes.

Local Bird Guides, still active along the ZBR were selected for participation. Thus the expectations and disappointment in respect of training received as part of a conservation initiative is given by participants who appear to be 'satisfied' with their 'positions'. Sampling was purposeful and convenient. Snowball sampling could have yielded data, obtained from participants who had left the project (as defined), with feelings and thoughts around themes very different to those obtained from the selected sample. In other words, only the success stories were told, while the experiences of those who have left the project remain unexplored.

Due to time and economic restraints follow up interviews were not possible and clarification could not be sought. This could be problematic in that participants, although they all have a good command of the English language, are not English speaking and meaning and expressions attached to words may have been incorrectly 'received' by the researcher.

Data obtained from participants during the interview, that did not fit into the theoretical framework, is not reported and therefore some meaningful data is 'lost'.

There is the possibility that some of the participants could have answered questions in a socially desirable manner.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the data gathered it is evident that participants were unaware of what to expect from the training initiative prior to attending the NQF level 2 training.

All participants indicated that they had experienced a more positive sense of self, post training.

Many of the participants reported that as they gained experience they became more confident. Participants stated that they were putting skills, acquired during training, into practice. They also reported applying these skills to areas of their lives other than guiding. The magnitude and strength of efficacy beliefs was not assessed, participants did however report that their efficacy beliefs generalised to other areas of their lives.

Many of the participants reported that they were motivated to take up bird guiding as a career based on the observation of the successful performance of others. Participants also reported that they learned from other, more experienced birders,

and that verbal encouragement from people who are respected, by the Local Bird Guides, lead to greater performance related efforts on their part. Many participants felt that they, in turn, were role models on which community members, especially children or the youth could model behaviour on. These participants considered them selves to be successful in their achievements and as such they were good role models or examples.

Some participants found that goal attainment in the face of pressing situational and environmental demands was possible. However, many of the participants reported that they did not feel that they had the ability to direct behaviour in order to secure a desired outcome under difficult conditions. Most negative reports in respect of control made reference to environmental factors, such as birding being seasonal, that is, Local Bird Guides tended to be busy during the summer months and quiet during the winter months, or dependent on the weather. The other area in which a lack of control was perceived related to institutions such as municipalities and the ZBR.

Participants did not express dependency on BLSA or the ZBR, they did however express a need for further training and development provided by the ZBR or BLSA.

Participants did report being able to gather knowledge and information independently. In many cases respondents were aware of the institutions, organisations and funding projects within the Zululand Birding Route.

All participants indicated that training received allowed them to make meaningful contributions in their lives and the lives of their families and the larger community. Most participants were able to use skills obtained during training to achieve desired performance outcomes.

Most participants reported that they had not planned a career in bird guiding. In many cases participants became bird guides based on role models or through others recommending them for training based on their performance or interest. Some participants indicated that bird guiding was only an employment opportunity while others indicated that it was a career. Participants who indicated that bird guiding was a career indicated that certain performance goals were being aspired to.

Based on the outcome of this study the following is recommended.

- Research into the effect of the 'new psychological contract' on participants in such projects. That is, their perceptions of what this 'new' contract entails.
- Research into personality traits or situational variables associated with empowered people. As the literature has pointed out "all people have the potential for empowerment (empowerment is possible for the most disenfranchised but at the same time it is not automatic for the most resourceful); some people are more capable of being empowered than others; empowerment is not the same for all people or settings;
- The 'psychological' effect of tourism on local communities.

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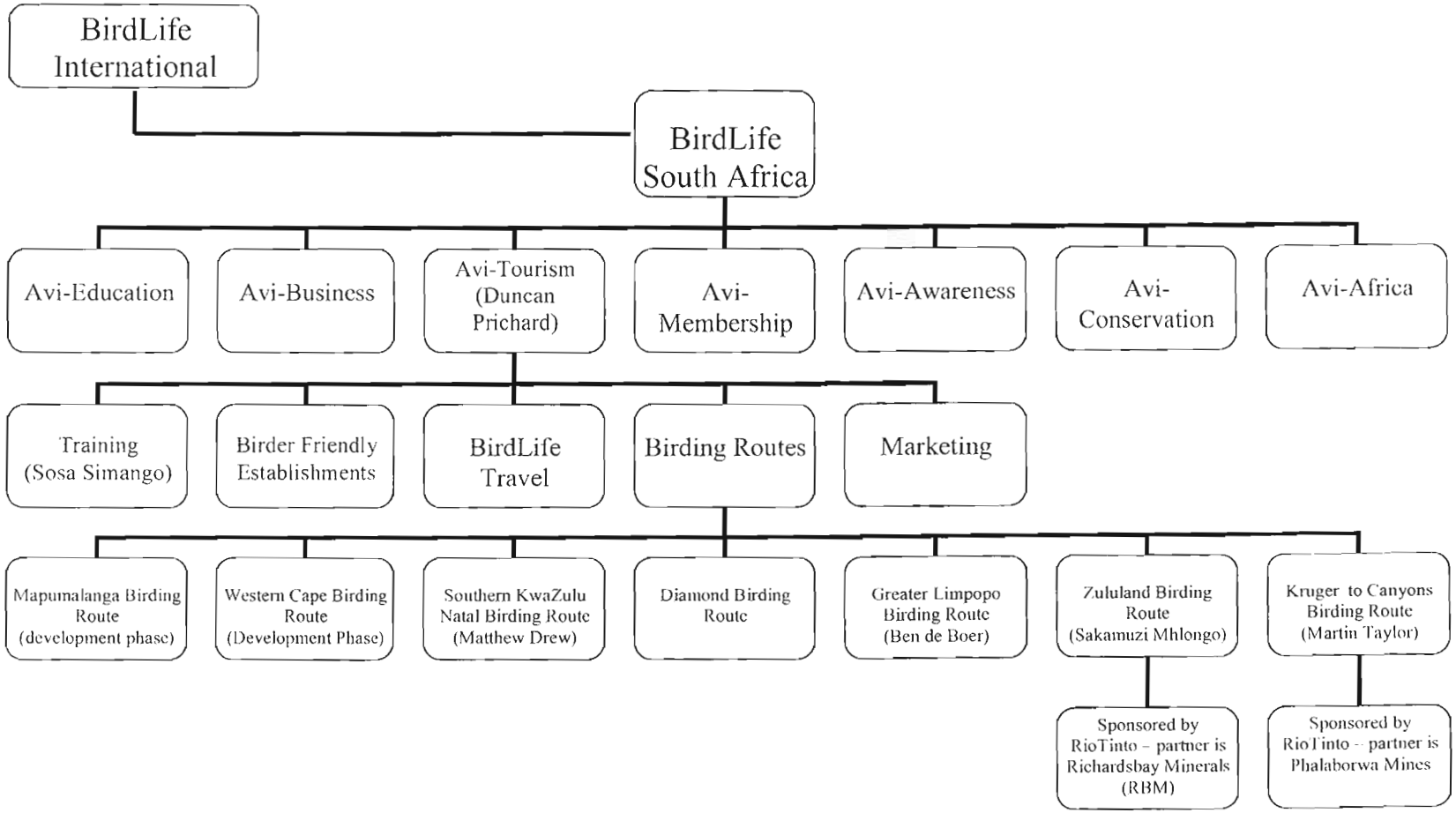
List of Abbreviations

BLSA	:	BirdLife South Africa
IBAs	:	Important Birding Areas
LBGs	:	Local Bird Guides
NQF	:	National Qualifications Framework
NGO	:	Non-governmental Organisation
THETA	:	Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority
ZBR	:	Zululand Birding Route

Appendix 1

Organisational Structure as at July 2007



INFORMED CONSENT

RESEARCH FOR MASTERS: INDUSTRIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

The purpose of the research and interview is to gather information relating to the participants' perception of the Zululand Birding Route, in respect of his/her involvement, perceived benefits and success of the project.

I, FULL NAMES.....(participant)

ID number..... (M / F) hereby consent to being interviewed by Linda Brenchley (student number 207524358) for the purpose of completing research for submission in respect of the requirements for a Masters Degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology.

I have been informed of the following:

- Participation is voluntary
- I may withdraw from participation at any stage
- No monetary reward or rewards in kind will be received as a result participation
- All data collected, analysed and stored will be dealt with in a confidential manner
- Identity of participants will not be made known
- I am not required to make any medical information available to the researcher
- I am not obliged to answer any questions which I do not feel comfortable with
- Data gathering is in the form of an interview and no physical activities are required
- The research project is being supervised and where necessary assistance will be obtained
- The researcher will answer any questions participants may have in respect of the proposed research
- The interview is being conducted with the sole purpose of gathering information relating to the completion of an academic qualification and not as part of an intervention strategy
- Limits on Confidentiality: The identity of participants and information obtained from them will only be made available should there be a legal requirement for it, that is, should it be subpoenaed by a court of law or should participants agree to the information being made available in writing.

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Date

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IMVUMO ECHAZEKILE

UKUHLOLA NOKUHLANGANISA ULWAZI MAYELANA NEMFUNDO EPHAKEME YOKUSIZA ABASEBENZA EMAFEMINI NASEMNYANGWENI WEZINDAWO

Inhloso yocwaningo nokuxoxisana ngokuhlanganisa ulwazi oluphatheleni eZululand Birding Route (abathanda ukubona izinyoni) mayelana ngokuzimbandakanya ekutholeni impumelelo yocwaningo.

Mina, ngokugcwele,
Amagama.....(ongenele)

Inombolo kamazisi.....(owesilisa/owesifazane) ngiyavuma ukuthi ngixoxisene noLinda Brenchley (inombolo kamfundi 207524358) ngenhloso yokuphuthula ucwaningo ngidlulise izidingo zeMasters Degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology (isifundo esiphakeme)

Nakhu engichazelwe kona:

- Ukungenela ukuzinekela ngokuthanda kwami
- Ngingayeka noma nini uma ngithanda
- Akukho umklomelo noma imiklomelo yezimpahla ezotholakala njengo mphumela kongenele
- Konke okutholakele kuyochazwa kugcinwe kuxoxiswane ngokuthembeka
- Ukuthi ngubani wena, akuzovezwa ekugcineni ezincwadini zokufunda
- Angivumelekile ukwenza ulwazi lwezimpilo oluvezwa ngumncwaningi
- Angiphoqekile ukuphendula nokubuza uma ngizizwa ngingakhululile ngakho
- Imibuzo izohamba ngenkulumo kuphela uyikho imisebenzi yezandla ehlangene nayo
- Umsebenzi lona unomphathi, uma kudingeka umsebenzi uzosekelwa futhi
- Obuza imibuzo uzoyiphendula imibuzo yobuzwayo uma ikhona imibuzo
- Imibuzo lena ibuzwa ngoba umfundi ufuna ukuthola ulwazi, hhayi ngoba imiphendulo izosetshenziswa ngenye indlela.
- Imfihlo yezinininingwane zongenelayo: Ukuthi ngubani wena kuzovezwa kuphela uma kudingwa ngabahlengene nezomthetho, ngendlela yokubhala

.....
isignisha yongenele

.....
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ucingo: 031-2601546

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Background questions to establish rapport:

1. Were you born in this area?
2. Where is your home?
3. Are you married?
4. What does your wife / husband / life partner do?
5. Do you have any children?
6. How many children do you have?
7. How old are they?
8. What do your children do?
9. Where do they stay?
10. Do you work in the same area where you work or are you working far away from your home?
11. How long have you been guiding for?

---

1. What did you do before you became a bird guide?
2. How did you become aware of the ZBR?
3. What made you become involved with the ZBR as a guide?

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1. Before you went for training and became a guide, what did you think the ZBR would / could do for you?
2. When did you receive your training and tell me more about the training you received from BirdLife?
3. (a) What has the training you received from BirdLife meant to you?
4. How or in what way has this training helped you?

5. (a) Has the training you received changed the way you feel about yourself?

   (b) How has it changed the way you feel about yourself?

   (c) How did the training you received change the way you feel about the people in your community?

   (d) How has the training you received changed the way the community feel about you?

   (e) Have you received any support from BLSA after your training?
   - What kind of support have you received?

6. Do you feel that being a bird guide has helped you, your family and the community you live in, and if so how has it helped you?

7. Do you think you will be a bird guide forever? And why / why not?

8. Do you feel the training you received can help you to find a different job – different to that of being a bird guide? Why?

9. What effect has your guiding had on the community in which you work / live?
   - Are they happy about you guiding?
   - Are they happy with the tourists that come to do birding (Why)?

10. (a) What was your relationship like with members of the community before you started guiding?

    (b) What is your relationship like now (after you started guiding)?

11. What impact has the ZBR had on your daily life - how has the ZBR helped you – what has it done for you, your family and the community you live and/ (and) or work in?

12. Now that you have been guiding for a while, what do you think of the ZBR?

13. Has the ZBR done for you what you expected it would? Why / why not?

14. Do you think the ZBR is successful? Why / why not?

15. What is the best thing for you about the ZBR?

16. If there is something about the ZBR that you could change to make it better what would that be?