

**THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL  
AREAS: THE CASE OF HLABISA AND ITS LOCAL COMMUNITY ADJACENT TO  
GAME PARKS.**

**by**

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**23 November 2021**

APPROVED FOR FINAL SUBMISSION

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## DECLARATION

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I, Xolani Welcome Dlamini (formerly Mhlongo) do hereby declare that the work presented in this dissertation is my own work and findings, except where indicated. All sources used have been duly acknowledged and referenced.

..... 23 November 2021 ...  
Dlamini X.W Date

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Chili S.N Date

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## DEDICATION

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This work is dedicated to all the people who supported and encouraged me to complete this Masters. These people included my wonderful family in Dundee who had to withstand my absence and exercised high level of patience and tolerance during the period I undertook this Masters. These people were my pillar of strength and source of inspiration.

**Mrs YB Dlamini** [Wife]

**Mrs GD Mhlongo** [Mother]

**Ms LP Mhlongo** [Sister]

**Ms LC Mhlongo** [Sister]

**Ms AS Molefe** [Niece]

**Mr A Dlamini** [Nephew]

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The research is centred on rural tourism and its socio-economic effects on the local community of Hlabisa located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, investigating and disclosing the socio-economic conditions, tourism activities, rural tourism models/strategies, community participation and challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. According to Ivanovic et al. (2009) rural tourism can develop rural economies by providing new economic activities and employment. The research was guided by five research objectives: (1) To determine the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa, i.e. employment, income, skills development, entrepreneurial opportunities; (2) To determine level of tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa area; (3) To determine the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa; (4) To ascertain rural tourism strategies / rural tourism models in place to empower the local community of Hlabisa socially and economically? (5) To ascertain the challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa?

The research problem of the study seeks to investigate the extent to which the wellbeing of the local communities of Hlabisa is being empowered or changed for the better socially and economically through the game park and tourism development inter alia. The Rural Tourism Strategy (2012) states that between 10-15 million South Africans live in areas that are characterised by extreme poverty and underdevelopment. "There is limited integration of local communities and previously neglected groups into tourism, inadequate tourism education, training and awareness and lastly lack of infrastructure, particularly in rural areas" (Rural Tourism Strategy 2012). Moreover, what triggers the researcher's curiosity is that while seeing and knowing that there is quite a number of tourism activities taking place in the study area

but the extent to which those activities affect the livelihood of the surrounding rural communities economically and socially is unknown.

The concept and literature were matched or tested in line with the identified themes which were as follows:

- Socio-economic conditions;
- Rural tourism models (strategies);
- Community participation and representation in tourism;
- Tourism activities; and
- Challenges / obstructions faced by the local community and businesses in the area.

The study was anchored around the Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) development model “with emphasis on co-planning, learning and participation which originates from the Global North” (Saarinen and Lanao 2014). This model was relevant to this study because “it discusses key challenges of rural tourism development especially related to the integration of the tourism industry and rural communities in developing countries and overviews the applicability and conditions of the IRT framework as a potential approach for rural tourism development in the developing world” (Saxena et al. 2007). The study employed a qualitative research approach, with the following tools or instruments used to collect data i.e. questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions and focus groups. The questionnaires were analysed using the Atlas.ti 8 Data Analysis Software in order to enhance reliability by applying the rules built into the programme. The information analysed included employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. The software provided tools that helped with transcription analysis, coding and text interpretation, recursive abstraction, content analysis and discourse analysis.

The outcomes from the interviews indicate that the majority of the local community respondents are happy with the economic opportunities presented by tourism development in the area. The majority of respondents indicated the community participates in tourism planning and development activities in the area. There are structures in place such as Co-management boards in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and,

Local Community Committees and Community Trust that represent communities in decision making processes in relation to tourism. However, the key challenges that emerged from the findings were that the majority of the locals employed in tourism occupied low paying positions, with grade 08-12 and no tourism qualifications. This means locals do not have the necessary qualifications and skills to qualify to be employed in Senior Management positions in the tourism establishments in the area. The lack of a tourism qualification, training and skills would prohibit locals to progress up the ranks to become managers who earn higher salaries and be in a position to make key decisions about tourism in the area.

On the other hand, the small family run tourism business cited access to capital and incentives, markets access, road access, lack of training programmes, unreliable electricity and water supply among the main challenges they face in the area of Hlabisa which affects their growth and revenue.

Recommendations arising from the study include but are not limited to the following:

The local and district municipality, provincial and national government tourism institutions should consider providing bursaries to the youth and scaling learnership programmes in Hlabisa in order to have greater reach and impact in advancing the careers of the local people in the local tourism industry. The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should put in place a sound educational programme to improve the education of the local people of Hlabisa so that they can advance to high ranking positions in order to earn high income. The small businesses in the area of Hlabisa should enter into joint marketing agreements with one another, travel trade, destination marketing organisations in order to increase tourist volume and revenue but also to meet tourist demand in the interim. In addition, the local, provincial and national tourism institutions should put in place sound tourism dedicated incentives and capital to assist small tourism business businesses to grow and expand their businesses to enable these small tourism businesses to employ more local people and pay them high income.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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B&B:	Bed & Breakfast
CATHSSETA:	Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority
CBEs:	Community Based Enterprises
CBD:	Central Business District
CED:	Community Economic Development
CIT:	Community Involvement in Tourism
CRDP:	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
DEAT:	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DNTP:	Draft National Tourism Policy
DUT:	Durban University of Technology
EKZNW:	Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
HiP:	Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
IPAP	Industrial Policy Action Plan
IRT:	Integrated Rural Tourism
KZN:	KwaZulu-Natal
LED:	Local Economic Development
MIG:	Municipal Infrastructure Grant
NDP:	National Development Plan
NGP:	New Growth Path
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
PGDP:	Provincial Growth and Development Strategies
PPT:	Pro Poor Tourism
QUAL:	Qualitative
SA:	South Africa
SANParks:	South African National Parks
SNV:	Netherlands Development Organisation

SDPs:	Spatial Development Plans
TKZN:	Tourism KwaZulu-Natal
TIKZN:	Trade and Investment KwaZulu-Natal
UMDA:	Umhloosinga Development Agency
UNCTAD:	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNWTO:	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
WEF:	World Economic Forum
WTTC:	World Travel and Tourism Council



## **CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives a brief introduction to the background of study including a discussion of the research problem, aim of the study, objectives and rationale for the study, as well as delimitation and limitations of the study.

The research is centred on rural tourism and its socio-economic effects on the local community of Hlabisa located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, investigating and disclosing the socio-economic conditions, tourism activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. According to Ivanovic et al. (2009) rural tourism can develop rural economies by providing new economic activities and employment.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. According to Telfer and Sharpley (2007), Rogerson (2012: b) tourism development in rural areas is now actively used for economic diversification and opening up new ways to generate income and employment in the developing world.

The study uses the qualitative approach. According to Yin (2011) the qualitative research involves studying the meaning of people's lives, under real-world conditions, representing the views and perspectives of the people as the participants in a study, covering the contextual conditions within which people live, contributing insights into existing or emerging concepts that may help to explain human social behaviour and striving to use multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone. The study used the following tools or instruments to collect data i.e. questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions and focus groups. The study contributes to the body of knowledge by adding value to existing rural

tourism models and current management practices as tools for economic development for rural communities. According to Morrison (2003) a body of scientific knowledge can be seen as knowledge residing in the public domain and which is considered both useful and valid for understanding a particular study field by scientists in that field. “Doing research is not to present information, but to use scientifically collected information to change or enrich the understanding of a particular science by its users” (Morrison 2003).

According to Guerin and Martin (2010) a body of knowledge is considered the foundation of a profession and abstract knowledge is the basis of a body of knowledge. “Knowledge constantly evolves, transforms, grows and forever demonstrating its value. Moreover, it must be discussed, defined, and documented by members of the profession” (Morrison 2003). “With a defined body of knowledge, it is possible to declare that a level of professionalization has been reached, the jurisdictional boundaries of knowledge of a profession can be identified, and gaps in knowledge can be defined” (Guerin and Martin (2010). “Once a profession has defined and documented its body of knowledge, its members can participate in the future growth and development of abstract knowledge in an informed way. The act of documenting the body of knowledge allows all members and other stakeholders to consider what is known by practitioners of the profession or what is newly developing and should be added to augment the current definition, which will change the profession’s jurisdictional boundaries” (Guerin and Martin 2010).

The study was anchored around the Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) development model “with emphasis on co-planning, learning and participation which originates from the Global North” (Saarinen and Lanao 2014). This model was relevant to this study because “it discusses key challenges of rural tourism development especially related to the integration of the tourism industry and rural communities in developing countries and overviews the applicability and conditions of the IRT framework as a potential approach for rural tourism development in the developing world” (Saxena et al. 2007). “Recently, an Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) framework has been proposed to overcome the problems between rural populations, rurality and tourism” (Saxena et al. 2007), (Saxena & Ilbery 2008). “The framework’s objective is holistic tourism planning

through the integration of tourism as a new activity for localities (Saarinen and Lanao 2014)".

According to Jenkins and Oliver (2003) Integrated Rural Tourism is explicitly linked to the economic, social, cultural, natural and human resources of the localities in which it takes place and further argue that "IRT can be used as a tool to facilitate greater coordination among actors but also involves roles and responsibilities associated with both the implementation and the monitoring of tourism development strategies, and resource management at the local and regional level" (Jenkins and Oliver 2003).

The study will result in publications and papers which will assist students and other researchers with keen interest in the study field of rural tourism as a tool for economic development for rural communities. It is further hoped that the study will influence policy in the local government sphere to prioritise tourism as a tool for economic development and improve the livelihoods and living standards of rural communities in their jurisdiction. Several researchers Ashley, Roe and Goodwin (2001), Rivett-Carnac (2009), United Nations World Tourism Organization (2002) point out the potential for tourism to contribute to local economic development.

The socio economic effects of tourism development in a rural area: The case of Hlabisa and its local community adjacent to game park.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

According to Bryman (2007) a research problem is a definite or clear statement about an area of concern, a condition to be improved upon, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a troubling question that exists in scholarly literature, in theory, or within existing practice that points to a need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation. "A research problem does not state how to do something, offer a vague or broad proposition, or present a value question" (Bryman 2007).

This study is investigating the extent on which the wellbeing of the local communities of Hlabisa is being empowered or changed for the better socially and economically through the game park and tourism development inter alia.

According to Chaudhry and Gupta (2010) as many as 75% of the world's poor live in the rural areas. Moreover, the Rural Tourism Strategy (2012) states that between 10-15 million South Africans live in areas that are characterised by extreme poverty and underdevelopment. "There is limited integration of local communities and previously neglected groups into tourism, inadequate tourism education, training and awareness and lastly lack of infrastructure, particularly in rural areas" (Rural Tourism Strategy 2012).

According to Shen, Hughey and Simmons (2008) research shows that for rural tourism development to be able to sustain livelihoods, it should not be an externally tailored development plan and process whilst the local community rendered as passive recipients. As observed in Slovenia by Verbole (2000) rural tourism development should be a negotiated process, as different actors involved interact in the on-going development process which is planning, implementing and controlling rural tourism". "Despite government efforts to reduce poverty and promote economic development in rural areas through a realignment of local government priorities towards poverty reduction in marginalised communities, high levels of unemployment and chronic poverty still persist in South Africa" (Delius & Schirmer 2001). According to the anecdotal knowledge of the researcher, socio-economic challenges in Hlabisa are substantial with no well-established economic centre. The area is mostly rural and under developed with high rate of unemployment and the majority of families depend on social grants for their survival. It is for this reason that the study focuses on rural tourism and its socio-economic effects on the local community of Hlabisa located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, assessing the socio-economic conditions, tourism activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa.

Moreover, what triggers the researcher's curiosity is that while seeing and knowing that there is quite a number of tourism activities taking place in the study area but the extent to which those activities affect the livelihood of the surrounding rural communities economically and socially is unknown.

According to Cole (2006) a number of research studies have previously endeavoured to look at key factors regarding the effects of tourism development to rural communities. “However, the aspect of tourism development and its effects on rural communities necessitate more research to contribute to knowledge accumulation in order to provide a meaningful understanding on the extent of the effects of tourism development on rural communities” (Cole 2006). “Research through previous studies shows that rural communities either benefit minimally or not at all from tourism activities taking place in their areas” (Ilrrshad 2010). It is therefore from this basis that this research is undertaken. Similarly, investigating the effects of tourism development on the rural communities of Hlabisa has become a focal point or a trigger action for the study.

### **1.3 Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the study is to determine and examine the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. As the socio economic conditions of the local communities are attributed and associated with tourism activities under the microscope, challenges faced by the local community and the respective tourism related business stakeholders entrusted with the obligation to expedite and fast track the objectives of social and economic development in the area of Hlabisa, are also going to be taken into cognisance. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

- What is the level of tourism development and the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa?
- What rural tourism strategies / models are put in place by the game park and other role players in the area to ensure that the local community of Hlabisa is empowered socially and economically?

- What is the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa?
- What is the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa area?
- What are the challenges or obstructions that impede community participation in rural tourism development in Hlabisa?

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

- To determine the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa, i.e. employment, income, skills development, entrepreneurial opportunities;
- To ascertain rural tourism strategies / rural tourism models in place to empower the local community of Hlabisa socially and economically?
- To determine the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa;
- To determine level of tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa area;
- To ascertain the challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa?

## **1.6 Rationale for the Study**

This study contributes to the body of knowledge to enrich the understating of rural tourism as a tool for economic development for rural communities. According to Morrison (2003) a body of scientific knowledge can be seen as knowledge residing in the public domain and which is considered both useful and valid for understanding a particular study field by scientists in that field. “Doing research is not to present information, but to use scientifically collected information to change or enrich the understanding of a particular science by its users” (Morrison 2003). What triggers the researcher’s curiosity is that while seeing and knowing that there is quite a number of tourism activities taking place in the study area but the extent on which those activities affect the livelihood of the surrounding rural communities economically and socially is unknown.

## **1.7 Research Design and Methodology**

### **1.7.1 Research Design**

This is a qualitative research study which is underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm. The lenses of the study are widened by critical literature search as it almost yields an extensive discussion of the socio-economic effects of tourism development in rural areas. This study is focusing on the area of Hlabisa and its surrounding communities. According to Noor (2008) the qualitative research approach is a fitting research method for researchers who are concerned with insight, discovery and understanding rather than making assumptions.

As aforementioned, the study uses the qualitative approach. According to (Yin 2011) the qualitative research involves studying the meaning of people's lives, under real-world conditions, representing the views and perspectives of the people as the participants in a study, covering the contextual conditions within which people live, contributing insights into existing or emerging concepts that may help to explain human social behaviour and striving to use multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone. The study uses the following tools or instruments to collect data i.e. questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions, focus groups. This explicitly implies that in-depth interviews are used for data collection. The interview method was chosen to provide valuable insights and opinions of those involved in the operations of Hlabisa rural areas.

### **1.7.2 Research Population**

The census conducted in 2011 estimated the population of Hlabisa to be 71925 (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16). This included people living in the informal town of Hlabisa and the surrounding rural area. Hlabisa is 99% African and predominantly rural. The target population was drawn from the Hlabisa community including three traditional authorities, managers of tourism establishments and local economic development managers in the area. These tourism establishments included B&Bs, hotel/resorts and other amenities such as arts and crafts, community based

tours etc. For the purpose of this study, “local community” is defined as the black residents living within the three traditional authorities in Hlabisa which are AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni Traditional Authorities.

### **1.7.3 Sampling Technique**

Purposive sampling method was used for this study. It was chosen for this study as it was found to be appropriate when targeting informative respondents who were actively participating in developmental activities and representability and this was important for the validity of the study as detailed and relevant data to research questions could be provided. It was also chosen based on the suitability and cost effectiveness. Letters were written to community leaders and establishments requesting participation of their members. The researcher identified and selected research participants who were of interest to the study and were able to respond to all the research questions. The researcher approached critical local participants which included community leaders and members, local tourism businesses and authorities who were able to provide insights into the study area and assisted in responding to this study’s research questions.

### **1.7.4 Data Collection and Instrumentation**

The study used the following tools or instruments to collect data i.e. questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions and focus groups.

### **1.7.5 Data Analysis Technique / modality**

The questionnaires were analysed using the Atlas.ti 8 Data Analysis Software in order to enhance reliability by applying the rules built into the programme. The information analysed included employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. The software provided tools that helped with transcription analysis, coding and text interpretation, recursive abstraction, content analysis and discourse analysis. The software assisted to save time, managed huge amounts of qualitative data, increased flexibility and improved validity and auditability of qualitative research.



## **1.8 Overview of Methodology**

This was a qualitative research study underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm. The lenses of the study were widened by critical literature search as it almost yields an extensive discussion of the socio-economic effects of tourism development in rural areas. This study focused on the area of Hlabisa and its surrounding communities under the AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni Traditional Authorities. According to Noor (2008) the qualitative research approach is a fitting research method for researchers who are concerned with insight, discovery and understanding rather than making assumptions. The study further focused on tourism establishments and local economic development managers in the area. The tourism establishments included B&Bs, hotel/resorts and other amenities such as arts and crafts, community based tours etc. The study used the following tools or instruments to collect data i.e. questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions and focus groups. This research methodology provided valuable insights, experiences, and opinions of the population especially those who were directly involved in the operations of tourism.

## **1.9 Role of Researcher**

According to Syed (2006) when planning and conducting research, the researcher must consider the importance and relevance of the area being studied, its contribution to the field, who or what will be studied, collection, recording and analysing data and writing it up. The researcher's role was to plan and conduct a study that is relevant and important to the field of rural tourism which would contribute to the body of knowledge to enrich the understating of rural tourism as a tool for economic development for rural communities. The study uses qualitative approach due to the fact that it was social oriented with respondents in the field. The researcher's role was then to ensure that the following tools or instruments to collect data were used i.e. questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions, focus groups.

The researcher further identified the research participants whom were the affected communities from four traditional authorities in Hlabisa, namely; AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni Traditional Authorities. The researcher ensured that the

interviews were conducted in areas free from distractions and at times and locations that are most suitable for participants. The researcher ensured that respondents were informed about the study details and given assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality.

“The researcher addressed reliability by ensuring that the measurement error can be reduced by standardising the administration of the study, i.e. ensuring that all measurements were taken in the same manner among all the study participants, making certain that participants understand the purpose of the study and the instructions and thoroughly training data collectors in the measurement strategy” (Marczyk et al. 2005). The researcher further reduced potential sources of biasness at the planning stage of a qualitative study. The researcher ensured reflexivity which meant the sensitivity to the ways in which the researcher and the research process have shaped the collected data.

“The researcher ensured anonymity by not exposing participant’s identities and personal details through the use of pseudonyms” (Wiles et al. 2006). The researcher ensured confidentiality by not disclosing identifiable information about participants in the study to try and protect the identity of research participants through various processes designed to anonymise them (Wiles et al. 2006). The researcher ensured ethical requirements from DUT were addressed by going through the institutions Research Ethics Policy which encourages a high quality research and enterprise culture, with the highest possible standards of integrity and practice.

The researcher ensured that people were not coerced into participating in the research. Therefore, the researcher ensured that voluntary participation in the research was conducted through a consultative process with research participants. The researcher explained the issues of informed consent, the purpose and procedures of the research to the participant before written consent was requested. The research participants were requested to sign the letter containing information about the research. In terms of non-violation of human rights or no harm to participate, the researcher explained to the participants that they were free to withdraw from the research should they feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, conflicted, or when their friendships, job or livelihood are at risk.

### **1.11 Research Assumptions**

The research was centred on rural tourism and its effects on the local community of Hlabisa located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, looking at socio-economic conditions, tourism activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. Therefore, the following hypothesis was tested:

The socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park are non-existent.

### **1.12 Definition of Key Terminology**

Below is the definition of key terminology used in the study:

#### **1.12.1 *Tourism***

The UNWTO (2014) defines tourism as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. "These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure" (UNWTO 2014). Stats SA (2015) defines tourism as activities of persons travelling to, and staying in places outside their usual environment, for not more than one uninterrupted year, for leisure, business and other purposes. Pulido & Cardenas (2013) note that tourism can significantly contribute to the solution of rural problems such as unemployment, massive rural exodus, it creates and redistributes income, increases the involvement in activities, creates new jobs. "The usual environment of a person consists of a certain area around his/her place of residence, plus all other places he/she frequently visits" Stats SA (2015). "Tourism is increasingly seen as a relevant tool for addressing rural problems in developing countries and tourism is currently used for economic diversification and opening up new ways to generate income and employment" (Saarinen & Lenao 2014). Opperman and Weaver (2000:3) define tourism as experiences and relationships arising from the interaction among

tourists, and the host communities, composite of activities, services, and industries that deliver a travel experience to individuals and groups traveling fifty miles or more from their homes for purposes of pleasure.

### **1.12.2 Rural Tourism**

The definition “rural tourism” was adopted by the European Commission as a tool to describe and explain all the touristic activities in rural areas (European Commission) available at [www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu) . According to Matekoniene (2002) rural tourism provides opportunities for economic development of the community, to raise the standards of living, to protect the cultural heritage and social values. The UNWTO (2002) contends that the development of rural tourism can act as a precondition for the transformation of rural areas, ensuring the income for representatives of rural tourism businesses, establishment of new small business enterprises and work placements. Shapley & Pender (2005) argue that in order to attract more visitors to rural tourism homesteads, the owners have to offer a wide range of services with its specialization. “There are 10 main specializations of rural tourism i.e. for quiet recreation, educational recreation, active recreation, rest with the family, the culinary heritage, nature-friendly country houses, health farmstead, family celebrations, corporate events and agro-tourism” (Shapley and Pender 2005). “Rural tourism should ideally sustain and create local incomes, employment and growth, contribute to the cost of providing economic and social infrastructure, encourage the development of other industrial sectors, contribute to local resident amenities and services, contribute to the conservation of environmental and cultural resources” (Rogerson 2012a). “Thus the goals of rural tourism development are in many aspects almost identical with the ones of sustainable tourism development” (Saarinen 2014). Lenao and Saarinen (2015) argue that by its nature, rural tourism encourages joint ventures, cooperation, partnerships, solidarity-keywords which, when turned into action are at the heart of the sustainable development of a rural area.

According to Viljoen and Tlabela (2007) rural tourism consists of leisure activities carried out in rural areas and includes different types of tourism activities such as community-based tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, guest farms, backpacking, riding and agri-tourism. Lubbe (2003) describes rural tourism as

any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience. Moreover, Pakurar & Olah (2008) argue that rural tourism is an efficient way to increase the income of rural inhabitants and connects areas of rural leisure activities. The European Parliament (2013) has defined the guidelines for rural tourism – rural tourism must improve the quality of life, provide economic benefits, create jobs and prevent depopulation of rural areas. “Developing tourism in rural areas increases participation of the poor and brings wider benefits, for instance, ownership and management” (Viljoen and Tlabela 2007). According to Dapkus (2009) effective development of rural tourism is possible only with a balanced structure of all the levels of an organization and coordinated communication, so it is very important in municipality of every district to have a tourism specialist responsible for the implementation of tourism policy.

### **1.12.3 Development**

According to Fullerton (2010, p. 427) development is defined, not in purely economic terms, but in terms of Community Economic Development (CED) which places a stronger (though not complete) emphasis on the procurement of local investment and the identification, training and continued activity of local entrepreneurial talent, particularly in the interest of small business development.

### **1.12.4 Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT)**

Jenkins and Oliver (2003) define Integrated Rural Tourism as tourism that is explicitly linked to the economic, social, cultural, natural and human resources of the localities in which it takes place. Saxena et al. (2007) posits that the benefits of IRT are likely to be wide-ranging and can comprise of the following:

#### **1.12.4.1 Direct economic benefits**

“Integrative linkages between tourism and local economies have considerable potential to increase the value added to, and reduce the value leakage from rural areas, leading to improved income and employment multipliers” (Saxena et al. 2007).

#### **1.12.4.2 Experiential benefits**

“Complementary approaches to marketing and packaging of products and services should provide visitors / tourists with a distinctively local and quality package of products and services, resulting in better experiences for both tourists and host communities” (Saxena et al. 2007).

#### **1.12.4.3 Conservation benefits**

“For example, IRT should improve the incentives for the conservation and regeneration of resources, both natural and human-made, through closer cooperation among different actors and more actions on the ground. This should enhance recreation and tourism providers’ capacity to engage in sustainable development” (Saxena et al. 2007).

#### **1.12.4.4 Developmental benefits**

“IRT can become a path to rural pluriactivity and rural multifunctionality, providing valuable new opportunities for the development of lagging regions that go beyond a simple compensation for agricultural decline. It can permit a wide range of local economic actors to benefit from the use of a locality’s resources through stimulating positive local responses to market trends such as market 12 segmentation, niche marketing and new product development. It can also allow for the potentially beneficial exploitation of rural and regional imagery” (Saxena et al. 2007).

#### **1.12.4.5 Synergistic benefits**

“IRT provides an increased likelihood of co-ordinated and consistent institutional policies for rural and regional development, and it should encourage partnerships among a range of local actors who can then reap wider developmental benefits based on association, synergy and participation. “An often-overlooked fact in the debate about benefits via tourism is that, in many rural areas, the onus lies on small, family-centred enterprises and groups for its promotion and development” (Saxena et al. 2007). Typically, they have a low capital base and function with limited skills and experience. Also, they may be too specialist or in the wrong location (too remote)” (Fleischer and Felsenstein 2000). “This necessitates a renewed focus on strategies

that generate benefits for actors and on networks that reconnect these apparently 'disconnected' actors in face-to-face proximities where obligations and advantages go hand in hand" (Saxena et al. 2007).

Moreover, Jenkins and Oliver (2003) argue that IRT can be used as a tool to facilitate greater coordination among actors but also involves roles and responsibilities associated with both the implementation and the monitoring of tourism development strategies, and resource management at the local and regional level. According to Jenkins & Oliver (2001) the notion of IRT is also intended to open up practical ways of thinking about improving linkages between tourism and local as well as regional resources, activities, products and communities in the light of changing trends in tourism demand.

#### **1.12.5 *Economic effects***

According to Cooper et al. (2005) tourist expenditure has a 'cascading' effect throughout the host community. "It begins with tourism spending money from 'front line' tourist establishments, such as hotels, restaurants and taxis, and then permeates throughout the rest of the economy. It can be examined by assessing the impact at the three different levels as follows: – the direct, indirect and induced levels" (Cooper et al. 2005).

##### **1.12.5.1 Direct effects**

"The direct level of impact is the value of tourist expenditure less the value of imports necessary to supply those 'front line' goods and services. Thus the impact is likely to be less than the value of tourist expenditure except in the rare case where a local economy can provide all of the tourist's wants from its local productive sectors" Cooper et al (2005).

##### **1.12.5.2 Indirect effects**

According to Cooper et al. (2005) the establishments that directly receive the tourist expenditure also need to purchase goods and services from other sectors within the local economy, for example hotels will purchase the services of builders, accountants,

banks, food and beverage suppliers, electricity and water. “Furthermore, the suppliers to these ‘front line’ establishments will also need to purchase goods and services from other establishments within the local economy and so the process continues” (Cooper et al. 2005).

#### **1.12.5.3 Induced effects**

According to Cooper et al. (2005) during the direct and indirect rounds of expenditure, income will accrue to local residents in the form of wages, salaries, distributed profit, rent and interest. “This addition to local income will, in part be re-spent in the local economy on goods and services and this will generate yet further rounds of economic activity. It is only when all three levels of impact (direct *plus* indirect *plus* induced) are estimated that full positive economic impact of tourism expenditure is fully assessed” Cooper et al. (2005).

#### **1.12.5.4 Multiplier effect**

According to Cooper et al. (2005) the concept of the multiplier is based upon the recognition that sales for one firm require purchases from other firms within the local economy. This means that firms purchase not only primary inputs such as labour but also intermediate goods and services produced by other establishments within the local economy. “Because firms in the local economy are dependent upon other firms for their supplies, any change in tourist expenditure will bring about a change in the economy’s level of production, household income, employment, government revenue and foreign exchange flows (where applicable)” (Cooper et al. 2005).

#### **1.12.6 Income**

According to Godfrey and Clarke (2000) visitor spending not only affects wages and employment opportunities but generate income for both the public and private sector. Moreover, tourist enterprises, like all local businesses, pay taxes to the government, and as tourism expands so too do these tax revenues. “Parking and admission fees collected from public sector facilities also bring in further general revenue resulting from tourism. In addition, local ‘bed tax’ or other form of tourist tax is collected, this can represent further tourism revenue to a destination” (Godfrey and Clarke 2000).



### **1.12.7. *Quality of life***

According to Godfrey and Clarke (2000) tourist spending in destination often helps to support local facilities and services which are also used by the resident community. “Often the additional income earned from tourism which helps keep some shops and services in business, which in turn affects personal income, helps improve living standards for those more directly involved in the industry, can make the difference between a business closing down in winter or staying open throughout the year and supports the diversity of restaurants, theatre and other cultural entertainment” (Godfrey and Clarke 2000).

### **1.13 Brief Preliminary Review of Related Literature**

The literature review focuses on the connection between community participation, rural tourism, community development and socio economic impact reflecting on previous empirical studies, literature and models. Important variables of this research in relation to rural tourism are presented. Moreover, the literature provides details on following areas:

- The role local communities in rural tourism development;
- Importance of local communities in rural tourism development;
- Contribution of tourism in local community;
- The willingness for local community to participate in rural tourism development;
- Community benefits derived from participating in rural tourism development;
- Opportunities for host communities to be involved in the management of tourism;
- Community participation in decision making process and planning;
- Limitations, i.e. political, socio-economic and cultural) to community participation in rural tourism development;
- Community participation in tourism operation and management;
- Typology of community participation in tourism development;

- The concept of community participation and representation in Rural Tourism Development;
- Role of the white paper in tourism development in South Africa;
- Role of the key players such as government, private sector and communities in tourism development

This chapter further discusses the identified themes which were as follows:

- Socio-economic conditions;
- Rural tourism models (strategies);
- Community participation and representation in tourism;
- Tourism activities; and
- Challenges / obstructions faced by the local community and businesses in the area.

In addition, international and national perspective of rural tourism development models and its effects on local communities and key role players were discussed.

#### **1.14 Delimitations of the Study**

This scope of the study assessed the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, under the AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni Traditional Authorities in Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The aim was to assess the socio-economic conditions, tourism activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. In addition, the geographical locations of the four communities were far apart, which resulted in more time spent on travel than being on the ground administering questions.

#### **1.15 Limitations of the Study**

The study was limited to the effects of tourism development in Hlabisa focusing on socio-economic conditions, tourism activities, community participation and challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. Another limiting factor

encountered was the fact that some community members were semi-literate and had difficulties in interpreting questions. Moreover, the majority of the respondents mainly spoke and wrote isiZulu not English. It therefore necessitated the researcher to administer the questionnaires.

## **1.16 Overview of Chapters**

- **Chapter 1:** Overview of the Study
- **Chapter 2:** Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework (IRT) model
- **Chapter 3:** Research Design and Methodology
- **Chapter 4:** Data Presentation and Analysis
- **Chapter 5:** Findings, Conclusions and Recommendation for Future Trajectories

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK (IRT) MODEL**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter highlights the connection between community participation, rural tourism, community development and socio economic impact reflecting on previous empirical studies, literature and models. Community participation in rural tourism is one of the most important practices that has to be implemented by local tourism developers within the public and private sectors. However, meaningful participation is often disregarded by developers. As a result, this chapter presents important variables of this research in relation to rural tourism. In addition, international and national perspective of rural tourism development models and its effects on local communities and key role players are being discussed as well as the Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) theoretical framework.

### **2.2 The role of local communities in rural tourism development**

According to Godfrey & Clarke (2000) local communities have a key role in rural tourism development as they are crucial in providing a good environmental condition for tourists. “They are the focal point for the supply of accommodation, catering, information, transport, facilities and services for rural tourism development” (Godfrey & Clarke 2000). Sanoff (2000) attests that the main purpose of community participation is to involve people in the design and the decision making processes. According to Bramwell and Lane (2003) participation in tourism planning for development by many stakeholders can help to promote sustainable development by increasing the extent of efficiency, equity, and harmony practised. “The role of the local community in influencing rural tourism development activities are becoming clearer” (Hall et al., 2005). Furthermore, Yu, Chancellor & Cole (2009) argued that the participation of locals at a destination in rural tourism development is important for successful tourism planning and they should be enlightened about the expected impacts from such development. There are some positive examples of partnerships between local communities and other key stakeholders. This is evident in a study conducted in Costa Rica, where Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2010) noted that participation was reflected in

different levels ranging from local participation in community meetings to ownership and management of local resources. According to Aref and Redzuan (2009) only few studies have taken a further step to examine community participation in rural tourism development at the grassroots level. In addition, Tosun (2006) states that such studies, local communities indicated their preferred role in tourism development as being workers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry. According to Phiri (2009) participation is the involvement of all local people and other stakeholders in the formation of programmes or policies that would assist to change their communities. According to Mannigel (2008) there are different levels of participation ranging from simple sharing of information to a full transfer of power and responsibilities. According to Scherl and Edwards (2007) the power of the local communities to influence decision making as well as policy making will therefore depend on the level of participatory approach being in operation in a particular destination. "In most developing countries, the decision and policy making process is typically top-down and is dominated by the government, private sector and/or NGOs" (Scherl and Edwards 2007). "Community participation in decision making encourages people to have confidence in the tourism industry and this improves plans, service delivery and brings the people together as they share common goals" (Muganda et al. 2013). According to Muganda (2009) community participation is vital in tourism management, as it empowers local members to be involved and participate in the planning of the whole tourism development process. According to Matarrita-Cascante et al. (2010) to achieve sustainable tourism development local communities need to participate in decision-making process. Kepe (2004, p. 45) states that local communities should play a proactive role to ensure they accrue positive benefits from rural tourism. "Local communities should work closely with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to educate others in the community concerning rural tourism development projects" Kepe (2004, p. 45). In addition, Croke et al. (2014) explain that participation is important as it encourages governments to be accountable and also enables locals to be involved in the planning and implementation of projects in their respective areas. "Community participation also provides the local community with a voice in design and decision-making in order to improve plans, service delivery, and finally, promotes a sense of community by bringing together people who share common goals" (Pongponrat 2011).

### **2.3 The importance of community in rural tourism development**

“The term community can have a specific geographic meaning with a clearly defined spatial boundary and area and also refers to groups of people with a common interest” (Chapman & Kirk 2001). According to Haukeland (2011) local communities are regarded as important asset in rural tourism development as it is within their premises that tourism activities take place. According to Rátz & Puczkó (2002) the debate around the relationships between rural tourism, communities, development and participation has evolved significantly since then, within socio-cultural impact studies. “However, issues that regard the strengthening of communities through rural tourism participation are still increasingly important and require further research and analysis” (Simpson 2008). According to Tosun (2006: 81) the idea of community participation in rural tourism development is a necessity and the success of any tourism development venture is mainly dependent on the cooperation of the local community. “The degree of involvement of local communities in various decision making and policy issues is determined by the extent to which they affect or are affected by these decisions and policies” (Mayers 2005). In addition, Pongponrat (2011) noted that “local tourism development requires people who are affected by tourism to be involved in both the planning process and the implementation of policies and action plans. This ensures that development meet the perceived needs of the local community” (Pongponrat 2011). According to (Niezgoda and Czernek 2008) if decisions concerning development of rural tourism in a region are not made in consultation with the local communities during the design stage, it will be impossible for the local communities to be involved during implementation. According to Bartholo et al. (2008) there are two successful cases of community-based tourism in northern Brazil where not only a fair and environmentally responsible model was rooted, but the communities’ quality of life improved significantly. They further discuss the concept of “situation-centred” development. This notion of development, which goes beyond economic considerations, adapts to the locality, reinforces the centrality of local knowledge and recognises ordinary people as actors in the process of transforming their territories (Bartholo et al., 2008). However, Mitchell and Muckosy (2008: 102) conducted research in Latin America and concluded that tourism developments in the community do not often lessen poverty and that local communities must as an alternative attempt to make their way in conventional tourism businesses, which may generate more

advantages compared to the alternative approach. According to Niezgoda and Czernek (2008: 386) numerous tourism community developments are not connected with local authority structures and decision-making. "As a result, there will be little support of local communities for tourism activities" (Niezgoda and Czernek 2008: 386). Whichever circumstances, it is vital to identify and involve key stakeholders right from the design stage. Failure to do so can cause technical or political difficulties during implementation, and can significantly influence the success and outcome of the process. In fact, "enabling wide participation of various stakeholders in the decision making process, including local communities, makes possible to gain knowledge about other stakeholders, acquire understanding of regional problems and allows for generation of new and innovative solutions" (Niezgoda and Czernek 2008: 386). According to Mitchell & Muckosy (2008) many rural tourism projects do not form part of local power structures and decision-making processes and as a result the solution would be to link poor communities with major tourist flows, rather than pursuing alternative tourism. Whereas, Mowforth & Munt (2009) argue that rather than relying on multinational corporations, what holds the key to future survival for tourism in developing countries is fostering indigenous skills, creativity and innovativeness. Hence, this may lead to communities managing to take a degree of control and exercise power over tourism developments in their localities (Mowforth & Munt, 2009).

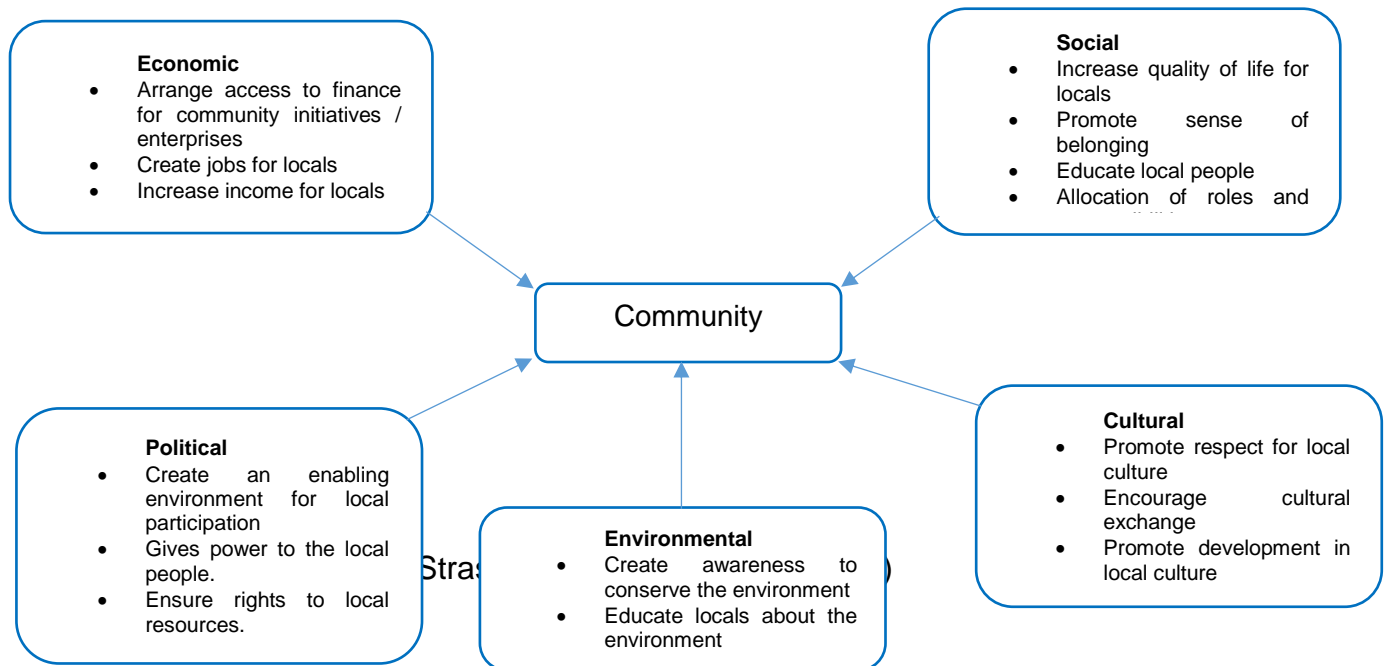
## **2.4 Rural tourism and community development**

According to Shah et al. (2002) rural tourism development can be linked and explained better using two concepts: sustainable tourism and sustainable development. The World Tourism Organisation defines sustainable tourism as "tourism which leads to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be filled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life supporting systems" (Shah et al. 2002: 1). Therefore, rural tourism development can be meaningless if it's socio-economic benefits do not trickle down to the local communities. According to Bushell & Eagles (2007) rural tourism plays a role in facilitating community development through business mentoring and educational opportunities that contribute to local communities in increasing skill and knowledge in local communities and local residents as well as improving the

community's economic level. "Apart from the economic contribution that the local communities can accrue from rural tourism, their involvement in rural tourism development can as well be beneficial to rural tourism development because they can create an "effective environmental stewardship that builds on indigenous, local and scientific knowledge, economic development, social empowerment, the protection of cultural heritage and the creation of interpretive and nature-based experiences for tourist learning and cross-cultural appreciation" (Jamal and Stronza 2009: 177). According to Aref (2010) & Coccossis (2004) at community levels, tourism offered opportunities for direct, indirect, and induced employment and income, spurring regional and local economic development. "Rural tourism is increasingly seen as a key community tool, with the recognition of its economic contribution in bolstering stagnating economies and its ability to unify local community residents" (Fennell, 2003). The involvement of local communities in rural tourism development cannot be overlooked due to their crucial roles. Jamal and Stronza (2009) assert that involving the local communities in rural tourism development within and around protected areas is crucial in bridging the gap between governance and use of the resources in a tourist destination. According to Godfrey & Clarke (2000) tourism is no economic panacea, and is best suited as a supplement to a local community for achieving development. According to Bushel & McCool (2007), local communities have historically coexisted with the protected areas which are key tourism attractions. In addition, Figgis and Bushell (2007) state that tourism development and conservation that denies the rights and concerns of local communities is self-defeating, if not illegal.



Figure 1 Contribution of tourism in local community



## 2.5 The willingness for local community to participate in rural tourism development.

According to Claiborne (2010) many tourism planners rush to involve various public authorities in their projects without fully considering the support and means of local participation first. “In addition, while many researchers support greater public involvement, few have tested or evaluated appropriate methods to secure local residents’ interest and support for rural tourism planning” Claiborne (2010). According to Ekwale (2014) the level of participation in the activities of the community is undefined as some people may be very active, some proactive and others even inactive. According to Ngxongo (2011) the eagerness of local community members to participate in rural tourism and their capacity to develop useful options is a critical aspect to consider. “Ideally, the principle would be for the local community to make a decision on the type of tourism developments and have complete authority over any rural tourism projects in their area” (Ngxongo 2011). In actuality though, local communities regularly lack not only knowledge and capital, but in some instances they even lack the curiosity and eagerness required to participate in rural tourism activities (Scheyvens, 2002: 146). Okazaki (2008) states that within the context of tourism planning, community participation can be defined in the following way: “a process of

involving all stakeholders including local government officials, local citizens, architects, developers, business people, and planners in such way that decision-making is shared". However, Taylor (2001) cautions that should community development initiative represent outside expert's values, the outcome may be lack of local interest limiting full support. Active local participation in decision-making is alleged to be a precondition for benefits to reach communities. Whereas, this is rarely found in developing countries and Li (2006) argues that it is not a necessary condition in all contexts. Moreover, "residents themselves do not even know where to begin or how to get involved when it comes to participation" Claiborne (2010). Whereas Scheyvens (2002) argues that local community willingness to participate and their ability of developing practical and logical options for their development should be critically evaluated for a successful rural tourism development venture despite the fact that, they often lack the experiences and resources which can no doubt be instigated or established for ethical consideration and goal attainment. Okech (2006) highlights the concern of lack of knowledge among local community members, stating that it usually limits their participation in planning and decision-making in rural tourism development. In addition, Moscardo (2008) is of the view that lack of tourism knowledge limits the community members to be the leaders of rural tourism projects in their community and also effective planning in tourism development and this has been used as an excuse by many governments in developing countries to exclude the community members in participating.

## **2.6 Community benefits derived from participating in rural tourism development**

According to Kepe (2004, p. 45) local communities should play a proactive role to ensure positive benefits from rural tourism. Hall et al., (2005) argue that local communities must be able to identify potential tourism resources and attractions within their communities to support rural tourism development in order to derive tourism benefits. According to Lee and Chang (2008) a general consensus has emerged that tourism not only increases foreign exchange and incomes, but also creates employment opportunities, stimulates the growth of the tourism industry and by virtue of this, triggers overall economic growth". Nkemngu (2012) adds that the benefits of

using rural tourism as a strategy for local economic development (LED) have been largely publicized in literature, with references to benefits accruing from foreign exchange earnings, employment creation and the stimulation of the local economy among others. According to Tosun (2006) communities may participate in rural tourism implementation by running small scale tourism enterprises or come up with benefit sharing mechanisms with investors but not necessarily involved in the decision making process. Rural tourism development is seen as a prospective basis of employment for local communities (Johannesen and Skonhoft, 2005: 214) given that improved manual-labour and small-scale prospects in the local community can be made available by rural tourism (Chok and Macbeth, 2007: 149). Greiner, Stoeckl and Schweigert (2004) argue that rural tourism involves many players including tourists, businesses, tourism managers, host communities and society. “All players need to derive benefits from tourism for tourism to be truly successful” (Greiner, Stoeckl and Schweigert 2004). According to Leksakundilok (2004) economic benefits appear to be indispensable, particularly in the context of developing countries, it is usually the initial motivation for the poor people to be involved with rural tourism so as to receive additional income. According to Leiper (2004) motivates on the need for community members to be actively involved, and have full influence on what kind of tourism development happens in their communities, so as to benefit from effectively planned and productive rural tourism development. However, Moyo and Tichaawa (2017) state that communities also perceive the benefits brought about by rural tourism to be confined to business and government officials as opposed to it being leveraged to the entire community. Rogoff (2011) state that the participation of communities in rural tourism should be a social interaction that benefits the whole community rather than a few individuals.

Table 1 Opportunities for host communities to be involved in the management of tourism

Type of enterprise or institution	Opportunities for management roles by locals	Examples
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Private business run by Outsiders or local business men / women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written agreement over nature and extent of the enterprise</li> <li>• Agreement over benefits for the wider community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tours of natural features in the area to take place only at set times and to be postponed during community rituals.</li> <li>• No more than two busloads of tourists to visit an attraction within the community in a day.</li> <li>• Jobs for local people or donations to a community fund based on the number of visitors.</li> </ul>
Community enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collectively owned and managed</li> <li>• Collectively owned but individually managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community campsite run by a management committee</li> <li>• Craft centre owned by the community but managed by an individual with business training</li> </ul>
Joint venture between the community and private operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concessions</li> <li>• Revenue sharing agreement</li> <li>• Participation in decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community leases land for tourism development and sets conditions upon which development may proceed</li> <li>• Community has equity in accommodation establishments</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community representatives serve as board of directors</li> </ul>
Tourism planning body or conservation authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Representation</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local consultation in regional tourism planning</li> <li>• Community representatives on tourism board or parks board</li> </ul>

Source: cited from Ramchander (2004)

## 2.7 Community participation in decision making process and planning

According to Li (2006): 138; Zhao and Ritchie (2007): 125 various tourism researchers and scholars recommend that local communities should participate in the tourism decision-making progression. Timothy (2002, p. 153) defines public participation in decision-making regarding tourism as participation in decision-making which entails community members determining their own goals for development and having a meaningful voice in the organisation and administration of tourism. "Therefore, community participation in tourism planning and decision making substantially relates to power relations among tourism stakeholders" (Timothy 2002, p. 153). According to Lee (2013) community involvement can be defined as the magnitude to which the residents are involved in the daily activities within the communities that they live in. "Hence, tourism development will be more successful with the involvement of the local communities as their perception and attitudes are important for the decision makers to achieve sustainable rural tourism" (Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012). Chok and Macbeth (2007: 153) state that local communities "must participate in tourism decisions if their means of support are to be redirected in the manner that tourism is developed". Whereas, Zhao and Ritchie (2007: 136) recommend that this can be attained through involving local communities as participants in the tourism-related decision-making structures. "Despite this notion, local communities rarely take part in tourism development activities and often experience a very limited participation in or a

complete exclusion from decision-making process” (Kim, Park & Phandanouvong 2014). According to Godfrey & Clark (2000); Tosun & Timothy (2001) community planning and development is bound to be positive in situations where there is the collaboration and community participation every step in the planning and development of tourism projects. Kim, Park & Phandanouvong (2014) add that if local communities are empowered to consult with other stakeholders in the planning and decision-making processes about the management and future development of tourism in their areas, there is a greater likelihood that tourism will be more successful and sustainable. According to World Bank (2013) community driven development aims at giving a voice to the stakeholders, involve them in identifying their own needs and the ensuing decision making, encourage them to take responsibility, and mobilize the majority of actors in a given community through a participatory process. According to Ekwale (2014) community development generally build and develop the capacity of the communities to collectively make decisions as to the proper use, development and management of resources in the communities. According to Thammajinda (2013) it is often assumed by community-based tourism analysts that people have equal access to economic and political resources when undertaking the planning and policy process in communities. “In fact, power is rarely distributed equally among stakeholder groups or even among individual actors” Thammajinda (2013). Tosun (2006: 86) argues that the local community needs to be part of the decision-making structures through engagement by local tourism authorities with a committee elected by the public specifically for developing and managing tourism issues. Thammajinda (2013) note that some groups and individuals have the ability to exert greater influence over the tourism planning process than others. “Consequently, community participation may occur superficially but decision making remains in the hands of the power holders”, with Hall (2003) describing it as a form of “tokenism”. Whereas Mowforth and Munt (2009) assert that the relationships of power between local people and other players in tourism activities can produce effects which reflect and promote the unequal development of tourism. Li (2006: 465) studied community decision-making participation in tourism development and points out that local community can receive reasonable benefits from tourism despite weak local participation in the decision-making process. Li (2006: 138) states that incorporation of local communities into the decision-making process is “not the final approach” but merely one of many methods through which community participation can be achieved.

## **2.8 Limitations to community participation in rural tourism development**

According to Aref & Redzuan (2008) the lack of a genuine and active leader to carry on tourism development activities in the community may be a particularly important limitation to effective rural tourism development in developing countries. According to Kim, Park & Phandanouvong (2014) these limitations to community participation can be categorised into three dimensional aspects which are cultural, operational and structural. Tosun (2000, p. 626) posits that these limitations can occur not only from local people but also from tourism developers with impediments from both sides presented in three aspects: political, socio-economic and cultural aspects. According to Ekwale (2014) a failure actualizing and putting in to practice the principle of community participation may be catastrophic especially with the fact that, community projects directly affect the marginalized, poor, and disadvantaged groups. According to Tosun (2000, p. 626) evidence suggests there are numerous limitations in community participation in rural tourism development in developing countries. "Community participation as citizen power is not a simple matter but it involves different ideological beliefs, political forces, administrative arrangements, redistribution of wealth and power, and varying perceptions of what is possible, which seem to be unacceptable for the prevailing ruling class in many developing countries" Tosun (2000, p. 626). In addition, "Insufficient human and social capital coupled with suppression of the roles of gender and youths and other cultural obstacles which may bring about uncertainty and misconception about their own roots and purported earnings of community initiatives may thwart its developmental efforts" Ekwale (2014). According to Tosun (2005) there are a wide range of factors that could hinder and constrain the promotion of community participation in the developing world where people have low standards of living (e.g. poverty, inadequate housing, poor health, limited or no education) and struggle with maintaining livelihoods. According to Ekwale (2014) community participation in rural tourism may be impaired by lack of community trust and equity which may arise from sapping information flow and transparency within and amongst the community and stakeholders. According to Hall (2005: 21) partial skills and awareness can lead to incorrect expectations regarding the benefits of rural tourism and lack of readiness for changes related to tourism, limiting

opportunities for local communities to take advantage of rural tourism benefits. “However, one method to warrant that local communities can conquer those obstacles and eventually participate actively in rural tourism development is to empower them” (Tosun 2000: 621).

### ***2.8.1 Political limitations to community participation in rural tourism development***

According to Thammajinda (2013) the dimension of political empowerment occurs when local people have the power to join in decision making and to express their opinions, needs and interests about the development that will occur in their area. However, Tosun (2000: 66) community participation in rural tourism development appears to be centralized only at the higher levels of government, making it rather difficult for the local communities to participate in rural tourism. “The lack of organisation may be partially due to a traditional controlling bureaucracy that governs legislative and operational processes” (Tosun 2000: 62). Kim, Park & Phandanouvong (2014) argue that the imbalanced power of, and distrust in tourism development authorities are viewed as a hindering factor that affect to strengthen community participation in rural tourism planning and development process from both operational and structural levels of limitations. For an example, the case of Solomon Islands cited in Claiborne (2010) where the local community constructed simple tourism accommodation, however, the construction was prevented by the central state government since the community did not meet the legislated requirements. “This shows that the residents initial reactions towards tourism were favourable, yet the political limitation to local participation were the cause behind frustration and passive attitudes” Claiborne (2010). Whereas Botes and Rensburg (2000) argue that community committees, which are not legitimately elected, often represent the voice of a group of self-appointed persons and may not truthfully replicate the opinions of the broader community. It is a test to rural tourism developers to identify the correct community agent to participate in tourism decision making, who are competent to act on behalf of the entire community. Moreover, Kim, Park & Phandanouvong (2014) state that trust in government institutions is indispensable for gaining political support for the development process and is a basic precondition for effective cooperation between multiple stakeholders. “Particularly, lack of trust in tourism authorities makes



local people reluctant to accept rural tourism development activities and their associated changes” Kim, Park & Phandanouvong (2014). This is evident in the case of China by Yiping (2004), cited in Claiborne (2010) where some residents initially showed interest in participating in the development process in transforming a rural village into a modern resort. “However, the heavy hand of the Chinese government excluded valuable local efforts and hence the residents” attitudes turned apathetic” (Lepp, 2008).

### ***2.8.2 Socio-economic limitations to community participation in rural tourism development***

According to Tosun (2000) it is widely known that the lack of skills, knowledge and awareness of the local people is a fundamental limitation to participation in tourism development. Telfer (2003) adds that community participation requires considerable money and skills both to organize and sustain. Tosun (2000), argues that poor people in the developing world have difficulty meeting their basic needs which makes them concerned about their survival rather than being involved in rural tourism initiatives. According to Cole (2006) in developing countries most local people in the tourism sector are unskilled, hence the skilled jobs are occupied by people from other parts of the country or from outside it. “Low status jobs associated with low wages have limited local people in participating in rural tourism development as they may have limited dignity, no confidence and little power to participate” (Tosun 2000). According to Reid (2003) community participation is not a single event; it is a series of events which continually involve in the affairs of the community over the long term. According to Tosun (2000) in most developing countries tourism information is not sufficient and there is lack of awareness creation to citizens in an understandable form. “Therefore, there is a knowledge and information gap in many communities in the developing world between the centralized authorities, the rich and educated elites, and the poor local people” (Tosun, 2000). According to Manyara and Jones (2007: 634) exclusiveness, degree of participation, outflow of profits, conglomerates, access to tourists, uncluttered approach to benefit-sharing, and lack of a suitable strategy for backing the growth of community initiatives have substantial bearings on community participation in the rural tourism. In addition, Cole (2006: 123) that the apparent lack of ownership,

funds, expertise, awareness and resources all limit the ability of communities to entirely control their participation in rural tourism development.

### ***2.8.3 Cultural limitations to community participation in rural tourism development***

According to Dogra and Gupta (2012) cultural limitations include (a) limited capacity of poor people and (b) apathy and low level of awareness in the local community. Mustapha and Azman (2013) pointed out that in Tioman Island - Malaysia, the local community operates small and medium size businesses with limited human resources, where the owner depends on family members with limited capacity to participate in tourism planning and development during peak period from March to August. Whereas Kumar (2002) argues that one cultural obstacle which may limit community participation is the culture of silence. "This culture is found in many developing countries, where people do not feel comfortable to express their opinion or share ideas in public" Kumar (2002). However, Tosun (2000) argues that these limitations may be an extension of the prevailing social, political and economic structure in developing countries, which have prevented them from achieving a higher level of development. "On the other hand, it should be accepted that community participation as citizen power is not a simple matter but it involves different ideological beliefs, political forces, administrative arrangements and re-distribution of wealth and power in developing countries" Tosun (2000).

## **2.9 Community participation in tourism operation and management**

According to Scheyvens (2003) there is a strong rationale for host communities to play a role in managing tourism when they are the ones facing the most direct consequences of poorly planned and managed tourism. Table 2 below reflects on the typology employed by Aref (2011) as a research framework to illustrate community participation in tourism operation and management.

Table 2 Typology of community participation in tourism development

Typology	Comments
Passive Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People participation is limited to be told what is going to happen.</li> <li>• People's responses are not taken into account.</li> <li>• Information belongs only to external professionals.</li> </ul>
Participation in information giving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People participation is limited to provision of information in response to questionnaires, surveys etc. designed by external agents.</li> <li>• Findings of the research are not shared with the people.</li> </ul>
Participation by consulting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People participation involves consultation with local people.</li> <li>• They may take into account people's views during this process, but are not obliged to do so.</li> </ul>
Participation for material incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People participate by contributing resources (e.g. labour) in return for food, cash or other material incentive.</li> <li>• Farmers may provide fields and labour but are not involved in the experimentation or the process of learning. This is often called participation, but people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.</li> </ul>
Functional participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People participate by forming groups to meet specific objectives related to the project.</li> <li>• Involvement may be interactive but tends to arise later in the project cycle after major decisions have been made.</li> <li>• Institutions formed tend to depend on external facilitators, but may become self-dependent.</li> </ul>
Interactive Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and creation or strengthening of local institutions.</li> <li>• Participation is seen as a right and not only as a means of achieving projects goals.</li> <li>• It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local groups take control of local decision making and determine how resources are to be used giving them a stake in maintaining structures or practices.</li> </ul>
Self-mobilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions or change systems.</li> <li>They develop contacts with external institutions for advice and resources, but retain control of the use of resources.</li> <li>Self-mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power.</li> </ul>

Source: Aref 2011

## 2.10 The concept of community participation and representation in Rural Tourism Development

According to Aref (2011) community participation can be seen as a process whereby the residents of a community are given a voice and a choice to participate in issues affecting their lives. "Community participation in rural tourism development processes can support and uphold local culture, tradition, knowledge and skill, and create pride in community heritage" (Lacy et al. 2002). "The goal of community participation is to improve communication between stakeholders in the interest of facilitating better decision-making and sustainable development" (Nampila, 2005). "Community participation also is the mechanism for active community involvement in partnership working, decision making and representation in community structures" (Chapman & Kirk, 2001). Levi & Litwin (1986, p. 26) also regard community participation as the creation of a democratic system and procedure to enable community members to become actively involved and to take responsibility for their own development, to share equally in the fruits of community development and to improve their decision-making power. "Community participation increases people's sense of control over issues that affect their lives and also promotes self-confidence and self-awareness" (Nampila 2005). According to Briedenhann & Wickens (2002) lack of tourism awareness and understanding amongst rural communities is a significant constraint to effective

participation, communication and decision-making. Community involvement in rural tourism is becoming increasingly popular among the development circle worldwide as a means of contributing towards rural development and poverty alleviation. According to Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism (CIT) in Myanmar (2013) the increase of tourism provides an opportunity for local communities, especially rural, poor and marginalized people in Myanmar to take up gainful employment or other income generating opportunities in tourism by selling goods and services to visitors. The government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, developed a policy on Community Involvement in Tourism (CIT) in Myanmar (2013). This policy document, provides the framework for ensuring that local communities gain access to opportunities in tourism and encourages the development of community-run tourism activities and enterprises in Myanmar. Promoting linkages between community tourism development and local economic development including the creation of jobs is pivotal to overcome socio-economic challenges. However, the Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism (CIT) in Myanmar, (2013) argues that according to experiences in other countries, there are a number of challenges related to the integration of local communities towards sustainable and responsible tourism development. Community involvement needs to be an integral part of a strategy for holistic tourism promotion from the local to the national levels. The most significant problems are the lack of an adequate vision as well as a shortfall in planning, regulation and consultation with the communities involved in tourism projects. Often, these shortfalls result in limited community awareness and reduced commitment to rural tourism. The non-alignment between national, state, regional and local regulations presents a further challenge. The CIT further state that community members should be encouraged to start their own small and medium enterprises or to act as investors or even joint venture partners with the public or private sector. The core aim of CIT is to enable a significant number of local community members to gradually gain substantial control over the development and management of rural tourism activities in their region. Local residents need to have a voice in making decisions about rural tourism development in their areas and collaborate with other stakeholders to develop opportunities for employment, enterprises and new skills to improve their livelihoods. In designing investment incentives and facilitating soft loans for rural tourism development (e.g. from banks or donors), the government of Myanmar ensures that the specific needs of small-scale, community and informal sector

enterprises are being taken into account. A long-term goal is to enable community members to move out of the informal into the formal sector, thus gaining access to loans from the formal banking sector. The Myanmar Government is encouraged to create favourable conditions to work with communities by giving them market power and by allowing the private sector higher investment security and greater incentives for partnerships. The CIT recommended that members of local communities, even those not directly involved in tourism enterprises, can gain more benefits through the establishment of a community fund; tourists are expected to pay a certain amount of money into the community fund which will be used by the community for community activities only. In addition, community or community members are encouraged to run Bed & Breakfast Services (B&B's), either managed by community/ community members or in partnership with the private sector.

According to Manyara & Jones (2005) local communities are hardly involved in tourism development, and the control of tourism resources is vested in the hands of a few western investors who are mainly profit-driven. "Rural tourism therefore offers opportunities for substantial growth, although success depends on effective marketplace value, quality of the products developed and the establishment of meaningful community-private-public partnerships" (UNWTO 2002). "This is in contrast with Local Agenda 21 and the principles of sustainable tourism development which emphasise the involvement of local communities and the control of tourism resources by local communities" (Mbaiwa 2005). Mitchell and Reid (2001) argue that the higher the involvement of local communities in rural tourism through various community initiatives, the higher the benefits that would accrue to them. Kiss (2004) highlights how several international organisations, e.g. the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), are turning to rural tourism and specifically community-based tourism as a way of involving local communities in economic development.

"In Kenya, similarly, the Kenyan Government through its Draft National Tourism Policy (DNTP) recognises the potential of community based enterprises (CBEs) as an avenue through which the involvement of local communities in tourism development can be enhanced" (Kenya Government 2004). "The government envisages that CBEs can improve indigenous ownership of tourism resources and consequently the

sustainability of the industry” (Kenya Government 2004). Kiss (2004) nonetheless cautions that, although CBEs can generate income for local communities, concrete goals need to be established, adequate support should be in place, appropriate analyses undertaken such as for product development and marketing and appropriate information provided to facilitate informed decisions.

## **2.11 Role of the white paper in tourism development in South Africa**

In 1996 the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) developed the White Paper on the development and promotion of tourism South Africa. The White Paper provides a policy framework and guidelines for tourism development in South Africa.

### ***2.11.1 Key constraints addressed by the white paper in relation to community participation in tourism development***

The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) contends there are a number of factors limiting the effectiveness of the tourism industry to play a more meaningful role in the national economy. Some of the key constraints are identified below:

Table 3 Key constraints

<b>Constraints</b>	<b>Description</b>
Limited participation of local communities in tourism development	Local communities have not been afforded an opportunity to participate in the planning, decision-making, investment, development or promotion of the tourism industry in their local areas. Communities have not been involved or consulted in respect of major investment decisions or developments proposed for areas in which they live.
Lack of training, information and awareness	The local communities and previously neglected groups lack the technical know-how and training to effectively participate in tourism development.

Lack of incentives	There are no rewards for private enterprises that build or develop local capacity and create job opportunities.
Lack of partnerships	There is no interest on the part of existing establishments to build partnerships with local communities and suppliers in the area.
Inability to access finance	Local communities are not able to take full advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities provided by the tourism sector.
Lack of market access	Local communities lack access to the lucrative tourism markets as visitors are kept within the hotels and resorts and venture out only to 'sanitised' places of interest.
Barriers to entry	Large companies and corporate structures which control the market usually make it difficult for new players to enter the market. Businesses in South Africa are either very large or very small - a middle segment is only slowly emerging. The cost of capital furthermore prevents many small operators from entering the market.

Source: Tourism White Paper (1996)

## **2.12 Role of the key players in tourism development**

The study looked at the role of various stakeholders in tourism development in South Africa. These include the national, provincial and local governments, communities, private sector and conservation agencies and their roles are as follows:

### **2.12.1 Role of national government in tourism development**

According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) the national government must play five key roles in the development and promotion of the tourism industry. These roles include facilitation and implementation, coordination, planning and policy-making, regulation and monitoring and development promotion. According to Gorica et al., (2012) government management of tourism has a key role in designing a sustainable model for community development. "Governments are key players in this process, because they are responsible for territorial development and it is their responsibility to



provide the necessary conditions for the sustainable development of tourism in communities” (Gorica et al., 2012). According to Lepp (2007:876) many governments have resorted to tourism for the revival of their local economies. “In some instances, these have yielded the desired results as tourism-led development has created jobs, increased incomes for families, and boosted the GDP of the country among others” (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010:1141).

The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) further states that the national government must establish a safe and stable political and economic environment for tourism to flourish ensure the safety and security of residents and visitors and promote the involvement of communities at appropriate levels of tourism activity. According to Deery et al., (2012) the knowledge about the local communities’ perceptions of the impacts tourism has on their communities is of utmost importance for the government’s tourism departments and agencies, because this knowledge is what should lead the process of managing places and consequently, planning of tourism activities, marketing them and developing tourism products and programmes.

### ***2.12.2 Role of provincial government in tourism development***

The provincial government has a critically important role to play in the development and promotion of the tourism industry of South Africa. According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) the provincial government must focus more on the implementation and application of national principles, objectives and policy guidelines as appropriate to local conditions, facilitate and develop the tourism product, marketing and promoting tourism locally. “The provincial government, through provincial tourism organisations, have the responsibility for marketing and promoting their destinations. The provincial governments should also play a more prominent role in tourism development activities such as the involvement of local communities, environmental management, safety and security of visitors, tourism plant development, infrastructure provision, etc. budgets and resources allocated to provinces will need to reflect this reality” (DEAT 1996).

### ***2.12.3 Role of local government in tourism development***

According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) the functions of the local government mirror those of the provincial government, but with added emphasis on the planning, development, maintenance of many specific aspects of the tourism product. According to Brokaj (2014) local government are pivotal in developing actions aimed at guaranteeing tourism becomes increasingly sustainable. “Local government has been acknowledged as the most important authority in developing effective tourism development policies, because it is at this level where the impacts of tourism development are felt most acutely” Vieira (2016). The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) states that at the local government level, specific provincial functions of policy implementation, environmental planning and land-use, product development, marketing and promotion are further supported. Specific functions of the local government include the facilitation of the participation of local communities in the tourism industry, license establishments in accordance with national framework, promote and financially support the establishment of local publicity associations /community tourism and marketing organisations to facilitate, market, coordinate and administer tourism initiatives. “Local authorities should provide an enabling and encouraging context for an effective management of the impacts of tourism” (Vieira 2016).

### ***2.12.4 Role of the private sector in tourism development***

According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa DEAT (1996) the private sector has and will continue to play a critically important role in the further development and promotion of tourism. “The private sector bears the major risks of tourism investment as well as a large part of the responsibility for satisfying the visitor. The delivery of quality tourism services and providing the customer with value for money are largely private sector responsibilities” (DEAT 1996). According to DEAT (1996) furthermore, the private sector is in a position to promote the involvement of local communities in tourism ventures by, inter alia, establishing partnership tourism ventures with communities. “Involve local communities and previously neglected groups in the tourism industry through establishing partnership ventures with communities, out-sourcing, purchase of goods and services from

communities (e.g. poultry, herbs, vegetables and other agricultural supplies, entertainment, laundry services, etc.) Enable communities to benefit from tourism development, for example communities benefiting directly from new reticulation systems and village electrification programmes developed through tourism investment in rural areas” (DEAT 1996).

#### ***2.12.5 Role of communities in tourism development***

According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) communities are also expected to play a vital role in the development of tourism. “Many communities and previously neglected groups, particularly those in rural areas, that have not actively participated in the tourism industry possess significant tourism resources. The role of communities includes organising themselves at all levels (national, provincial and local) to play a more effective role in the tourism industry and interact with government and role players at all levels” (DEAT 1996). According to DEAT (1996) communities must identify potential tourism resources and attractions within their areas to exploit opportunities for tourism training and awareness, finance and incentives for tourism development, seek partnership opportunities with the established tourism private sector and participate in all aspects of tourism, including being tourists, support and promote responsible tourism and sustainable development. “The community must participate in decision-making with respect to major tourism developments planned or proposed for the area and work toward enhancing the positive benefits of tourism and minimise the negative impacts” (DEAT 1996).

#### ***2.12.6 Role of conservation agencies in tourism development***

According to the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) the national and provincial conservation agencies play an important role in developing and managing state conservation land for tourism purposes. “In this regard, their roles are to proactively integrate areas under their control into the tourism resource base by providing controlled access to and use of protected areas to the local community and commercial tourism operators” (DEAT 1996). According to DEAT (1996) conservation agencies must facilitate and support the establishment of community owned reserves and facilitate and support the

establishment of partnership tourism ventures between communities, private business and conservation agencies inside or adjacent to protected areas. “Moreover, promote and provide opportunities for local entrepreneurs and communities to integrate their operations with tourism activities inside protected areas” (DEAT 1996).

### **2.13 International perspective**

According to Isaac and Van der Sterren (2004:2) tourism is seen as a possible strategy of growth for developing economies and an agent of economic development for local communities because of its potential to be a source of income for local economies. Raupeliene (2015) argues that tourism is one of the activities in rural areas that is creating added value, and rapidly becoming a part of the global economic and social process. Chaudhry and Gupta (2010) state that as many as 75% of the world’s poor live in the rural areas. According to EuroGites (2009) there are 400 000 rural tourism homesteads with 3.6 billion places. The EuroGites (2009) further states that rural tourism supports 900 000 direct and indirect jobs in Europe and generates 150 billion in gross income each year. “Rural tourism has become a job creation tool for many communities which are seeking to diversify their economies because of its ability to generate local employment, promote external investment and supplement traditional industries” Raupeliene (2015). According to Labanauskaite & Juscius (2001) rural tourism is an alternative kind of activity allowing the creation of additional jobs by 30%-40% in Lithuania increasing income of the farmers from agriculture. “In Australia, the Department of Tourism noted that tourism diversifies rural economies and provides them with considerable benefits, including wider opportunities, diversification of the income base of farmers and rural towns, additional justification for the development of infrastructure, a broader base for the establishment, maintenance and/or expansion of local services, scope for the integration of regional development strategies and an enhanced quality of life through extended leisure and cultural opportunities” (Hall 2000). It is in this context that rural tourism is identified as a tool for rural revitalisation.

Lenao and Saarinen (2015) conducted a study on Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) as a tool for community tourism development: exploring culture and heritage projects in the North-East District of Botswana. The purpose of the study was to establish the

applicability of IRT framework in Botswana's rural tourism, utilizing specifically selected study site. It sought to address the question of whether there was evidence in integration in the development of rural tourism at a community level in the selected community setting. "Botswana's rural areas are home to a predominantly poor population" Ketshabile, 2011. "The situation is attributable in part to the decline in rural areas' agricultural production capacity and the attendant loss of employment and livelihood opportunities" Osei-Hwedie (2004). The study relied on results of a qualitative method carried out in and around the village of Kalakamati in North-East District of Botswana. "The population of Kalamati was recorded as 858 persons during the 2011 national census" (Government of Botswana 2011). In-depth interviews were carried out with selected respondents associated with Mantenge, Domboshaba and Gandanyemba heritage sites. The researcher found that for each of these sites, the resident tour guides are youth from the local community. They were semi-skilled and employed by the Department of Museum and National Monuments. The local guides further stated that despite growing up in the area, they were not aware of these tourist sites until discussion to develop them took place. These youths also expressed their excitement at the opportunity to get a job locally, even though the allowances were quite minimal. Those with basic high-school qualification accepted that tourism in the area was still at its infant stage and hoped that as more development come with time, their situation would begin to improve. Based on the interview results, Lenao & Saarinen (2015) "argue that the IRT framework can be a useful tool in assessing development of rural tourism in the Botswana but needs to be carefully contextualized in developing countries situations". "The revised national policy for rural development of 2001 accepts the critical role that agriculture has played in rural development but appeals for more integrated and diversified approach to developing rural areas in Botswana" (Saarinen, Moswete, & Monare 2014). The policy further recognizes the need to incorporate other sectors that could increase the rural areas' competitive advantage (Government of Botswana 2002, Hunt, Rogerso & Kotze, 2012). "As a result, rural tourism development has been identified as a necessary tool to help rural areas realize some progress" (Lenao & Saarinen 2015).

Ashley (2000) conducted a study on the impacts of tourism on rural livelihoods: Namibia's experience. The study was aimed at assessing a wide range of impacts that tourism has on the livelihoods of rural resident's in parts of Namibia. It aimed to serve

two purposes. First it illustrates that a focus on livelihoods offers a useful perspective on tourism for enhancing local benefits. It contrasts with conventional tourism perspectives which tend to focus exclusively on either economic, commercial or environmental impacts. It also contrasts with narrow assessment of local benefits focusing only on job creation and cash income. Taking a livelihoods perspective helps identify the wide range of impacts – direct and indirect, positive and negative – that matter to local people. Secondly, the study was aimed at showing how tourism's contribution to livelihoods can be enhanced by adjusting decisions on what is developed and how, in ways that reflect people's livelihood priorities. The study further revealed that this has implications for how tourism planners, other policy-makers, communities, businesses and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) work. The study further stated that between 1994 and 1996, residents of Bergsig area (now Torra Conservancy) were involved in negotiations with two different tourism investors. The investors were interested in setting up luxury lodges in this area, which fringes the Namib Desert in Kunene Region (north west Namibia), which is home to desert-dwelling elephants, black rhino, giraffe, springbok, oryx and other species, and offers tourists spectacular landscapes. The Residents Committee negotiated two joint ventures but decided to proceed with only one, for a 16-bed tented 'Damaraland Camp' with Wilderness Safaris. Both deals could have been implemented. The other offer, for a small exclusive lodge at 'Poachers Camp' was discussed for three years, but reached the point where the company said it must be yes or no, and the community decided not to go ahead. The prospect of high cash returns was outweighed by other disadvantages. The study reveals that the community was happy to go ahead with the Wilderness Safaris offer because they saw tangible benefits, with relatively low trade-offs in terms of loss of land for other current uses. Poachers Camp offered significantly more money but had three major disadvantages, it was a high *risk*, involved keeping people and livestock out of a much *larger area*, and involved a much *longer commitment*. By affecting their assets and pastoral activities, it would have impinged on their livelihoods. In addition, the negotiation was more difficult because proposals kept changing, making it difficult for the community to assess and discuss the deal. "These disadvantages outweighed the potential benefits in the eyes of the community" Ashley 2000.

Raupeliene (2015) conducted a study on the assumptions of successful development of rural tourism in Lithuania (Case study of the Eastern Aukštaitija Region). The aim of the study was to perform the analysis of development of rural tourism in Eastern Aukštaitija Region and to discuss the assumptions of successful development of rural tourism in this region. The analysis of scientific references, quantitative research survey and generalisation of the questionnaire data were used. The study found that successful development of rural tourism depends on external (economical, natural, legal, political, social and technological) and internal (the size of homesteads, the number of services the experience of the owners of homesteads in rural business, professional knowledge of the staff and the ability to communicate in a foreign language(s), factors. According to Raupeliene (2015) the survey further showed that, the main visitors of rural tourism homesteads were visitors who stayed overnight and spent 2-3 days in rural tourism homesteads. The study found that the owners of rural homesteads plan to develop their rural tourism business. They further plan to expand summer and winter activities, rent sports equipment, provide with health services and to organize camps, to organize educational services and provide guiding services. According to Sharpley & Pender (2005) in order to attract more visitors to rural tourism homesteads, the owners have to offer a wide range of services with its specialization. Raupeliene (2015) further stated that by increasing the number of places in their homesteads and offering new services and entertainment activities, the owners of the homesteads can expect a successful business development but it is still not enough.

Gupta and Singh (2015) conducted a study on Potential and Performance of Rural Tourism in India: Assessing Intra-State Variations. This study was aimed at assessing the potential, performance and prospects of rural tourism in various states of India. In addition, the research was meant to assess the role played by the Indian government in the development of tourism in the country. "72.2% of the population in India lived in about 638,000 villages and enjoys the spectacular shade of nature and culture" (Roy 2012). According to the researchers the figure of villages in India, itself is the representation of great potential of rural tourism. The other side of the coin is that the residents of these villages are very poor and suffers from daily livelihood. The authors found that the government of India through the Ministry of Rural Development had initiated many schemes to bring up the standard of living of rural people, but they were insufficient to bring up the significant changes. The Indian Ministry of Tourism realized

the significance of rural tourism, as an important tool to provide better livelihood to rural people and developed the tourism policy in year 2002 aimed to develop few rural tourism sites as per the potential of area. Despite the ground breaking efforts of the state, the study found that rural tourism still has to make a significant leap forward and this form of tourism has to catch the attention of tourists and further responsiveness of policy makers. The results of the research revealed that tourism sites of different states significantly varied in potential and performance and that the work of rural tourism sites development was at very infant stage, but if developed, they will modify the entire rural landscape and will transform the living standard of rural populace in India. Considering the potential and performance variation of the states three homogeneous clusters were formed and was recommended to treat different clusters through dissimilar uniform code of conduct at the time of project sanctioning, implementing, monitoring and controlling. The study findings recommended dissimilar uniform strategy to different clusters followed by the more concrete steps to laggard i.e., ‘poor potential and poor performance’ cluster. Rural tourism is one of the few forms of new category of tourism, which has enhanced capability to deliver standard of living to rural people. “To provide the employment and means of earning to rural people, the government of India initiated several tourism project considering the potency, vibrancy and vividness of rural areas but very few of them could come up and remaining failed” Gupta and Singh, 2015.

## **2.14 National context**

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) (2009) of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform states that “between 10-15 million South Africans live in areas that are characterized by extreme poverty and underdevelopment. In some of these poverty stricken areas, one can find world heritage sites and other major tourist attractions. According to the (National Tourism Sector Strategy – final gazette draft (2016) Government has recognized the critical importance of tourism through its inclusion as one of the priority areas in the initial Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP 2007). The New Growth Path (NGP 2010) and the National Development Plan (NDP 2013) have reconfirmed tourism’s importance to the



continued growth of the economy, and the creation of jobs. A stand-alone Ministry of Tourism was formed in 2009 and the Tourism Act of 2014 was promulgated.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC 2016) the tourism economy contributed R375 billion (9.4 percent) to South African Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2015 and the World Economic Forum (WEF 2015) confirmed that the South African tourism economy is the most competitive in sub-Saharan Africa. The South African tourism industry was also responsible for 702 824 direct jobs in 2015. However, when indirect and induced jobs are added, a total of over 1.5 million jobs are linked to the tourism industry, representing 9.9 percent of all employment in South Africa in 2015. According to Ivanovic et al. (2009) the tourism sector was chosen as one of the tools in South Africa to drive the country's economic growth, reduce poverty and create jobs at the local level and has been at the centre of national, regional and local levels of development planning ever since. The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa (DEAT 1996) contends that prime tourism attractions are not located in the city centres, but rather in rural areas.

According to Briedenhann & Wickens (2004) both the South African government and the country's communities increasingly envisage tourism as a catalyst to stimulate economic activity, job creation and entrepreneurial opportunity in rural areas. However, Briedenhann and Wickens (2002) further argues that the vast majority of South Africa's rural population has never experienced being a tourist. Previously prohibited by law from participating in most tourist activities, they are now prohibited by finance. "As a result of this historical isolation from the tourism sector, many communities do not realise either their potential or the value of their resources as tourist attractions" (de Villiers, 2002). "In addition, the new government was faced with considerable challenges, not least of which were mitigation of the rampant unemployment and historic underdevelopment in the country's rural communities. Finding few viable alternatives, the government seized on tourism as the catalyst for the development of rural areas" (Briedenhann & Wickens 2004). However, as Sharpley (2002) questions, tourism can seldom be regarded as a 'development panacea'. As evidence clearly shows, tourism development often comes at a price and economic gains must be balanced against social and environmental costs. "Questions must be asked concerning the costs and impacts of tourism, and whether it truly can be an

empowering development strategy for the host community, from which it can derive sustainable long-term benefits” (Mitchell & Reidb 2001). Mitchell & Reidb (2001). Saarinen & Lenao (2014) Rural tourism is problematic concept, in general it can be seen as a replacement activity for threatened and possibly disappearing traditional rural economies or as an additional activity to be used for diversification of rural economies and sustaining rural communities and ways of living. Moreover, Saarinen & Lenao (2014) argue that instead of conceptualising rural tourism as a sectorial idea (a tourism-centric approach) within the tourism industry and referring to tourism operations and activities simply taking place in rural environments, rural tourism is seen here as ideological and development-oriented concept, which can be operationalised by utilising the Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) framework. Roberts & Hall (2001, p. 120) point out that the one individual rural tourism project is seldom able to offer the multiplicity of product required as a major attraction. It would thus seem vital that rural tourism projects recognise their interdependence and strive to build a healthy form of competition, in which they realise that they are competing with other destinations and not with each other, if ventures are to survive.

Gopaul (2006) conducted a study on the significance of rural areas in South Africa for tourism development through community participation with special reference to Umgababa, a rural area located in the province of Kwazulu-Natal. The aim of this study was to determine the role of tourism, empowerment and participation in the socio economic upliftment of the community of Umgababa. The researcher examined the views of the community on their socio-economic conditions, their willingness to participate in tourism business ventures and their perceptions and attitude towards communicating with other rural communities on tourism development. The researcher found that the majority of the people living in Umgababa were very poor and therefore lived under poor social and economic conditions with a large percentage of the people who could not find suitable employment. The study further found that Umgababa does not have the infrastructure, commerce and industry to provide these people with suitable employment. Many of people in the area have little or no knowledge of any particular type of work, as a result they find it difficult to enter any form of skilled employment. A family of eight could survive on an income of between R500 and R2500 per month with large families, mostly women and children tend to work in subsistence agriculture or sell fruit and ornaments on the freeway and in curio stores. The finding

of this research acknowledges that the community living in the study area is willing to undertake a tourism business venture. Given the necessary training in skills development through empowerment programmes and financial assistance, there is possible hope that this rural community could uplift their livelihood through tourism.

Qongo (2013) conducted research to assess the contribution of rural tourism to local economic development as a strategy for poverty alleviation: a case study on the UKhahlamba District –Senqu Local Municipality (SLM) in South Africa. The overall aim of this study was to assess the degree to which local communities participate in tourism activities at the SLM municipality and to determine the role of tourism, empowerment and participation in the socio-economic upliftment of the community using the case study of UKhahlamba- SLM, Eastern Cape. The views of the community on their socio- economic conditions and their willingness to participate in tourism business ventures were also sought. The findings of the study lead to the conclusion that the socio-economic living conditions of the community of SLM are very poor and that empowerment and participation of the community could be an answer to alleviation thereof and provide a contribution to local economic development.

The Senqu municipal region is situated in the UKhahlamba District Municipal region in the interior of the Eastern Cape. The area is rich in its diversity of tourism attractions and is home to the only ski resort in South Africa. The area is renowned for its beautiful walks and hikes through the scenic and majestic mountains, varieties of fauna and flora and a plethora of rock art paintings, as well as adventure tourism activities, hunting safaris, and horse riding adventures. It also boasts well-run luxury resorts. With its natural beauty, as indicated, one would expect tourism to be a thriving industry in the impoverished Senqu local municipality. The findings of this research support the view that the people living in SLM are willing to participate in tourism for the development of their area as well as for their own improvement. However, the challenge is the lack of financial support and guidance to pursue their goals and objectives. The study found that the tourism sector within the SLM is largely “white owned” and operated by people who have alternate sources of income. Barriers to entry into the tourism market are high and development initiatives are currently being supported in an ad hoc manner. The critical gaps are evident as far as support for the tourism sector is concerned. These gaps and challenges are as follows:

- Owners of existing establishments show no sense of urgency to develop the tourism industry beyond what it currently is. This is largely due to the fear of competition from new entrants in the sector.
- Skills development programmes are plentiful. Most of these programmes are out of reach for the people who are in need of these programmes.
- Access to finance is the greatest barrier to entry for new participants and other smaller operators. The requirements for access to finance are also prohibitive as merely developing a business plan is beyond the means of most of those who wish to access the finance.
- Municipal entities thus face a key challenge to help integrate and co-ordinate actions that will lead to the more effective growth of the tourism industry.

Briedenhann & Wickens, (2004) conducted research on Rural Tourism: Meeting the Challenges of the New South Africa. The aim of the research was to examine the challenges faced by government in the governance and management of the rural tourism sector. It explored the opportunities presented by tourism as a catalyst of development in rural communities and investigated its primary constraints in achieving government objectives. One of the key findings of the research was the lack of capacity at local government level to assume its responsibilities in the rural tourism sector. The difficulties in actualising community-based rural tourism development also emerged from this study as a key constraint. In addition, the dearth of entrepreneurial expertise, management skills and capital with which to expand the tourism infrastructure appeared to present a significant challenge. One of the conclusions emerged from the research was the importance of cooperation, as opposed to competition, between rural tourism operators. In addition, the findings, however, suggest that although rural development has become a high priority for government, it is debatable whether this has found a genuine practical manifestation on the ground. Research respondents reported that, although community involvement in planning and decision-making with regard to the type and scale of rural tourism projects to be undertaken was deemed vital if the benefits of rural tourism are to be equitably spread, great difficulties were experienced in operationalising the concept. Lack of tourism awareness and understanding amongst rural communities is a significant constraint to effective participation, communication and decision-making.

The study suggests that factors of pride, respect and self-worth are important ingredients in the development of new cultural tourism products. Fieldwork also indicates that although South Africa has almost unlimited rural tourism potential, the country is faced with many challenges which unless dealt with will become ongoing limitations to the development of a sector which, it is hoped, will stimulate job creation and entrepreneurial opportunity. Expectations of rural tourism are riding high. South Africa undoubtedly has the potential to develop an unrivalled portfolio of product yet many rural tourism projects are being developed that are not market led. In the light of this, an academic respondent reports that he anticipates a high level of market failure. Neglecting to aggressively build implementation and management capacity at grassroots level is another cardinal limitation to stimulating the economic development desperately needed in rural communities. It has also been reported that resolution of the land problem and access to start-up funds are still the greatest challenges for most emerging entrepreneurs.

The study further noted that significant changes have taken place in the management of South Africa's National Parks which, in 2000, embarked on a commercialisation process. "Concessions for a period of 20 years have been granted to operators in national parks throughout the country to build, own and operate ecotourism facilities within the parks. In addition, the network of shops and restaurants has been outsourced to private operators" (South African National Parks 2003).

## **2.15 Local context**

According to the Rural Tourism Strategy (2012) the different spheres of government have elevated tourism planning through Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), Spatial Development Plans (SDPs) and Provincial Growth and Development Strategies (PGDP) of local municipalities and respective provinces. KwaZulu-Natal has also recognised the critical importance of tourism through its inclusion as one of the priority areas in the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Master Plan (2012), White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in KwaZulu-Natal (2008), the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Amendment Act (2002), and the Tourism KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Strategy (2008-2012). "However, despite government efforts to reduce poverty and promote

economic development in rural areas through a realignment of local government priorities towards poverty reduction in marginalised communities, high levels of unemployment and chronic poverty still persist in South Africa” (Delius & Schirmer, 2001). According to Tourism KZN (2016) the total contribution of tourism in KwaZulu-Natal to the GDP (foreign and domestic) is R20.4bn and the total employed is 200 466. According to Javier & Elazigue (2011) the role of local government is to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of their communities and their involvement in tourism must be related to that.

Hlabisa is located in Northern KwaZulu-Natal under the Umkhanyakude District Municipality and is generally characterised by isolated rural communities with high levels of HIV/AIDS, unemployment, poverty, and dependence on social grants. According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality (IDP 2015/16), Hlabisa has an estimated population of 71 925 people with approximately 13 184 households. The municipal (IDP 2015/16) further states that 5 983 people between the ages 15 and 64 years were unemployed and only 2 671 employed with the rate of unemployment at 52,6% in 2011. Approximately 40% of the residents within the municipal area earn an income of less than R1 500 per month, Hlabisa Local Municipality (IDP 2015/16). The area has no well-established economic core, which hampers economic development within the municipal area as well as no formal and/or proclaimed town. As a result, the area is unable to attract inward investments that could address economic development challenges. However, Hlabisa is surrounded by many tourist amenities which range from bed and breakfasts (B&B), resorts, lodges, and the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. It offers a variety of tourism activities, with Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park being the major tourist draw card in Hlabisa and for the province of KwaZulu-Natal attracting both domestic and international tourists. The park is the oldest proclaimed park in Africa and consists of 960 km<sup>2</sup> (96,000 ha) which is known for its rich wildlife and conservation efforts. The park is home to the popular big five animals and the largest population of white rhino in the world. This region has high level of tourism potential for the rural community of Hlabisa which is located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. This region is deemed rich in heritage and cultural attractions in which local communities can benefit. Therefore, the aim of the study is to assess the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, assessing the socio-economic conditions, tourism

activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. Burns (2000) suggests that tourism should create jobs and contribute economically to the community living in the areas where tourism development is taking place.

## **2.16 Themes**

The themes which forms the bases for the study are as follows:

### **2.16.1 Theme one - socio-economic conditions**

The economic impact of tourism in a country or region is well demonstrated by three often - used indicators, namely; tourism contribution to GDP, foreign exchange earnings and employment opportunities. According to Ivanovic et al. (2009) when tourism impacts positively in the economy, the economy grows. Signs of economic growth include increased wealth, lower numbers of poor and unemployed people increased foreign earnings through exports, lower interest rates and inflation. Godfrey & Clarke (2000) argue that tourism impact come in many shapes and form. These are often discussed in terms of the economy, social structure and physical environment of destination areas. Economic aspects concern issues of employment, balance of payments and foreign exchange; social structures relate to issues of culture, lifestyle and human interactions, the physical environment concerns issue of landscape and land-use in both built and natural settings. Ivanovic et al. (2009) further state that tourism whether domestic or inbound, brings about economic growth, because money is spent on tourism products. The money that tourists spend finds its way into the pockets of people working with tourists and tourism businesses, and that is not even the end of the growth triggered by tourism activities. However, although tourism creates many business and employment opportunities, it does not bring about economic freedom. Tourism is part of the national economy and even when tourism is managed sustainably and responsibly – it can cost South Africa Ivanovic et al. (2009). According to Reeder & Brown (2005) rural recreation areas have grown rapidly in recent years, and recreation and tourism development has become a popular vehicle

for rural economic development. Recreation development involves more than just tourist related businesses, such as hotels and restaurants; it encompasses all economic growth that results from people moving into the community to take advantage of its recreational amenities. This kind of development has the potential to dramatically transform a stagnant rural community into a thriving community by attracting retirees, entrepreneurs, and young workers, diversifying the economy, and improving the quality of life with a broader array of goods. Hall (2004) states that rural tourism development can act as an agent for the transformation of rural areas, allowing an inflow of resources and liquidity into host communities through tourist expenditure, the creation of new small businesses and employment Roberts & Hall (2004), “for the building of infrastructure and conservation of the natural environment, culture and identities of each rural tourist destination as these factors are in themselves, the tourism product” (Hawkes & Kwortnik 2006). Other benefits associated with social networks in the sphere of rural development are increased economic diversification, the growing diversity of actors involved in development processes, the economic, social and environmental scope of these processes and the different scales of political action to influence development (Cawley & Gillmor 2008, Saxena et al. 2007; Simpson 2008).

According to Kavita, Erling & Saarinen (2016) during the past decades, the tourism sector has become an increasingly important issue for governments and regional agencies searching for socio-economic development. Especially in the Global South the increasing tourism demand has been seen highly beneficial as evolving tourism can create direct and indirect income and employment effects to the host regions and previously marginalised communities, with potential to aid with the poverty reduction targets (Saarinen and Rogerson 2014). According to Brown & Hall 2008 tourism services and facilities can also improve the general level of infrastructure of a region which benefits local population by providing new, or maintaining the old, services and infrastructure. In addition, Florida 2002 states that tourism businesses generate tax revenues, including revenues from employees and, tourism promotion creates positive destination images attracting not only tourists but also businesses, capital investments and new skilful employees, like the so called creatives. However, UNCTAD (2010) argues that in many governmental strategies, the Global South tourism has emerged as a driver for development that goes beyond economic issues and the sector is also



used for promoting economic diversification and strengthening national economies. Kavita, Erling & Saarinen (2016) argues that the economic costs, such as inflation, leakages, land use changes, security needs, crime and the increase of domestic prices should be considered. In addition, tourism creates cultural, social and environmental changes and impacts while issues such as opportunity costs are rarely discussed in relation to tourism development and planning strategies. All these aspects may have serious direct or indirect socio-economic implications, and, thus, eventually create costs for the host regions (Kavita, Erling & Saarinen 2016). According to Aref (2011) in order to manage the costs and benefits of tourism development, many countries and regions have created strategies that aim to highlight the social responsibility of the sector and its benefit by sharing capacity at local and regional levels.

This has sparked various participatory planning and community-based tourism and natural resource management strategies, programmes and projects which emphasise the sustainability of the businesses and local participation needs (Aref 2011). According to Saarinen (2011) by involving local communities, the benefits of tourism are expected to trickle-down to a local level where the tourist activities and impacts actually take place. "Rural areas in South Africa face the problem of underdevelopment, unemployment, low literacy rates and lack of basic infrastructure" (Nzama 2008:1). According to Mthembu (2011) South Africa is a tourism paradise which offers a variety of attractions including scenic beauty, diverse wildlife, a kaleidoscope of cultures, traditions and opportunities to explore the outdoors through sporting and adventure activities. However, little is known about its socio-economic impact on livelihoods of the poor in rural areas (Bennet & George 2004:4). Bennet & George (2004:4) contend that there is inadequate information about the contribution of the rural tourism assets to the socio-economic conditions of the local people especially the alleviation of poverty. On the other hand, Brown (2000) and Meyer (2006) insist that tourism development planners must change their focus from the enclave development of resorts which is characterised by exclusion of linkages to the local poor rural areas. Isaac & Van der Sterren (2004:2) argue that tourism is a possible strategy of growth for developing economies and an agent of development because of its potential to be a source of income for local economies. Mthembu (2011) further argues that tourism is indicated by development policies as an important industry for poverty alleviation. "It can create jobs, develop skills and grow the

economy by boosting the sales of various goods and services such as agricultural products and handicrafts (Fayissa, Nsiah & Tadasse" 2007:2). "Components of rural settings such as social, economic, geographic and community engender the intrinsic challenges. Stoian and Stoicea" (2011) refer to some key challenges: First, preserve and conserve resources through setting limits on their usage. Second, develop a balanced tourism activity, both temporally and spatially. Third, equitable sharing of local revenue derived from tourism. And fourth, convince local tourism actors on the economic viability to invest in rural tourism. SNV (2003b) has stated that rural tourism provides significant potential to use nature-based tourism as a low-cost, eco-friendly alternative to support socio-economic growth and fight poverty. Some of the objectives of rural tourism are to achieve maximum human welfare and happiness through sustainable socio-economic development of rural areas, to reduce growing poverty, inequality and regional imbalance, to generate employment and income for the villagers, to establish and sustain cottage and small scale industries etc. Embedded with rural tourism, ecotourism has been termed as nature tourism, considered as one of the important parts of rural tourism which is both need based and right based concept. More particularly it is need based approach because rural area needs to have more jobs created and revenue to be generated.

According to Gupta and Singh (2015) in the present time of stationary economic growth and stagnant industrial activity there are very few sectors which are performing exceedingly well and tourism is one of them. This sector has shown excellent performance, which can be understood from few indicators like tourist influxes and income generated in the area. Holland, et al. (2003) further stated that tourism promotion in the area will benefit rural people and will also increase their participation in destination management. High level of tourism activity in the area involves high level of local participation, which is an important activity of poverty elevation. According to Cooper et al. (2005) tourist expenditure has a 'cascading' effect throughout the host community. It begins with tourism spending money from 'front line' tourist establishments, such as hotels, restaurants and taxis, and then permeates throughout the rest of the economy. Economic impact analyses provide tangible estimates of these economic interdependencies and a better understanding of the role and importance of tourism in a region's economy. Tourism activity also involves economic costs, including the direct costs incurred by tourism businesses, government costs for

infrastructure to better serve tourists, as well as congestion and related costs borne by individuals in the community. Tourism's economic impacts are therefore an important consideration in state, regional and community planning and economic development. Communities therefore need to understand the relative importance of tourism to their region, including tourism's contribution to economic activity in the area. In this study measurement of economic impact is limited to rural tourism and its socio-economic effects on the local community of Hlabisa located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, investigating and disclosing the socio-economic conditions, tourism activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa.

#### **2.16.2 Theme two - rural tourism strategies / models**

According to Raupeliene (2015) the definition of rural tourism was adopted by the European Commission as a tool to describe and explain all the touristic activities in rural areas. Sharpley (2015) further argues that rural tourism could be defined as a state of mind and technologically, linking with activities, targets and other measurable characteristics. Whereas Matekoniene et al. (2002) notes that rural tourism provides opportunities for economic development of the community, to raise the standard of living, to protect the cultural heritage and social values. According to Lanao and Saarinen (2015) rural tourism should ideally sustain and create local incomes, employment and growth, contribute to the costs of providing economic and social infrastructure, encourage the development of other industrial sectors, contribute to local resident amenities and services, contribute to the conservation of environmental and cultural resources. Moreover, Pulido & Cardenas (2013) argue that tourism can significantly contribute to the solution of rural problems such as unemployment, massive rural exodus, it creates and redistributes income, increase the involvement in activities, creates new jobs.

According to Portuguese Association for Rural Tourism (2013) rural tourism is a form of tourism located in rural areas in natural surroundings, joining a series of activities and services in order to ensure the development and evolution of these places.

According to this association, this is an industry characterized by small firms where a lack of trust and cooperation predominates, where weak pro-activeness in collaborative partnerships limits the transfer of knowledge and experience, as well as firms' innovative capacity. "The development of rural tourism can act as a precondition for the transformation of rural areas, ensuring income for representatives of rural tourism business, establishment of new small business enterprises and work placements" (United nations World Tourism Organization 2002).

According to Dapkus (2009) effective development of rural tourism is possible only with a balanced structure of all the levels of an organisation and coordinated communication, so it is very important in the municipality of every district to have tourism specialist for the implementation of tourism policy. "Rural tourism must improve the quality of life, provide economic benefits and create jobs and prevent depopulation of rural areas" (European Parliament 2013). According to Vainiene (2001) scientific references acknowledges that the development of rural tourism is influenced by internal and external factors. Raupeliene (2015) argues that the internal factors disturbing the development of rural tourism is the lack of professional knowledge, poor knowledge of foreign languages, imperfect organisational structure, poor facilities or equipment, lack of information and shortage of experience and the external factors by data survey are economic (GDP, salary development), political environment (visa, implementation of state tourism policy), natural environment and its application for recreational activities, seasonality), legislation of rural tourism business, technology (rural infrastructure, accessibility by roads, water supply, access to internet) and social (demographics, lifestyle, celebration of the traditions, and their change, medical assistance and training arrangements) factors.

According to Saxeian et al. (2007) the process of developing rural tourism ordinarily involves a number of stakeholders including government, local communities, private investors, service providers and tourists. "Therefore, rural tourism development is a complex process that involves potential conflicts and negotiation of landscapes of different actors with different aims and values" (Daugstad 2008, Paniagua & Moyana 2007). Attempts at tourism development in rural and peripheral areas have resulted in widely varying outcomes, with many successes presented in case studies of tourism e.g., Brown & Hall, (2000), Hall, Kirkpatrick & Mitchell, (2005) "and many more communities disappointed by the false hope offered by tourism" (Hall 2007). According

to (Saxena and Ilbery 2010, Saxena et al. 2007) the use of integrated rural tourism (IRT) concept has been identified as one way of addressing this challenge. However, Saxena et al. (2007, p. 363) further argues that IRT is highly contextual and the framework has not been previously used in the developing countries context. "The concept of IRT has been subject to debate in the tourism literature for some time now" (Hall 2001, Mitchell & Reid 2001). On the other hand, Raupeliene (2015) acknowledged some discrepancies in the use of the concept, in integration in tourism literature, as well as derivatives. In addition, various studies indicate specific problems in developing collaboration networks for rural tourism: i) due to the small size of rural enterprises, resources are necessarily limited Ring et al. (2009); ii) "there is often a lack of qualified workers, many people working in such enterprises being family members whose involvement is not conditional on the possession of formal qualifications" (Phillipson, Gorton, & Laschewski 2006). "As previously mentioned, cooperation partnerships and strategies are frequently suggested as orientations for the success of rural tourism, but networks are not pre-given social facts and can be difficult to create, sustain and manage" (Saxena et al. 2007). "Tourism in rural and peripheral areas is often nature-based and so is closely connected to the land and local physical environment" (Hall & Boyd 2005). What is clear is that tourism does have a local economic impact Rinne & Saastamoinen (2005) "and that for rural and peripheral regions it is still generally welcomed as part of a diversified economy" (Noakes & Johnston 2009). "The presence of tourism in rural and peripheral areas has created new opportunities for entrepreneurs to create value where there previously was none" (Anderson, 2000).

The European Parliament (2013) has defined guidelines for rural tourism, rural tourism must improve the quality of life, provide economic benefits and create jobs and prevent depopulation of rural areas. "In order to attract more visitors to rural tourism homesteads, the owners must have a wide range of services with its specialization" (Sharpley and Pender 2005). Providing specialized services of rural tourism is a particular challenge in order to increase the competitiveness of rural tourism. There ten main specializations of rural tourism: for quiet recreation, education recreation, active recreation, rest with family, the culinary heritage, nature friendly country houses, health farmstead, family celebrations, corporate events and agro tourism homesteads. According to Zilinskas and Maksimenko (2008) the strength of rural tourism is the

nation's material and spiritual heritage and its creative application in modern public environments. In addition, Fitjar & Rodriguez-Pose (2011) suggests that local cooperation in rural regions is primarily based on long-established friendships or contact and is expressed through symbolic activities linked with expressions of local identity and solidarity; iii) small rural firms cannot achieve economies of scale for marketing activities and social capital to overcome barriers on their own.

#### **2.16.2.1 Integrated Rural Tourism Model**

The study was anchored around the Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) development model. The rationale for using the IRT model was due to the fact that it discussed key challenges of rural tourism development, especially in relation to the integration of the tourism industry and rural communities in developing countries and overviews the applicability and conditions of the IRT framework as a potential approach for rural tourism development in the study area as a destination that is still developing. Moreover, assessed the degree to which tourism provides resources or facilities that benefit those who live locally even if not directly involved in the tourism industry. The ability of people, firms and agencies in the local area to work together to develop and manage tourism. The role tourism plays in the politics, culture and life of the whole area and population as a local priority. The extent of local control over the tourism industry especially related to ownership, law and planning. The fundamental principles of the IRT model are detailed on table 4 below: "Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) is defined as tourism explicitly linked to the economic, social, cultural, natural and human structures of the localities in which it takes place" (Saxena et al. 2007). This interdependence is multi-dimensional, intended to promote the development of tourism on the strength of local resources – historical, cultural, landscape-based – and the interplay between individual personalities and networks of exchange so that a destination's specificities are able to compete globally. According to Ballesteros and Ramirez (2007) the convergence of the host community and tourist activities is mediated chiefly by local resources, which have a dual role to play: they are the central focus of touristic activities whilst also being a fundamental element in the construction of a community's identity. This 'practice' and performance' centred approach is useful since participation discourse has moved beyond merely 'beneficiary participation' to include interactive and participative conflict resolution processes that situate residents

as 'makers and shapers' rather than 'users and choosers of development initiatives Bellamy & Johnson 2000, Cloke et al. 2000, Gaventa 2002, Cornwall 2003, Healy 2003, Selman 2004, Greathouse-Amador, 2005).

According to Saarinen & Lenao (2014), tourism is increasingly seen as a relevant tool for addressing rural problems in developing countries and tourism is actively used for economic diversification and opening up new ways to generate income and employment. "However, many development models, such as Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) with emphasis on co-planning, learning and participation, originate from the Global North. This calls for careful considerations when such models are applied to the Global South's rural context" (Saarinen & Lenao 2014). "Recently, an Integrated Rural Tourism framework has been proposed to overcome the problems between rural populations, rurality and tourism" (Saxena et al. 2007, Saxena & Ilbery 2008). "The framework's objective is holistic tourism planning through the integration of tourism as new activity for localities" (Saarinen & Lenao 2014). "The aim of the IRT framework is to centralise the role of local actors and communities in rural transformations by highlighting the local needs, benefits and control in rural development" (Saarinen & Lenao 2014). According to Saxena et al. (2007) "the argument behind the promotion of IRT is much needed realisation in rural development policies that, instead of safeguarding or aiming to keep rural areas as spaces solely for traditional economies e.g. agricultural production, they should be encouraged to incorporate other uses and activities that would maintain or even increase their sources of income in future" (Ashley & Maxwell, 2001). According to Saxena & Ilbery (2008) IRT seeks to empower local communities for the benefits of the wider rural economy through a type of tourism that suits the people and observes high standards of environmental, economic, and socio-cultural sustainability. "At a principal level IRT does not differ greatly from many other planning frameworks aiming to integrate different stakeholders with tourism rural areas" (Reid 2004). According to Lenao & Saarinen (2015) rural areas are experiencing major socio-economic changes with a need to transform and diversity rural livelihoods. In this context, tourism industry is increasingly used as a tool for local development with an aim to facilitate participation and integration of communities in tourism planning and operations. According to Saxena et al. (2007) the process of rural tourism development ordinarily involves a number of stakeholders including government, local communities, private investors, service providers and tourists.

“Therefore, rural tourism development is inevitably a complex process that involves potential conflicts and negotiation of landscape as different actors with different aims and values interact” (Daugstad, 2008). According to Lenao & Saarinen (2015) this raises the need to explore issues of rural tourism development using other tools which offer a more holistic approach. “The use of Integrated Rural Tourism concept has been identified as one way of addressing this challenge” (Saxena & Ilbery 2007). “A well-integrated tourism, in fact, seeks to empower local communities for the benefits of the wider rural economy through a type of tourism that observes high standards of environmental, economic and socio-cultural sustainability” (Mitchell & Reid 2001). However, Hall (2000), Mtichell & Reid (2001) argue that the concept of integration has been a subject of debate in the tourism literature for some time now. Whereas Oliver & Jenkins (2003) acknowledged some discrepancies in the use of the concept, integration in tourism literature as well as its derivatives. He begins with a warning that when dealing with the concept of integration especially with reference to resorts, users should be very careful with interpretations, including what is integrated by whom. “The key tenet underpinning Integrated Rural Tourism is the notion of formal and informal networks, shaped by both ‘weak’ (low intimacy and infrequent interaction) and ‘strong’ (characterized by spatial proximity and kinship and friendship focused bonds) ties, traditions and patterns of behaviour that form part against the backdrop of geography of a place and its socio-economic dynamics” (Ilbery and Saxena 2009). This network-centred approach helps to uncover different ways that people are attached to their communities through ties of cooperation and conflict, and how they organise “space and time as a means heightening receptiveness, stimulating involvement, and (not least) undermining authority” (Thrift, 2000, p 235).

Table 4 Key principles of tourism integration in rural areas

Dimension	Description
Networking	The ability of people, firms and agencies in the locality and beyond to work together to develop and manage tourism.
Scale	The extent of tourism in an area in terms of its distribution over time and geographically, bearing in mind thresholds related to the area’s carrying capacity.



Endogeneity	The degree to which the area's tourism is recognised as being based on the real resources of the area.
Sustainability	The extent to which tourism does not damage, and possibly enhances, the environmental and ecological resources of the area.
Embeddedness	The role tourism plays in the politics, culture and life of the whole area and population as a local priority.
Complementarity	The degree to which tourism provides resources or facilities that benefit those who live locally in the area even if not directly involved in the tourism industry.
Empowerment	The extent of political control over the tourism industry through ownership, law or planning, particularly control exercised at a local level.

(Clark & Charbrel 2007)

#### **2.16.2.2 Pro Poor Tourism (PPT) model**

According to Akyeampong (2011) at the community level, approaches to tourism development which focus on the poor in society are described as “pro-poor”. However, Hussmann (2010) states that because most attractions that constitute the basis for tourism development in rural areas tend to be publicly owned, and because tourism affects the lives of host communities for better or worse, using tourism as a tool for rural development requires the collaborative efforts of residents, communities, business firms and intermediary agencies, whether public or private. “At the community level, approaches to tourism development which focus on the poor in society are described as pro-poor” (Hussmann 2010). In contrast Ashley (2004) suggests that Pro Poor Tourism is tourism that results in increased net benefits for poor people. It enhances the linkages between tourism businesses and poor people, so that tourism's contribution to poverty reduction is increased and poor people are able to participate more effectively in product development. Whilst, Binns & Nel 2002, argue that literature on the developmental impacts of tourism, mainly in the developing world, but to a certain degree also in the developed world, has in recent years sought to identify whether tourism can actually be regarded as, and encouraged to become, a ‘pro-poor’ development strategy. But there is often some confusion as to how PPT

relates to other tourism concepts such as ‘ecotourism’, ‘sustainable tourism’ and ‘community-based tourism’. However, according to Pro-Poor Tourism (2002, 1) PPT also overlaps with both ecotourism and community based tourism, but it is not synonymous with either. Ecotourism initiatives may provide benefits to people, but they are mainly concerned with the environment. Community-based tourism initiatives aim to increase local people’s involvement in tourism. This is a useful component of PPT. But PPT involves more than a community focus – it requires mechanisms to unlock opportunities for the poor at all levels and scales of operation. However, Akyeampong (2011) argues that the definition of PPT says nothing about the relative distribution of tourism benefits; as long as poor people reap net benefits, the approach can be described as pro-poor – even if rich people benefit more than the poor. PPT is an “approach” to tourism, not a particular form of tourism, and its key distinctive feature is that “it puts poor people and poverty at the centre” (Ashley et al. 2000, p. 1).

Table 5 Types of PPT strategies

<b>Increase economic benefits</b>	<b>Enhance non-financial livelihood impacts</b>	<b>Enhance participation and partnership</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boost local employment wages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more supportive policy / planning framework</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boost local enterprise opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigate environmental impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase participation of the poor in decision making</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create collective income sources, e.g. fees, revenue and shares.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address competing use of natural resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build pro poor partnerships with private sector</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve social, cultural impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase flows of information communication</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase local access to infrastructure and services</li> </ul>	
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Source: Ashely et. al (2000)

### **2.16.3 Theme three - community participation and representation**

The concept of community participation and representation in rural tourism development has been covered extensively on paragraph 2.9 above.

### **2.16.4 Theme four - tourism activities**

According to Godfrey & Clarke (2000) tourism activities entail the following categories:

**2.16.4.1 Recreational** - children's playground; golf course – championship, driving range, 9/18 hole; ski hill / dry slope; tennis courts; nature trails; horse trails; bike trails; bowling greens; canals; roller blading; national games; flying / gliding; hang-gliding; parachuting; ballooning; horse riding; hobby /skills – painting, writing; view points; sports stadium, playing fields, ice rink; swimming-pool; water sports – canoeing, boating, river / canal boats, sailing, windsurfing, surfing, diving / snorkelling, white water rafting; fishing; hunting and shooting; caving; archery; off road driving; fashion activities; bungee jumping; white knuckle activity.

**2.16.4.2 Services** - retail – outlets, camping supplies, winter sports, water sports; art galleries; craft galleries; speciality clothes; glass; factory seconds / rejects; theatres, cinemas; health resorts; conference centre; meeting rooms.

**2.16.4.3 Facilities** - winery - tours /tasting, sales; zoo / sea-life centre; wildlife sanctuary; game park; farm park; aviary; aquarium; arboretum; botanical garden; planetarium, theme park –amusement, water mini /crazy golf; industrial tours – dams, hydro power, nuclear, mines manufacturing; dockyards – naval, historic; piers – fisherman's wharf; railways – funicular, steam; parks – local / public, regional, national.

According to Shapley & Pender (2005) there are 10 main specializations of rural tourism i.e. for quiet recreation, educational recreation, active recreation, rest with the

family, the culinary heritage, nature-friendly country houses, health farmstead, family celebrations, corporate events and agro-tourism. Whereas Pakurar and Olah (2008) argue that rural tourism connects areas of rural leisure activities based on the rural circumstances, and can be combined with the elements of cultural and active tourism (i.e. horse riding and hiking). "Rural tourism can help remote communities to become directly involved in and benefit from tourism by generating and diversifying revenues for farmers and helping to create a value-added market channel for local products, such as handicrafts" (Park & Yoon 2009, p. 99). According to Upadhyay (2016) as a phenomenon, rural tourism is related to natural environment, hill, mountains, agricultural terraces, river, rural society and countryside households representing conservation, life style free of cultural pollution, experience, adventure and above all benefit to the local people. A sustainable rural tourism is the product of the careful planning, management and monitoring of tourism development.

According to Molera & Albaladejo (2007), rural visitors may include contact with nature; experiencing space and freedom; enjoying peace and tranquillity; searching for authenticity and tradition; the desire for contact with local residents; and the importance given to the cost of going on holiday. Tyrvaenen et al. (2001) posited that the main reason tourists go to the country is for the sake of change, to relax and try something new. Engaging in social contact, spending time with their family, resting and having fun were also identified as reasonably important motives, while the opportunity for self-development and/or to find peace were not considered important.

According to Yun, Hennessy & Courtney (2011) rural residents interested in activities such as camping; staying at a country inn, bed & breakfast, or farm/ranch; visiting farmers' markets; and participating in water sports were more likely to be highly motivated by visiting family and/or friends; enjoying a feeling of freedom from being in the countryside; and reconnecting with the past. They were, however, not likely to be motivated by opportunities to experience and gain knowledge of different cultures, history and ways of life. In addition, rural residents consider the following activities important at rural destinations: experiencing adventure activities; viewing beautiful scenery; shopping for local crafts or souvenirs; and horseback riding. These activities were more likely to be positively related to the following motivations: reconnecting with the past; relaxing; and, experiencing something new and different. "They were,

however, negatively related the following motivations: enjoying a change of pace from everyday life; visiting family and/or friends; observing natural beauty, pastoral settings, and scenic vistas; and experiencing and gaining knowledge of different cultures, history and ways of life” (Yun, Hennessy & Courtney 2011). Moreover, Masip (2006) argues that a tourism destination needs a good product portfolio strategy to be able to develop tourism and specialise the existing supply of the destination. The portfolio should be based on the existing attractions and resources, but it should also take into account the essential infrastructures, facilities and services needed to make the development come true.

Figure 2 Product Portfolio –Destination Activities



Source: (Masip 2006)

### ***2.16.5 Theme five - challenges to community participation in rural tourism development***

According to Moric (2013) there are many rural areas which are exposed to continuous processes of depopulation, economic decline and complete marginalization due to the intense process of industrialization, urbanization and electrification. According to Upadhyay (2016) rural tourism is a lucrative business with many financial, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits however; the development of rural tourism compared to urban tourism is faced with numerous challenges related to its practicability and sustainability. Mitchell & Hall (2005) points out some major challenges related to rural tourism, such as lack of understanding and knowledge on

demand factors, incapability of product presentation, and constraints in marketing, cooperation and networking in rural tourism development.

However, Upadhyay (2016) argues that challenges and issues are also prevalent in materializing rural tourism through existing conventional tourism organizations such as security concern, environmental concern, infrastructural problems, long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability, community empowerment and participation, choice of options and conflicts. The major issues and challenges in developing tourism in rural areas are pedestal on two factors. One is inherent rural characteristics and the other one is inception and infrastructural/sustainability problems. Components of rural settings such as social, economic, geographic and community engender the intrinsic challenges. Stoian & Stoicea (2011) refer to some key challenges: first, preserve and conserve resources through setting limits on their usage; second, develop a balanced tourism activity, both temporally and spatially; third, equitable sharing of local revenue derived from tourism; and fourth, convince local tourism actors on the economic viability to invest in rural tourism.

On the other hand, various authors argue as follows, there is also a great number of risk factors that can affect the development of rural tourism, such as:

- “Great lack of inconsistency with regards to the quality of services provided and they can vary to a greater or lesser extent” (Meyer-Chec 2005);
- “Small businesses with limited staff and finances, which directs them to join forces for more efficient implementation of destination management and marketing programmes” (Mitchell & Hall 2005);
- “Lack of understanding and/or misunderstanding of the concept of the rural tourism, coupled with the wrong initial assumptions about the simple and easy generation market, income and employment” (Sharpley 2002);
- “Non-compliance with the development objectives of local governments and development agencies, and as a result of inadequate communication, lack of confidence, and lack of shared vision of development” (Nylander & Hall 2005);
- “Lack of planning for further development and limited use of marketing concept as a business philosophy that leads to the lack of information about the tourists’ needs and desires” (Clarke 2005);

- “Lack of funds for starting and/or continuation of business as a result of insufficient understanding and support from the state, banking and other financial institutions, especially in transition countries” (Demonja & Ruzic, 2011);
- “Lack of information on the possibilities and opportunities for further development of tourism, leading to disconnection of villages in a unique tourist product and lack of support of local, regional and governmental entities” (Sharpley 2002);

Musasa (2013) conducted a study on Challenges for Rural Tourism Development in Zimbabwe: A case of the Great Zimbabwe Masvingo area. The primary objective of the study was to explore the potentials and problems of rural tourism promotion activities in Zimbabwe and their role in sustaining the livelihoods of the rural communities. The secondary objective was to identify strategies that can be employed in the promotion of rural tourism in order to sustain the livelihoods of rural communities. The study found that there was lack of sustainable interventions in the development of rural tourism which is catalysed by the absence of rural tourism promotion strategy to support the sustenance of livelihoods through socio-economic transformation. Furthermore, meaningful socio economic transformation in the African rural areas through tourism remains a major development challenge. Moreover, development initiatives through different forms of tourism in the rural communities, has to a less magnitude benefited the rural communities and have negatively impacted the socio–economic environment. The study established that the absence of a strategy is caused by political instability, community conflict, lack of finance, marketing, poor communication, and limited knowledge of tourism. All the aforementioned reasons complement each other and posed a challenge to the sustainability of rural tourism development. The study recommended that in order for Zimbabwe to effectively transform its economy through tourism, the government needs to plan the process, formulate and implement relevant economic and social development strategies and policies.

## **2.17 Summary of this Chapter**

This chapter focused on the connection between community participation, rural tourism, community development and socio economic impact reflecting on previous empirical studies, literature and models. Community participation in rural tourism is one of the most important practices that has to be implemented by local tourism developers within the public and private sectors. However, meaningful participation is often disregarded by developers. As a result, this chapter presented important variables of this research in relation to rural tourism. In addition, international and national perspective of rural tourism development models and its effects on local communities and key role players were discussed.



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY / SPATIAL SETTING OF THE STUDY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Chapter three describes the details of the research design, methodology, the target population, sampling techniques employed and instruments used to gather and analyse data for this study as well as the spatial setting of the study. This chapter further explains how the study was conducted and the methods of investigation undertaken by the researcher to address the following questions:

- What is the level of tourism development and the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa?
- What strategies are put in place by the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and other role players in the area to ensure that the local community of Hlabisa is empowered socially and economically?
- What are the views of the local community of Hlabisa regarding the game park towards socio economic tourism development in the area?
- What are challenges or obstructions that impede the socio economic development through tourism in the community of Hlabisa?

### **3.2 Research Design**

According to Mouton (2002) the main function of research design is to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decision should be in order to maximize the validity of the eventual result. Moreover, “a design is used to structure the research; to show how all of the major parts of the research project, the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programmes, and methods of assignment, work together to try to address the central research questions and objectives (Mouton 2002). Whereas Creswell and Plano Clark (2007: 6) define research design as processes for gathering, scrutinising, understanding, and reporting information in research studies. According to Berg (2001) cited in Birungi (2005: 34) refers to a research design as a map used in planning when undertaking a research study and further stated that its objective is to visualise and imagine how the research will be

executed, the type of data to be collected, and how much it will cost the researcher. For this was a qualitative research study which was underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm. The lenses of the study were widened by critical literature search as it almost yielded an extensive discussion of the socio-economic effects of tourism development in rural areas. This study focused on the area of Hlabisa and its surrounding communities. According to Noor (2008) the qualitative research approach is a fitting research method for researchers who are concerned with insight, discovery and understanding rather than making assumptions. As aforementioned, the study used the qualitative approach. According to (Yin 2011) the qualitative research involves studying the meaning of people's lives, under real-world conditions, representing the views and perspectives of the people as the participants in a study, covering the contextual conditions within which people live, contributing insights into existing or emerging concepts that may help to explain human social behaviour and striving to use multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone. The study used the following tools or instruments to collect data i.e. questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions and focus groups. This explicitly implied that in-depth interviews were used for data collection. The interview method was chosen to provide valuable insights and opinions of those involved in the operations of Hlabisa rural areas. According to Mathers, Fox and Hunn (2009) questionnaires are a very convenient way of collecting useful comparable data from a large number of individuals. On the other hand, (Patton 2002) described unstructured interviews as a natural extension of participant observation, because they so often occur as part of ongoing participant observation fieldwork and further argued that they rely entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction. Whereas Eliot and Associates (2005) states that a focus group is a small group of six to ten people led through an open discussion by a skilled moderator. "The group needs to be large enough to generate rich discussion but not so large that some participants are left out. Focus groups can reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight" (Eliot and Associates 2005). The research methodology is appropriate because the study is social oriented with community as respondents together with managers of tourism establishments and local economic development managers in the area. The tourism establishments included B&Bs, hotel/resorts and other amenities such as arts and crafts, community based tours etc. As aforementioned the research methodology will provide valuable insights, experiences,

and opinions of the population especially those who are directly involved in the operations of tourism in the study area of Hlabisa.

### **3.3 Population of the study**

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) the full set of cases from which a sample is taken is called the population. According to Hanlon and Larget (2011) a population is all the individuals or units of interest; typically, there is not available data for almost all individuals in a population. However, Kitchin and Tate (2000: 53) argues that the total of all possible people who display the characteristics the researcher is interested in, is the population. Whereas, Babbie and Mouton (2003) define population as the theoretical, specified aggregation of the study elements and represents a group about which you wish to generalize your research. "Population is often defined in terms of demography, geography, occupation, time, care requirements, diagnosis, or some combination of the above" (Babbie and Mouton 2003). According to Finn, Elliot-White and Walton (2000: 3) the sample survey must cover the following critical questions:

- What is the projected population of the study area?
- How big should the sample of the study be?
- How should the study sample be achieved?

The census conducted in 2011 estimated the population of Hlabisa to be 71925 (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16). This included people living in the informal town of Hlabisa and the surrounding rural area. Hlabisa is 99% African and predominantly rural. The target population was drawn from the Hlabisa community including three traditional authorities, managers of tourism establishments and local economic development managers in the area. These tourism establishments included B&Bs, hotel/resorts and other amenities such as arts and crafts, community based tours etc. For the purpose of this study, "local community" is defined as the black residents living within the three traditional authorities in Hlabisa which are AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni Traditional Authorities.

### 3.4 Sample

According to Hanlon and Larget (2011) a sample is a subset of the individuals in a population; there is typically data available for individuals in samples. According to Lamb et al. (2004:265) a sample is a subset of the target population from which information is gathered to estimate something about the population. According to Lancaster, Withey & Ashford, (2001:40) the sampling plan involves five 5 steps, i.e. the sample population, sample frame, sampling method, sample size and gathering information from the sample elements. According to Bryman and Bell (2007:182) sampling is an element of data collection and is defined as the fragment or section of the population that is selected for the research process. However, Gill and Johnson (2010:123) warn that the sample size and selection are major concerns for researchers when designing and planning the research design. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) occasionally, it may be possible to collect and analyse data from every possible case or group member; this is termed a census. However, for many research questions and objectives, such as those highlighted in the vignette, it will be impossible for you either to collector to analyse all the data available to you owing to restrictions of time, money and often access. Sampling techniques provide a range of methods that enable you to reduce the amount of data you need to collect by considering only data from a sub-group rather than all possible cases or elements. The benefits of using a sample, according to Bergman (2008:70) as well as Mitchell and Jolley (2007:531), is to save costs and time.

This study was conducted in Hlabisa's three villages under the AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni Traditional Authorities, the Hlulhluwe-iMfolozi Park, which is located adjacent to the Hlabisa area, provincial and local tourism authorities and tourism establishments in the area were interviewed. One Administrator was interviewed from each of the three traditional authorities. The Hlulhluwe-iMfolozi Park manager and nine junior staff members including community coordinators were interviewed. One local economic development manager was interviewed from each of the following government institutions, namely; Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality and uMhlosinga Development Agency which is the Umkhanyakude District Municipality's Development Agency. Eleven tourism business managers were interviewed in the area. Community members were interviewed through the hosting of three focus groups

in each traditional authority with 10 community members each. Each focus group had a mixture of community representatives including those involved in community structures and tourism projects. Four officials from provincial and national tourism government and its agencies were interviewed. According to Barreiro and Albandoz (2001) a sample population is used for economic reasons, it will be convenient to interview a certain part of the population, a sample, chosen in an appropriate way in order to obtain later conclusions for the whole population. Therefore, the basis for selecting particular respondents for the study was due to the fact that those respondents possessed critical and applicable information required to respond research questions.

The Administrators of the three traditional authorities were selected due to the fact that they were the link between the traditional authorities and community and considering that the fact that the traditional authorities are custodians of the land. The manager and employees of the Hlulhuwe-iMfolozi Park were selected due to the fact that they are responsible for the game park which is a natural resource expected to improve the livelihoods of the local community located adjunct to the park. The local economic development managers and officials from the provincial and national tourism institutions were selected due to the fact that they are responsible for economic development, community projects and budget in the area. The tourism businesses were selected due to the fact that they are responsible for creating employment opportunities in the area. The community members were selected due to the fact that they are they are technically the land owners and located adjacent to the game park.

### **3.5 Sampling Technique**

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) the sampling methods available to the researcher can be divided into two types, namely; (a) probability or representative sampling, and (b) non-probability or judgemental sampling. However, Purposive sampling method was used for this study. Greenfield (2002:189) defines Purposive sampling as the technique where subjective judgements are used to resolutely select groups that the researcher believes will represent the population. The researcher identified and selected research participants who were of interest to the study and

were able to respond to all the research questions. The researcher approached critical local participants which included community leaders and members, local tourism businesses and authorities who were able to provide insights into the study area and assisted in responding to this study's research questions. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003a, p. 713) Purposive sampling methods have also been referred to as nonprobability sampling or purposeful sampling or qualitative sampling. "For non-probability samples, the probability of each case being selected from the total population is not known and it is impossible to answer research questions or to address objectives that require you to make statistical inferences about the characteristics of the population" (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). Cooper and Schindler (2006:455) concurs that non-probability sampling follows a subjective approach and is considered as a range of methods where the probability of selecting each sampling unit is not known and the selection of sampling units is done according to the researchers 'judgement or knowledge.

It therefore, according to Cooper and Schindler (2006:455). Whereas Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003a, p. 713 argue that Purposive sampling methods involve selecting certain units or cases "based on a specific purpose rather than randomly. According to Teddlie and Yu (2007) Purposive sampling methods are primarily used in qualitative (QUAL) studies and may be defined as selecting units (e.g. individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions. Moreover, Teddlie and Yu (2007) argue that purposive sampling is unique because it is used to achieve representativeness or comparability and these techniques are used when the researcher wants to (a) select a purposive sample that represents a broader group of cases as closely as possible or (b) set up comparisons among different types of cases".

### **3.6 Sample size**

According to Patton (2002) the sample size is dependent on your research question(s) and objectives, in particular, what you need to find out, what will be useful, what will have credibility and what can be done within your available resources. As stated earlier, the population of the community of Hlabisa is over 71925. Therefore, total

sample size is 60 and the respondents were divided into six categories as illustrated on the table below:

Table 6 Categories of respondents

QUALITATIVE	Cate gory	Sample population size	Number of participants	Organization	Date	Duration
	A	Community members (focus groups)	30	3 focus groups in each traditional authority with 11, 09 and 10 community members respectively pre group	29/10/18 21/11/18	30 minutes
	B	Traditional Authorities	3	3 Administrators from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority</li> <li>• Mpembeni Traditional Authority</li> <li>• Mdletsheni Traditional Authority</li> </ul>	29/10/18	20 minutes
	C	Local Economic Development Managers	3	• Big 5 Hlabisa Local	29/10/18	40 minutes 1 month

			Municipality official • uMhlosinga Development Agency official • UMkhanyakude District Municipality	30/11/18 - 03/12/18	
D	Tourism businesses	10	• Tour operators • Tour guides • Accommodation establishments • Arts and crafts	10/12/18 04/12/18 30/11/18 21/11/18	30 minutes 26 minutes 30 minutes 30 minutes
E	Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (part of economic development managers)	10	• Management and junior employees	23/11/18 – 10/12/18	1 month
F	Tourism Institutions (part of economic	4	• KZN Department of	26-27/11/18 10/12/18	30 minutes Email



		development managers)		Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism KwaZulu-Natal</li> <li>• Trade and Investment KZM</li> <li>• National Department of Tourism</li> </ul>		
		<b>Total Target Population (sample size)</b>	<b>60</b>			

### 3.7 Geo-Spatial Setting of the Study

#### 3.7.1 Introduction

The geo-spatial setting of the study section describes the geographic area of Hlabisa in terms of its physical location, history and profile. It was important for the researcher to include the spatial elements of the study area to acquaint readers with spatial features and services offered by the study area. Due to insufficient scholarly research on the background of the area, the researcher relied heavily on information solicited during the interviews and internet sources.

### 3.7.2 Location of the study area

The study area is Hlabisa which is located 260 km north of Durban, adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park under the Umkhanyakude District Municipality in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (Umkhanyakude District IDP 2014/15). The local municipality where Hlabisa is located is called the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality which was established by the amalgamation of the Big 5 False Bay Local Municipality and Hlabisa Local Municipality in 2016. The Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality shares its borders with Umhlabuyalingana Municipality, Jozini Municipality, Mtubatuba Municipality, Nongoma Municipality and King Cetshwayo District Municipality (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). Hlabisa's informal Central Business District (CBD) is centrally located in respect of its municipal area and is well connected by virtue of the R168 between Nongoma and St Lucia and Mtubatuba (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2007-2012). According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2007-2012) the town lacks structure and form. It lacks services appropriate for an urban area, for instance, it has gravel roads, no sewer system, no refuse removal system (Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2007-2012).

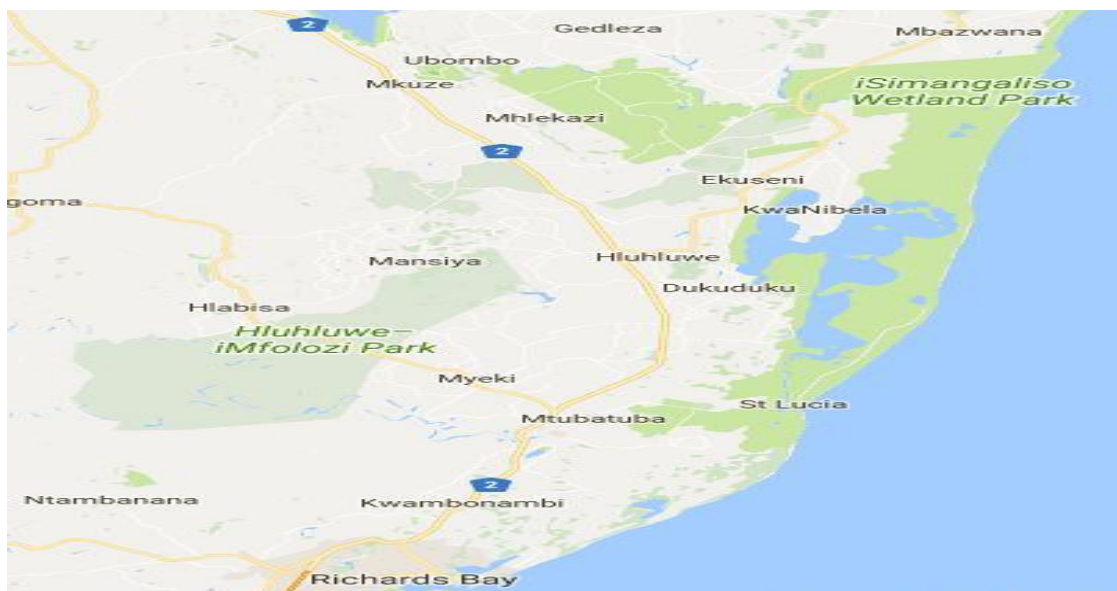


Figure 3 Map illustrating the geographical location of Hlabisa

Source: Tourism KwaZulu-Natal



Figure 5 Map illustrating the area of Hlabisa adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park

Source: Umkhanyakude District Municipality IDP 2014/15

### 3.7.3 Background and history of the study area

The area of Hlabisa is surrounded by many tourist amenities which range from bed and breakfasts (B&B), resorts, lodges, and the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. This region is deemed rich in heritage and cultural attractions in which local communities can benefit. In addition, it offers a variety of tourism activities, with Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park being the major tourist draw card in the area and for the province of KwaZulu-Natal attracting both domestic and international tourists. The park is the oldest proclaimed park in Africa and consists of 960 km<sup>2</sup> (96,000 ha) which is known for its rich wildlife and conservation efforts. The park is home to the popular big five animals, namely; the lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhino and the largest population of white rhino in the world.



Figure 6 Image of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park entrance

Source: Roger Thompson (2013)





Figure 7 Image of wild animals / game in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park

Source: Arnold Bustamante (2017)



Figure 8 Image of game viewing activity in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park

Source: Dirk Baert (2013)

The region where Hlabisa is located has high level of tourism potential for the rural community which is located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park features two main resorts, namely Hilltop and Mpila resorts. The Hilltop resort is situated on the edge of a forested hill and offers fine views of the surrounding countryside. “Hilltop holds the distinction of being the oldest tourist resort in KwaZulu-Natal, and provides a wide variety of accommodation, game drives, game walks and morning walks” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife 2014). “The Centenary Centre in the park which is located close to Hilltop resort, provides guided access to the Game Capture Complex, as well as presenting the visitor with an interpretation centre on game capture, a community-run craft market and refreshment kiosk” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife 2014).



Figure 9 Image of reception at Hilltop resort in Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park

Source: <http://www.kznwildlife.com/Hilltop.html>



Figure 10 Images of accommodation facilities at Hilltop resort in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park

Source: <http://www.kznwildlife.com/Hilltop.html>





Figure 11 Images of accommodation facilities at Hilltop resort in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park

Source: <http://www.kznwildlife.com/Hilltop.html>



Figure 12 Image of Curio shop at Hilltop Camp in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park

Source: SA Places

Whilst Mpila resort lies at the heart of one of Africa's oldest game reserves, the iMfolozi section of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. "Mpila resort is situated on a high ridge commanding magnificent views over the iMfolozi wilderness" (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife 2014). "Mpila resort is also the starting point for the world-renowned guided iMfolozi Wilderness Trails, begun in 1959, which take visitors on foot through the 25 000 ha



iMfolozi Wilderness Area” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife 2014). “The Centenary Centre, an easy drive from Mpila, provides guided access to the Game Capture Complex (during capture season), as well as presenting the visitor with an interpretation centre on game capture, a community-run craft market and refreshment kiosk” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife 2014).



Figure 13 Images of accommodation facilities at Mpila resort in the Hluhluw- iMfolozi Park

Source: <http://www.kznwildlife.com/Mpila.html>



Figure 14 Images of accommodation facilities at Mpila resort within the Hluhluwe- iMfolozi Park

Source: <http://www.kznwildlife.com/Mpila.html>

### 3.7.4 Traditional Councils in the Hlabisa area

“The municipal IDP states the area of Hlabisa has three Traditional Councils and these include AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni Traditional Councils” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “Each of these is made up of a number of rural settlements with varying degrees of density (Big 5 Hlabisa Local

Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “Higher density settlements tend to locate along major regional routes that run through the area while low density settlements are remote and located distant from the such routes” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “The settlement pattern is inefficient and results in high service costs” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “Most of the land in theses Councils are under Ingonyama Trust Board which means that the beneficiaries have to get Permission to Occupy (PTO) or lease agreement in order to qualify for a rural housing subsidy” (Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2015/16).

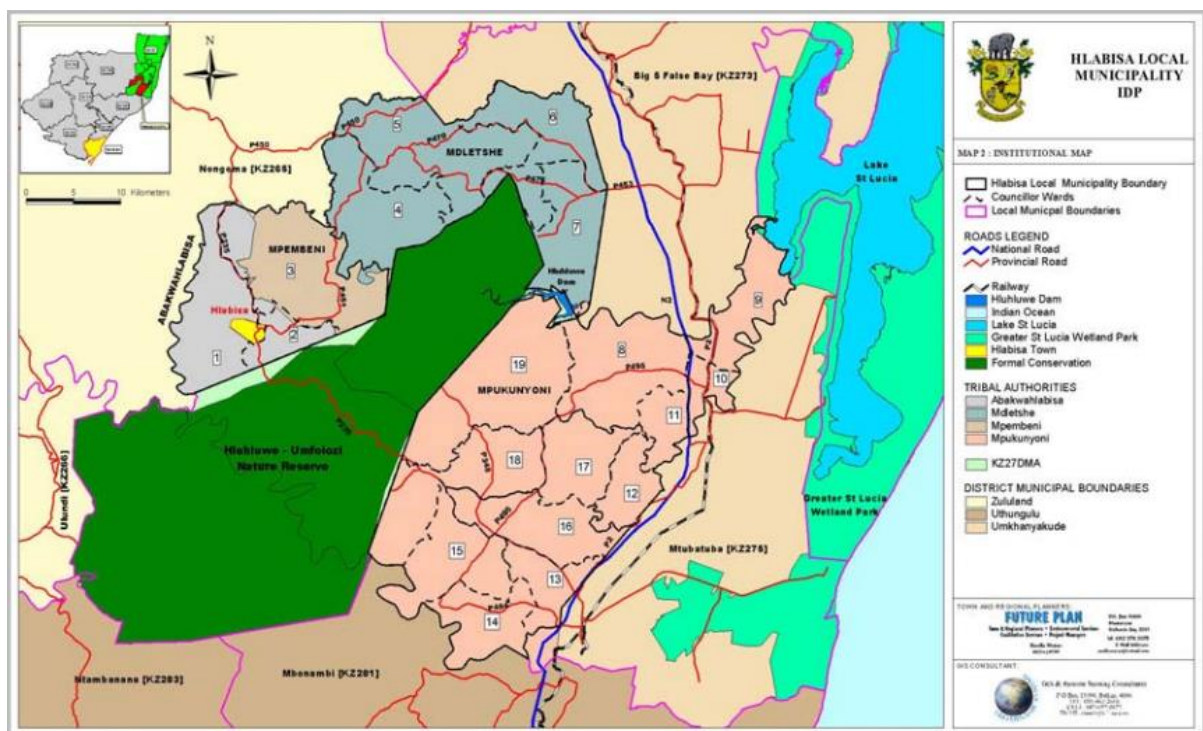


Figure 15 Map showing traditional authorities in the study area of Hlabisa

Source: Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2007-2012

### 3.7.5 Economic Profile of the study area

According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16 Hlabisa has a population of approximately 71925 with approximately 13184 households. “Hlabisa is 99% African and predominantly rural” (Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2015/16). The majority of Hlabisa population resides in rural villages scattered throughout the municipal area,

particularly traditional authority areas. “The majority (58%) of Hlabisa community members are less than 20 years of age” (Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2015/16).

### **3.7.5.1 *Economic structure and trends of Hlabisa***

According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16 only 33,5% of the size of the population is economically active, 37,2% unemployed and 29,3% discouraged work seekers, translating to 66% of the population not in employment. The age of the economically active population is between 15 and 64 years in the Hlabisa area. According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16 the local economy is predominantly agricultural, however it is noted that the Hlabisa agricultural potential has been lost due to the high prevalence of physical factors such as low rainfall frequency. “There is no commercial farming that takes place within the Hlabisa area” (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16). “The rest of the municipal is made up of small scale and subsistence farming activities” (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16). There are a number of poultry and vegetable projects that are in varying stages of implementation and there are small businesses of crafts and block making in the area. The Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16 further argues that a lack of proper educational facilities contributes to the high levels of illiteracy in the Hlabisa area with no tertiary education facilities that exist in the area. According to the Umkhanyakude District IDP (2014/15) whilst other municipalities in the district have shown increasing and sustained growth over the period 2001-2011, this is in contrast to the economy of the Hlabisa which experienced a reduced economic growth rate since 2008. According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16, the socio-economic challenges in Hlabisa are substantial, mostly due to the rural and under developed nature of the municipal area and the related prevalence of poverty and dependence on social grants. “The challenges faced by the area of Hlabisa relate to virtually every aspect of the human development index and general societal needs and desires” (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16). The area has a very small town with few shops as well as some offices of the Departments and the hospital. The area has no well-established economic core, which hampers economic development within the municipal area as well as no formal and/or proclaimed town. “As a result, the area is unable to attract inward investments that could address economic development challenges” (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16). “There is a high

rate of unemployment, and the majority of families depend on social grants for their survival” (Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2015/16). The poverty levels, are combined with levels of deprivation are at very high levels. According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2015/16) there exist an extreme high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the municipal area. “The high mortality rate and burden of AIDS related illness caused by this has resulted in increased socio-economic hardships of families in the municipality, mostly due to a loss of income when economically active family members are unable to work or pass away” (Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2015/16).

### **3.7.5.2 Household Income**

According to the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2017/18- 2021/2022) approximately 26% percent of the households has no secured source of income, whilst 23% earns between R4 801 and R9 600 per annum, followed by 18 % earning between R9 601 and R19 200, then 12% earns less than R5 000 per annum. “Only 21% of the community earns more than R19 000 a year, which is less than R2 000 per month” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “The above indicates that only a few households rely on a source of income, as 79% of the community receives an income of less than approximately R1 500 per month” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). This shows that the majority of the population lives below poverty line and should be linked with Department of Social Development (Welfare) for assistance in terms of welfare grants.

### **3.7.5.3 Occupation**

Table 6 below indicates that the majority (1157) of people working in Hlabisa is technical staff, which refers to unskilled work. Only 432 people fall in the category of professionals, for example teachers, nurses, engineers, etc. (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022).

Table 7 Occupation in Hlabisa

DESCRIPTION	TOTAL NUMBERS
Senior Officials	245
Professionals	432
Tech/Assoc Prof	1157
Clerks	542
Service workers	893
Skilled agric work	678
Other	661
Elementary occupation	2021
Occupations NEC	1280
Plant Operators	838

Source: MDB, 2007

**Source:** Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022.

#### **3.7.5.4 Education**

The level of education for the community of Hlabisa is marginally low. “The majority (44%) of people has no schooling at all, 16% have attended school up to primary level, 12% have completed matriculation and only 3% have enrolled for post matric studies” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). Looking at the unemployment rate countrywide, it would be difficult for this community to compete for well-paid jobs, as they do not have basic education. “This is evidenced by the fact that more than half (65%) of the community has attended school up to primary level” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022).

#### **3.7.5.5 Access to basic services - the basic services entail the following:**

**3.7.5.5.1 Mode of Transport** - according to the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022 the majority (91%) of the population have no access to any mode of transport, they travel by foot. This is followed by 6%, who uses a vehicle as a passenger, and only 1% drives a car, and another 1% uses either a bicycle or motorcycle. This indicates that the community can be considered as generally poor, considering the number of people who owns either a car or bicycle or motorbike. This could also be attributed to sources of income, which are very low, as indicated earlier.

**3.7.5.5.2 Roads** - road infrastructure in Hlabisa is of paramount importance since the area does not have other modes of transport such as rail and freight. The quality of roads varies considerably reflecting the level importance attached to each road. “The road that goes through Hlabisa to Nongoma has been upgrading and tarred as part of the Renaissance Programme of the Department of Transport” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022).

**3.7.5.5.3 Sanitation** - according to the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022) the majority (47%) of people living in the Hlabisa area does not have any form of sanitation. This is followed by 23% who uses Pit latrines, without ventilation, then 14% has pit latrines with ventilation. This is also against regulations of Environmental Health and it could also lead to health hazards. This results particularly from households without proper sanitation, as mostly use the bush.

**3.7.5.5.4 Water** - access to water is one of the key challenges facing Hlabisa as the majority of people do not have water in accordance with the standards set by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. The nature of backlog includes the lack of extensive use of boreholes and natural sources of water. None of this is purified. Only 6037 households benefit from a regional water scheme. “Water for Hlabisa CBD, Hlabisa and Mpembeni Tribal Authority areas is pumped from Matshamnyama River and pumped through a rising main and is later gravitated by pressure pipes to consumers, however, this supply is not enough hence its subsidization through boreholes” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “Whereas areas of Mdletshe Tribal Authority obtain water from Hlwathi Dam whereby the water is pumped through to a rising main and other schemes utilized are Ncwabakazi, Matshamhlophe, Gabadela water schemes and Hluhluwe Dam” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “However all the above mentioned water sources are not able to supply all the communities as the district supplement by delivering water to some other communities” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality, IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). Water shortage in Hlabisa is a critical factor and requires a good management programme.

**3.7.5.5.5 Energy** - according to the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2017/18- 2021/2022) only 28% of the households in Hlabisa have access to electricity. “The

majority (72%) of the households still rely on other forms of energy such as candles, gas and paraffin for their needs” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). These are not sufficient as they are only limited to the provision of a small energy. “For lighting purposes, most households (68%) uses candles, followed by 28%, who uses electricity and 5% who uses other sources of energy such as gas, paraffin and solar” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). These provide only a limited light, which is not sufficient for a big room. “For cooking purposes, the majority (67%) of households use wood to make fire” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). This is time consuming, as they have to collect wood first from the nearby bush before making any fire. It could also be dangerous, especially if there are children in that household who could easily get burnt, as normally the fire is not covered. “This is followed by 14% who uses electricity, then 10% uses paraffin and 7% uses gas for cooking purposes” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022) and the other 3% either uses coal or animal dung. “Wood is also used by 71% of households for heating” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). The same fire that is used for cooking automatically makes the room warm. “Whilst 14% uses electricity, 8% uses paraffin, and 7 uses either gas, coal or other forms of energy for heating” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022).

### **3.8 Tourism Development in the area of Hlabisa**

Tourism offers specific potential for local entrepreneurs and businesses. However, the opportunities are not fully reached or exploited and need to be unlocked and appropriately focused on niche markets for the full benefit of local communities. Particular focus should be paid to local community based tourism ventures. The area is located adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park outlined in the background above which is one of the prime tourist attractions in KwaZulu-Natal. According to the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Report (2011) about 60% of the visitors to the game parks/reserves in the region are domestic and 40% are international. “Domestic visitors are mainly from KwaZulu-Natal and international visitors are mainly from Europe (Germany, the Netherlands and France), the UK and the USA” Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Report (2011). According to the Ezemvelo KZN

Wildlife Annual report (2016/17), the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park adjacent to the community of Hlabisa received 246 339 tourists in the 2015/16 financial year and 238 063 tourists in the 2017/18 financial year which was a decrease of 8.2% from the previous year. “The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park occupancy rate was 70.2% in the 2017/18 financial year” Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual report (2016/17). Hlabisa is also within easy reach of other attractions including the iSimangaliso Wetlands Park. Indigenous arts and craft made in Hlabisa are supplied to Ilala Weavers and other craft shops and museums throughout the country yet this is not formally organised into a business venture. The community of Hlabisa is very good in making craft work. The municipal area has a number of curio shops full of craft work such as wooden trays, wooden spoons, doormats etc. All that work is made locally by the members of the community. In all three Traditional Council’s areas the craft making is dominant. “The industrial activity of the Hlabisa area is predominantly the eco-tourism industry which includes a variety of tourism types, most of which are interrelated and are located in close proximity” (Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2015/16). The area is also rich in terms of natural and cultural assets which provide tourism opportunities as well as related commercial activities.

The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is managed by Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Wildlife. According to the Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2015/16) the reserve has a range of accommodation facilities such as the Hilltop and Mpila Resorts as well as Muntulu and Munyaweni lodges as outlined in the background above. In addition, a variety of accommodation options exist in close vicinity to the game reserve and these include:

- Hotels;
- Game Lodges;
- Guest Houses;
- Bed and Breakfast’s; and
- Self-catering accommodation.

According to the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2017/18- 2021/2022), Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife makes available funding from the community levy fund to local communities and has funded the following tourism projects in the area:



- Nselweni Community Lodge in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park for an amount of R 7000 000; and
- Umkhombe Tourism in the Mdletsheni Traditional Authority for an amount of R110 000.

According to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual Integrated Report (2013/2014) the long-awaited declaration of a new community game reserve situated on the northern boundary of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park near the town of Hlabisa has happened. The report further states that this was a 14 year-long ecotourism and biodiversity dream for Nkosi Daniel Hlabisa of the Mpembeni Traditional Authority which has been realised, following his original apportionment of this land for conservation purposes back in 2000. “As Nkosi for the Mpembeni Traditional Authority, he along with Durban developer and joint owner Henry Frencken, has signed a 99-year lease with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual Integrated Report 2013/2014). “This ensures that 450ha of their land is not only declared a game reserve but in the process will fuse with KZN’s premier game reserve, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. It is anticipated that a further 350ha section of community land to the south of this reserve will join the Empembeni Game Reserve once it is up and running” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual Integrated Report 2013/2014). “Nkosi Hlabisa has secured the necessary loan through the National Empowerment Fund to construct a four star, 3 800 sq m tourism lodge, including villas as well as providing a conference room, pool and spa, external dining boma and covered parking” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual Integrated Report 2013/2014). According to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual Integrated Report (2013/2014), additionally, there are plans to erect a 980 sq m sophisticated tented camp as well. “Only once the construction has been completed the boundary fence with Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park will be removed. In the meantime, the fences demarcating the Empembeni game reserve have already been erected” (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual Integrated Report 2013/2014).



Figure 16 Map illustrating the Mpembeni Community Conservancy Nature Reserve

Source: Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Annual Integrated Report 2013/2014.

### 3.9 Agriculture in the area of Hlabisa

According to the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2017/18- 2021/2022) agriculture has been deemed as a potential sector, however, to this end it is still at subsistence level in Hlabisa. As a sector, opportunities for sustainable small-scale farming have to be unlocked. “Hlabisa has a moderate to high potential crop production potential, particularly in the north-east part of the area” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “Slope is the most limiting factor in many places. Despite the potential for agriculture in certain areas, many arable lands are left idling. In fact, the dominant form of agriculture is subsistence. Commercial agriculture is poorly developed” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2017/18- 2021/2022)).

### **3.10 Commerce in the area of Hlabisa**

According to the Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2017/18- 2021/2022), a number of small local convenient shopping facilities are spread unevenly throughout the area. “A relatively higher concentration of regional facilities is found in Hlabisa, was identified in the previous IDP as a primary node” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP (2017/18- 2021/2022)). “The municipality has initiated a processes towards the upgrade of infrastructure and formalisation of the town” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). This will create an environment conducive for further investment in the area. It must be acknowledged that a more rigorous approach to identifying and responding to business needs are required. “To this end the absence of organized business structure within Hlabisa makes it impossible to fully comprehend the needs of the business sector” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). “Currently, most people travel to Mtubatuba for their groceries and other needs” (Big 5 Hlabisa Local Municipality IDP 2017/18- 2021/2022). Therefore, the municipality has a responsibility to form effective partnership with business people and facilitate the establishment of platform infrastructure conducive for business to develop and prosper.

### **3.11 Data Collection Instrument(s) / Data Generation Tools**

According to Kruger and Welman (2001) data collection is the process of gathering data and encompasses such concepts as: the type(s) of interview used for data collection (e.g. personal or telephonic; paper and pencil; facsimile, computer-aided personal or telephonic interview, or mailed questionnaires). According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) data collection provides detailed information on how data are to be collected, specify population and sample size when using a survey strategy and clarify how the survey instrument such as a questionnaire will be distributed and how the data will be analysed. “Where the researcher is using interviews, the research should explain how many interviews will be conducted, their intended duration, whether they will be audio-recorded, and how they will be analysed” Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009). The study used questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions and focus groups to collect data from the respondents.

According to O’Leary (2004) in order to be able to collect data, the researcher should be able to access the data to be collected for the study. According to Churchill and Lacobucci (2004: 167) data collection is an important part of a problem-solving process. The study is descriptive in nature, and focuses on the population from which the sample has been drawn. The interviews involved local Traditional Authorities (Administrators), municipality (managers), the Hlulhluwe-iMfolozi Park (management and staff), local, provincial and national tourism authorities, tourism establishments in the area and local communities. According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2007) an interview involves direct personal contact with the participant who is asked questions relating to the research problem. The interview questions were informed by the extent of the research problem, the demands of the research questions and the scope of the research objectives.

### **3.12 Questionnaires**

The data collection method used in this study was survey questionnaires. Kruger and Welman (2001) define a questionnaire as a formulated set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually to rather closely defined alternatives. There were three sets of questionnaires in the study. One was for the community members (Annexure 2), economic development managers (Annexure 3) and tourism establishments (Annexure 4). The questionnaires were used to collect data on the socio-economic conditions, tourism activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The community questionnaire focused Community participation in tourism in the area. This section of the questionnaire considered the participation of community in tourism in terms of the nature and level of participation, types of jobs that they get within the tourism sector in the area, the level of tourism development that has taken place in the area. The community questionnaire further focused on community demographics, which addressed the gender, age, and level of education of the respondents. The questionnaire further looked at community occupation. The main focus in this part of questionnaire was to find out whether participants are employed; the sector within which they are employed and the income earned. The tourism establishment questionnaire focused on the role played by these establishments in the employment

of local communities. The questionnaire identified the type of employer e.g. hotels/resorts, bed and breakfasts, arts and crafts and skills development initiatives for the development of employees. Other aspects of the questionnaire included average wages paid to employees, the number of part-time and permanent employees and challenges they face as small tourism businesses in the area. The economic development managers focused on the current and planned socio-economic empowerment programmes implemented to support the local community in Hlabisa and their impact thereof. The last part of the questionnaire focused on the direct contribution made by tourism into the GDP of Hlabisa. According to Mathers, Fox and Hunn (2009) questionnaires are a very convenient way of collecting useful comparable data from a large number of individuals. However, Lubbe (2004) argues that the questions in questionnaires can be either open or close-ended. Close-ended questions are restrictive and open-ended questions are unrestrictive. Surveys questionnaires were identified by the researcher as suitable methods of collecting data in this study as they allow respondents to express their views based on their experiences and understanding with regard to the subject under study. Questionnaires provided factual information of the respondents such as the traditional council where the respondents live, their gender, educational level, age group, income and their occupation.

### **3.13 Administration of questionnaires / Structure of interviews**

Questionnaires for tourism establishments and economic development managers were self-administered through emails as they were filled in by the respondent on their own. Focus group-administered questionnaire, here, respondents (community) were gathered into a group and handed the instrument which they filled in. This allowed for collection and administration at one point in time, but it needed to be set up. However, where community members were illiterate, questionnaires for those members were administered by the researcher in the form of an interview. The questions were open-ended and required more than a yes/no answer, neutral, sensitive and understandable. The interviews started with questions that participants could answer easily and then proceed to more difficult or sensitive topics. This helped put respondents at ease, built up confidence and rapport and generate rich data that

subsequently developed the interview further. The average length of interviews lasted between 20-60 minutes. Before an interview took place, respondents were informed about the study details and given assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality. This gave respondents some idea of what to expect from the interview, increased the likelihood of honesty and was also a fundamental aspect of the informed consent process. The interviews were conducted in areas free from distractions and at times and locations that were most suitable for participants. When conducting the actual interview, it was prudent for the interviewer to familiarise himself with the interview schedule, so that the process appears more natural and less rehearsed. At the end of the interview it was important to thank participants for their time and asked them if there was anything they would like to add. This gave respondents an opportunity to deal with issues that they have thought about, or thought was important but have not been dealt with by the interviewer. This often led to the discovery of new, unanticipated information.

### **3.14 Unstructured Interviews with open ended questions**

According to Struwig and Stead (2004) an unstructured interview is an interview that does not have structured and predetermined questions. The researcher used unstructured interviews to achieve an understanding of the community's views on community participation and rural tourism development, tourism activities and decision-making processes in the area and in the nearby Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. According to Gray (2004), this type of interview is a non-directed and flexible method. Whereas Cloke, Crang, Goodwin, Painter, and Philo, (2004: 18) argue that the format also allows for a flexible, interactive process where both interviewer and interviewee are able to take an active role in communicating, answering, listening and conversing. The group for unstructured interviews included managers of tourism establishments and local economic development managers. The interviews were face to face and conducted on a one-to-one basis between the researcher and a single participant. There were cases where the researcher conducted interviews by telephone or electronically via emails due to potential respondents not having time to meet with the researcher. The community respondents formed part of focus groups. According to Patton (2002) unstructured interviews are natural extension of participant

observation, because they so often occur as part of ongoing participant observation fieldwork and further argued that they rely entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction. According to Schmidt and Hollensen (2006:151) the open ended questions allow the respondent to give his/her own answer in his/her own way. Whereas Webb (2002:99) points out that this type of question forces the respondent to think, which is ideal in situations where all possible answers to a given question are not known. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) unstructured interviews are informal and the researcher would use these to explore in depth a general area in which they are interested. According to Easterby Smith et al. 2008; Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005; Robson 2002 the interviewee is given the opportunity to talk freely about events, behaviour and beliefs in relation to the topic area, so that this type of interaction is sometimes called 'non-directive'. "It has been labelled as an informant interview since it is the interviewee's perceptions that guide the conduct of the interview" (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009). "In comparison, a participant (or respondent) interview is one where the interviewer directs the interview and the interviewee responds to the questions of the researcher" (Easterby Smith et al. 2008; Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005; Robson 2002).

### **3.15 Focus Groups**

This research study utilised focus groups as a data collection method. According to Carson et al. (2001) the term focus group is used to refer to those group interviews where the topic is defined clearly and precisely and there is a focus on enabling and recording interactive discussion between participants. Krueger and Casey (2000:25) refer to such participants as being 'information rich'. Whereas Eliot and Associates (2005) state that a focus group is a small group of six to ten people led through an open discussion by a skilled moderator. "The group needs to be large enough to generate rich discussion but not so large that some participants are left out. Focus groups can reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight" (Eliot and Associates 2005). According to Carson et al. (2001) a focus group, sometimes called a 'focus group interview', is a group interview that focuses clearly upon a particular issue, product, service or topic and encompasses the need for interactive discussion amongst participants. The researcher organised and hosted a total of three focus

groups in the area, with one focus group held per traditional authority, namely AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority, Mpembeni Traditional Authority and Mdletsheni Traditional Authority. “Participants were selected because they had certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic being discussed and they were encouraged to discuss and share their points of view without any pressure to reach a consensus” (Krueger and Casey 2000). The first focus group had a total of 11 people, whilst second and third focus groups had 9 and 10 people respectively. The focus group discussions were guided, monitored and recorded by the researcher whom also played the role of the moderator / facilitator. The themes for the focus groups included the following areas in relation to the research topic:

- Socio-economic well-being
- Rural tourism models (strategies)
- Tourism activities
- Community participation and representation
- Challenges / obstructions

According to Onwuegbuzie et al. (2009: 73) the focus group approach has a wide range of advantages including; they are useful to obtain detailed information about personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions, they save time and money compared to individual interviews and they provide a broader range of information. According to Boddy (2005) there are a variety of terms that are used interchangeably to describe group interviews and which are often assumed to have equivalent meanings. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) focus groups are well known because of the way they have been used by political parties to test voter reactions to particular policies and election strategies, and through their use in market research to test reactions to products.

### **3.16 Recruitment process**

Before an interview took place, respondents were informed about the study details and given assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality. This gave respondents some idea of what to expect from the interview, increased the



likelihood of honesty and was also a fundamental aspect of the informed consent process. In expediting the enrolment process, the researcher telephonically contacted the three traditional authorities (AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority, Mpembeni Traditional Authority and Mdletsheni Traditional Authority and Hlabisa Local municipality to set up appointments. Over the telephone, the research briefly explained the purpose of his visit. Thereafter travelled to Hlabisa and met with Administrators of the Traditional Authorities and the Local Economic Development official as follows:

- Hlabisa Local Municipality: 29 October 2018 at 08:30;
- Mdletsheni Traditional Authority: 29 October 2018 at 10:00;
- Mpembeni Traditional Authority: 29 October 2018 at 11:30; and
- AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority: 29 October 2018 at 13:30.

The purpose of the appointments was for the researcher to:

- Introduce himself to the local authorities;
- Explain to the local authorities about the study and its main objectives;
- Seek permission to conduct the study in their area; and
- Interview the local authorities and local community.

The researcher provided to the local and traditional authorities the letter from Durban University of Technology, research proposal and identification document to positively identify himself. All the above-mentioned local authorities granted permission for the researcher. The researcher further telephonically contacted the local tourism businesses including Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, Umhlosinga Development Agency (UMDA), Tourism KwaZulu-Natal and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs. The researcher introduced himself and stated that he was conducting a study in the Hlabisa area and needed managers of tourism businesses and economic development to assist with the completion of the questionnaire and asked for their email addresses. All participants agreed and the researcher emailed the questionnaire to some tourism businesses and tourism economic development institutions including the National Department of Tourism. In addition, the researcher further arranged an interview with the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park Manager. In addition, 09 park officials were interviewed. After permission was granted,

the researcher conducted the study using questionnaires, unstructured interviews with open ended questions, focus groups to collect data from the respondents.

### **3.17 Focus groups recruitment process**

The respondents (community) were gathered into a group and handed the instrument which they filled in. This allowed for collection and administration at one point in time, but it needed to be set up. However, where community members were illiterate, questionnaires for those members were administered by the researcher in the form of an interview.

The researcher held three focus groups as follows:

#### **3.17.1 *Focus group one interview***

The first focus group interview was held on 29 October 2018 at 10:30 -11:00 with 11 community members from Inhlwathi under the Mdletsheni Traditional Authority outside the traditional court of Mdletsheni Traditional Authority. Consent letters were issued to the participants requesting permission to conduct the study and to participate in the study. The letters that were handed to respondents explained the nature of the study and outlined the purpose to generate the validity of the research study. After permission was granted the researcher began the process of collecting information using unstructured interviews and focus groups.

#### **3.17.2 *Focus group two interview***

The second focus group interview took place at the AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Court on 29 October 2018 from 14:00 – 14:30 with 9 community members. Consent letters were issued to the participants requesting permission to conduct the study and to participate in the study. The letters that were handed to respondents explained the nature of the study and outlined the purpose to generate the validity of the research study. After permission was granted the researcher began the process of collecting information using unstructured interviews and focus groups.

### **3.17.3 Focus group three interview**

The third focus group interview was supposed to take place at the Mpembeni Traditional Court on 29 October 2018 at 12:00 – 12:30 but it could not take place due to the unavailability of community members. Only the Administrator was interviewed and the focus group interview was postponed to 21 November 2018. On 21 November 2018 at 10:30 the researcher held a focus group interview with 10 community members from Mpembeni village occupying a taxi / van at the Hlabisa taxi rank. Consent letters were issued to the participants requesting permission to conduct the study and to participate in the study. The letters that were handed to respondents explained the nature of the study and outlined the purpose to generate the validity of the research study. After permission was granted the researcher began the process of collecting information using unstructured interviews and focus groups.

### **3.18 Ethical Considerations**

Prior to undertaking the study, the researcher went through the Durban University of Technology's institutions Research Ethics Policy which encourages a high quality research and enterprise culture, with the highest possible standards of integrity and practice. The policy applies to all academic, contract research and administrative staff, all postgraduate research students, as well as undergraduate students who are undertaking research (Durban University of Technology Research Ethics Policy 2013). The moral qualities of this study were applied throughout confidentiality and the participants' rights to voluntary participation, participants' consent, confidentiality and anonymity.

### **3.19 Voluntary participation**

Participation in the research study was voluntary. According to Trochim (2006) the principle of voluntary participation requires that people not be coerced into participating in research. Moreover, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 522) state that there are three important considerations in as far as ethics are concerned in social research which are voluntary participation, informed consent and no harm or non-violation of human rights of participants. Therefore, voluntary participation in the research under

review was conducted through a consultative process with research participants. In terms of informed consent, the purpose and procedures of the research were explained to the research participants. In terms of non-violation of human rights or no harm to participate, the researcher explained to the participants that they are free to withdraw from the research should they feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, conflicted, or when their friendships, job or livelihood were at risk. According to Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2007; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003 participants have a right to decline participating in the study without justification.

### **3.20 Participants' Consent**

Participation in the study was with the consent of each participant. Prior to distributing questionnaires and conducting interviews, participants were notified of their consent and their rights, the research objectives, the risks and benefits of participating and the fact that they have the right to withdraw from participating should they feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, conflicted, or when their friendships, job or livelihood were at risk (Neuman, 2006; Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2007).

### **3.21 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

Confidentiality is important because it assures research participants that what has been discussed will not be repeated, or at least, not without their permission Wiles (2006). Confidentiality was ensured by not disclosing identifiable information about participants in the study to try and protect the identity of research participants through various processes designed to anonymise them Wiles (2006). According to Wiles at al. (2006) anonymity is important because it seeks to protect the identity and personal details of research participants in the study under review to third parties. The researcher ensured anonymity by not exposing participant's identities and personal details through the use of pseudonyms (stage name) Wiles at al. (2006). Participants were notified that they have a right to remain anonymous and the information they provided would be treated with confidentiality. The questionnaire ensured that there was no information needed on personal identity of the research participants. Confidentiality and anonymity was explained by means of a consent letter prior to

conducting interviews and participants had the right to participate or decline from the study.

### **3.22 Data Analysis Techniques**

According to Cooper and Schindler (2008:93) data analysis is a process where collected data is reduced to a more controllable and convenient size, and where the researcher can start to identify trends or patterns, apply statistical techniques and summarise the data. Neuman, 2006: 82 states that qualitative data analysis involves the organisation of data into categories on the basis of themes, concepts or similar features. The qualitative researcher develops new concepts, formulates conceptual definitions and examines the relationships among concepts (Neuman, 2006: 82). Whereas Malhotra and Birks (2006:10), describe data analysis as the editing, coding, transcription and verification of data. According to Creswell (2009: 184) data analysis follows several steps which include: a) organizing and preparing data for analysis; b) obtaining a general sense of information; c) coding and identifying the main themes; d) representing the main themes in a qualitative narrative; and e) interpreting data in relation to the literature or theories. To collect the data, the researchers used a combination of individual and focus group interviews. A series of interviews provided the researcher an opportunity to construct complete profiles for each interviewee, given that in group interviews, multiple views and opinions can gravitate to a group view as a result of social influences. All interviews were unstructured with open ended questions, allowing new issues to emerge for exploration. The data were analysed by qualitative content analysis where coded categories discovered in the interview transcripts were developed drawing on the theoretical concepts and themes wherever they appeared in the data. The categories evolved to conclusive circumstances over iterative readings and were grouped into themes at the end of analysis. Based on the theory and literature presented in Chapter 2, the themes were then reviewed and key findings developed including a theoretical framework conceptualising key factors in the socio-economic effects of tourism development on rural communities. The data collected was arranged, sorted and summarised in terms of percentages and displayed in tables, graphs and charts. According to Zikmund and D'Amico (2001:142) the data needs to be analysed to extract the needed information to solve the research

problem. The questionnaires were analysed using the Atlas.ti 8 Data Analysis Software. According to Roberts and Woods (2000) using computerised data analysis packages, can enhance reliability by applying the rules built into the programme. Qualitative Data Analysis Software provided the researcher with tools such as transcription analysis, coding and text interpretation, recursive abstraction, content analysis and discourse analysis. Qualitative Data Analysis Software helped the researcher to save time, manage huge amounts of qualitative data, increased flexibility and improved validity and auditability of qualitative research, away from manual and clerical tasks.

### **3.23 Pilot Testing**

According to Voicu (2008) in order for a questionnaire to be effective, it is necessary to pretest it before actually using it to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the survey questionnaire. "Questionnaire pretesting enables researchers to identify inappropriate terms in question wording, an inappropriate order, errors in questionnaires related to their layout and instructions, as well as problems caused by the respondents' inability or refusal to answer certain questions" (Voicu 2008).

A pilot testing of this study was conducted with a sample of eight respondents from the community of Bhanga Nek in Manguzi, Northern KwaZulu-Natal on 12 August 2018. This site was considered for pretesting due to the fact that Bhanga Nek community camps are owned and operated by the community. The researcher intended to test the questionnaire to ascertain whether it was asking the right questions to extract the needed information to solve the research problem in line with socio-economic effects of tourism development on rural communities. The Bhanga Nek community camps are located inside the iSimangaliso Wetland Park which is a World Heritage Site. In addition, interviews were pilot-tested with six tourism managers from the national, provincial tourism departments, tourism authorities and local government. This process assisted in the identification of errors or ambiguity in questions in order to uphold accurateness, before the data collection process commenced.

### **3.24 Delimitations**

This research study was restricted to three villages in Hlabisa, namely; AbakwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni (Inhlwathi) communities and one game park in the area, namely; Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The study addresses challenges faced by a number of rural communities situated adjacent to game parks around the country, however, it specifically intended to address the subject of tourism development and community participation at Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. Thus, this research was restricted both in terms of the variables and the study area.

### **3.25 Limitations**

The major limitation in this research study was experienced during data collection phase. The study was limited to the socio-economic (employment, income, education, quality of life), effects of tourism development in Hlabisa including tourism activities, community participation, challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area and contribution of rural tourism into the local economy of Hlabisa. The second challenge was the distances between the three traditional authorities were far apart from each other with gravel road covering long distances to be travelled. These circumstances affected estimated travel time and interview appointments, thus appointments ran behind schedule. The third limitation, most of the participants whom had agreed to respond and complete the questionnaires during the first visit to the area, when the researcher returned to collect the questionnaires, the questionnaires were not completed. The fourth limiting factor was the fact that some community members were not literate which made it difficult for them to respond to questions. In addition, majority of the respondents were only able to speak and write isiZulu not English. The fourth limitation of this research study was that a number of respondents, both community members and government officials displayed reluctance to participate in the study whilst others showed enthusiasm. Other government officials were forever not available to assist with the research study. The fifth limitation, was not having sufficient budget in advance to stay longer in the research area as a result the researcher conducted research over a period of two days, namely; 29 October 2018 and 21 November 2018 respectively.

### **3.25 Validity**

According to Gliner and Morgan (2000) validity understood within the context of judging the quality or merit of a study is often referred to as *research validity*. “As a measure of a research instrument or tool, validity is the degree to which it actually measures what it is supposed to measure” (Wan 2002). According to Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger (2005) validity is further identified as either internal or external. Internal validity of the research design is important due to the fact that it has the ability to rule out alternative explanations of the results. High degrees of internal validity are associated with experimental design, where the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable is studied under strictly controlled conditions. According to Roberts P et al. (2006) external validity addresses the ability to apply with confidence the findings of the study to other people and other situations, and ensures that the conditions under which the study is carried out are representative of the situations and time to which the results are to apply. Moreover, the sample of participants drawn from the population of interest must be representative of that population at the time of the study. The internal validity was achieved through conducting a pilot study with a sample of eight respondents from the community of Bhanga Nek in Manguzi, Northern KwaZulu-Natal prior to conducting the main study with people who were similar to the intended study participants. Moreover, the tool such as a questionnaire were compared to other similar validated measures of the same concept or phenomenon. For the external validity the researcher ensured that the sample of participants drawn from the population of interest were representative of that population at the time of the study. The representative samples were drawn with reference to relevant variables in the study, such as income and poverty. The questionnaires were seeking information such as employment, income, education levels from respondents.

### **3.26 Reliability**

In qualitative research, reliability can be thought of as the trustworthiness of the procedures and data generated (Roberts P et al 2006). According to (Bryman 2001) reliability is concerned with the extent to which the results of a study or a measure are



repeatable in different circumstances. According to Loyal (2016) reliability addresses the overall consistency of a research study's measure. "If a research instrument, for example a survey or questionnaire, produces similar results under consistently applied conditions, it lessens the chance that the obtained scores are due to randomly occurring factors, like seasonality or current events, and measurement error" (Marczyk et al. 2005). The researcher addressed reliability by ensuring that the measurement error was reduced by standardising the administration of the study, i.e. ensuring that all measurements were taken in the same manner among all the study participants, making certain the participants understand the purpose of the study and the instructions.

According to Roberts and Woods (2000) using computerised data analysis packages can enhance reliability by applying the rules built into the programme. Other methods for increasing reliability include ensuring technical accuracy in recording and transcribing. The researcher ensured reliability by using the Atlas.ti 8 Data Analysis Software which provided the researcher with tools such as transcription analysis, coding and text interpretation, recursive abstraction, content analysis and discourse analysis. Qualitative Data Analysis Software helped the researcher to save time, manage huge amounts of qualitative data, increased flexibility and improved validity and auditability of qualitative research, away from manual and clerical tasks.

### **3.27 Summary of this Chapter**

This chapter described the details of the research design, methodology, the target population, sampling techniques employed and instruments used to gather and analyse data for this study. This chapter further explained how the study was conducted and the methods of investigation undertaken by the researcher as well as the geo-spatial setting / geographic area of Hlabisa in terms of it's the physical location, history and profile. It was important for the researcher to include the spatial elements of the study area to acquaint readers with spatial features and services offered by the study area. Due to insufficient scholarly research on the background of the area, the researcher relied heavily on information solicited during the interviews and internet sources.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented the data collected from the respondents in the Hlabisa area and the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to make meaning of conceptualization presented in Chapter two. This chapter further reports on the results of the research that was conducted to investigate the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The concept and literature discussed in chapter two were matched or tested in this chapter in line with the identified themes which were as follows:

- Socio-economic conditions;
- Rural tourism models (strategies) including the IRT framework;
- Community participation and representation in tourism;
- Tourism activities; and
- Challenges / obstructions faced by the local community and businesses in the area.

The aim of this analysis was to arrive at a conclusion which proves whether the study has achieved its research objectives or not. The data that was collected included the factual information of the respondents in terms of socio-economic conditions including employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. The data collected was arranged, sorted and summarised in terms of percentages and displayed in tables, graphs and charts.

In this chapter results for the community, managers of tourism establishments and economic development managers are presented with its interpretations. This section presents the responses from the interviews conducted from the focus groups and unstructured interviews. The data is presented in numbers and percentages, the results discussed and the data presented in this chapter are clearly from the respondents. The themes that were identified for the purpose of data analysis are;

socio-economic conditions, rural tourism models (strategies) / empowerment programmes, community participation and representation in tourism, tourism activities, challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area.

## 4.2 Biographical information

The research sample comprised of 60 respondents. There were 30 community members who formed part of the three focus groups, 3 Administrators from the three Traditional Authorities and a total of 10 staff members from the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. This means a total of 43 community members from the three Traditional Authorities, namely; AbakwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni participated in the study.

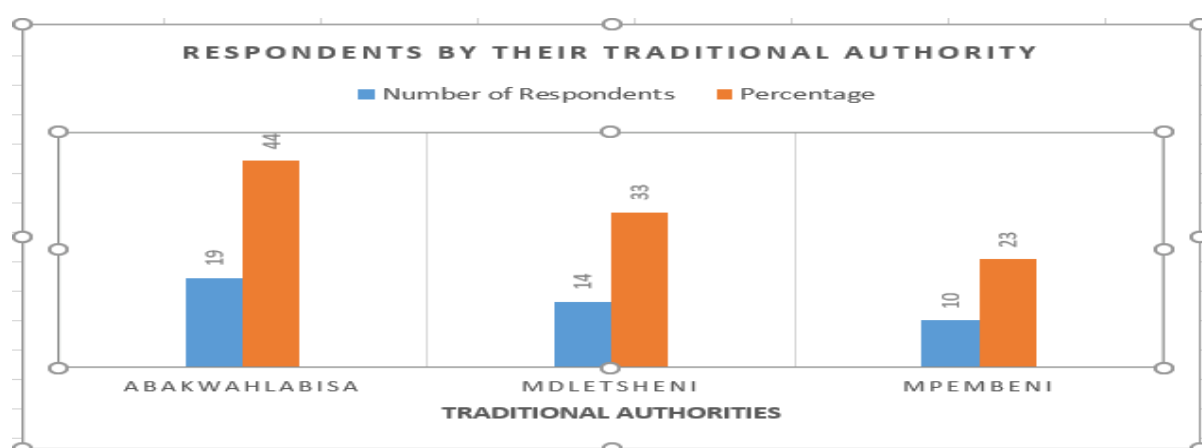
## 4.3 Tourism in Hlabisa - Community Perspective: The Hlabisa Community Demographics

Below are the Hlabisa community demographics for the study:

### 4.3.1 Theme One: *Community socio economic conditions (Community demographics)*

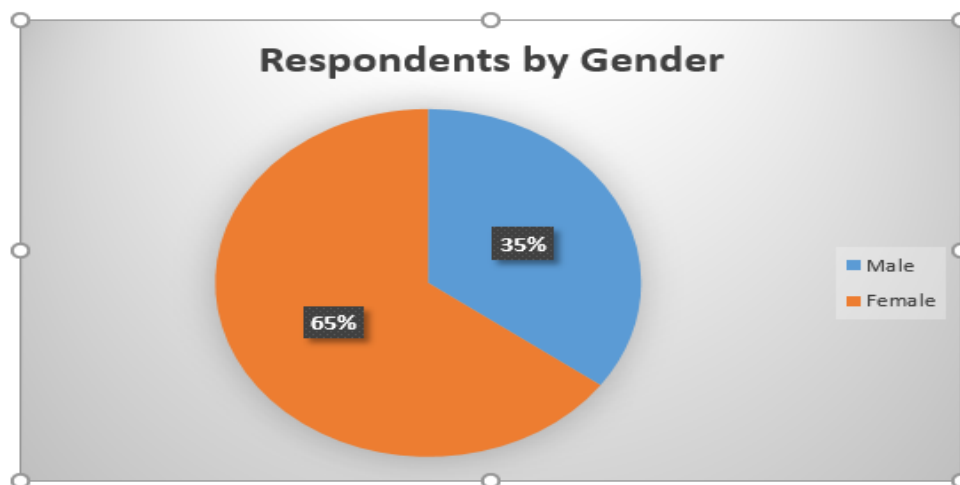
Figure 1. below describe the respondent's villages (traditional authorities), age, gender, level of education, salary and occupation of the sample for the community of Hlabisa.

Figure 17 Community Respondents by their Traditional Authority



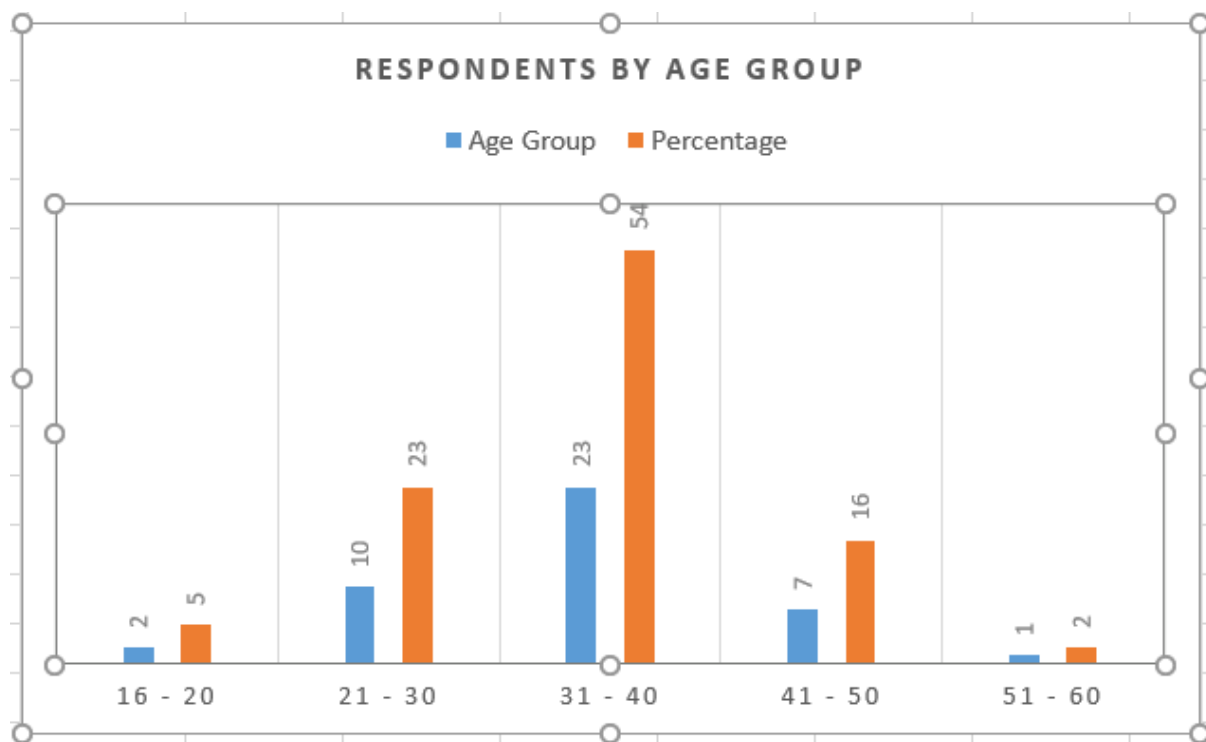
According to the results most of the respondents were from AbakwaHlabisa Traditional Authority, constituting 44% of respondent rates followed by Mdletsheni with 33% and Mpembeni with the lowest response rate of 23%. The reason for AbakwaHlabisa and Mdletsheni to have a high number of good response rate is because the location of the AbakwaHlabisa is near the town centre of Hlabisa whilst the Mdletsheni is near the town centre of Hluhluwe which are better developed than where Mpembeni is located. However, it must be noted that whilst the villages of AbakwaHlabisa and Mdletsheni are located closer to the two towns but are still very rural.

Figure 18 Community Respondents by Gender



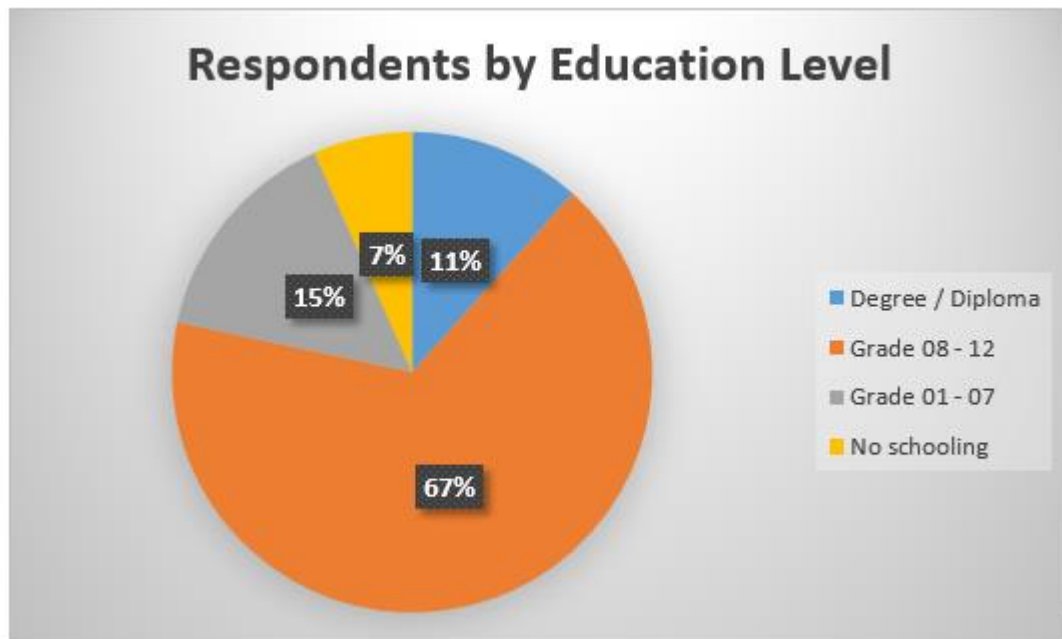
Of the 43 respondents, 35 % were males and 65 % were females in the three Traditional Authorities of the Hlabisa area. The results show that females were over represented. This difference is mainly because of the consequences of migrant labour, where most men migrate to work in urban areas, commercial farms and game lodges and women are left behind taking care of the families. This phenomenon where there are more females participating in the study is supported by the Hlabisa Big 5 municipal IDP which states that the numbers of female headed households in the area were 1798 in 1996, 3077 in 2001 and further increased to 4149 in 2011. In 2016 increase to 5600. The increase can be attributed to a number of factors ranging from HIV/AIDS epidemic to rural urban, migration, limited employment opportunities, better access to basic services in major urban centres and general decline in quality of life in the area.

Figure 19 Community Respondents by Age Group



The results indicate that the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 31- 40 which constitute 54%. This group of respondents was a combination of youth and adults who were either working in the tourism sector or managing their own tourism businesses in the area. Age group 21-30 constitute 23%, which is another large portion of youth respondents. Age group 41-50 constitute 16% which was a fair representation of adults actively involved in tourism. Age group 16-20 constitute 5%, this group of respondents were made up of youth who were either still at school / tertiary institution and those who were either employed or unemployed and age group 51-60 constitute 2%. The youth and mid age adults seem to understand tourism issues much better than the other groups and therefore, it may be concluded that the findings in this research are valid and reliable.

Figure 20 Community Respondents by Level of Education



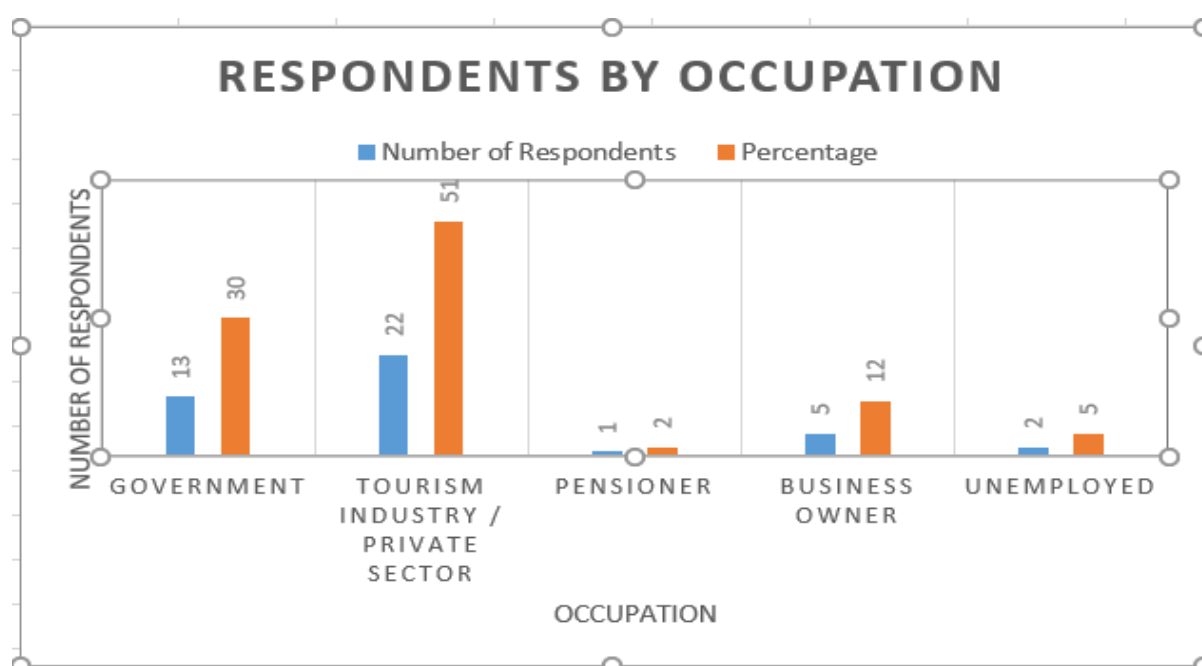
According to Cole (2006) in developing countries most local people in the tourism sector are unskilled, hence the skilled jobs are occupied by people from other parts of the country or from outside it. "Low status jobs associated with low wages have limited local people in participating in rural tourism development as they may have limited dignity, no confidence and little power to participate" (Tosun 2000). The respondents were expected to have knowledge and understanding of tourism activities taking place in the area. The findings indicated that those with degrees and diplomas constitute (11%). It was surprising to find that this group occupied junior positions as will be illustrated in next graph, figure 5 below. The respondents with grade (8-12) constitute (67%). It is notable that those with high school education are a majority because they are youth with Grade 12 and some having dropped out between Grade 08 and 12 but working in the tourism industry. The respondents with Grade 1-7 constitute 15%. These respondents are a combination of adults who are above the age of 35 to 49. The respondents with no schooling constitute 7%. These were older people with their ages ranging from 50-60 employed in the tourism industry in the area. It can be concluded that based on this level of educational qualifications, the information obtained in this regard can claim reliability.

Table 8 Tourism qualification

Tourism Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Yes	2	5%
No	38	89%
Other	3	6%
Total	43	100.0

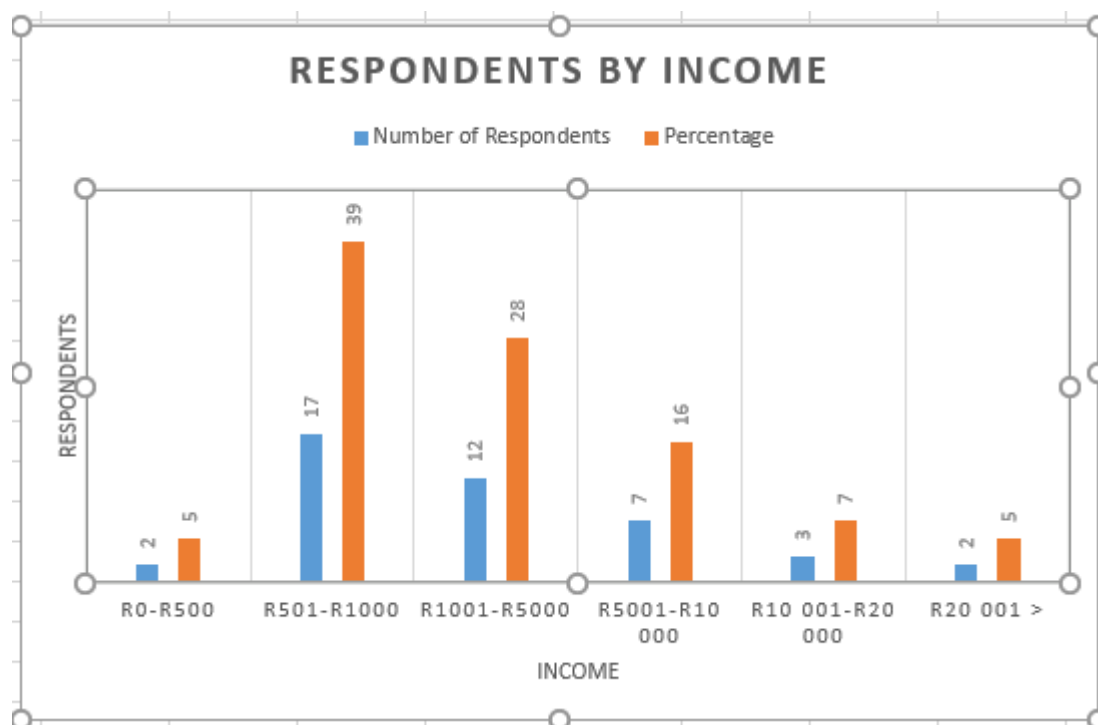
Out of 43 research participants, approximately 5% of the respondents have a tourism qualification and this 5% is at Senior Management level and are from outside the Hlabisa area. These findings suggest that people from the local community of Hlabisa do not have the necessary qualifications and skills to qualify to be employed in Senior Management positions in the tourism establishments in the area. Figure 4 above shows that 67% of the research participants have grade 08-12 as their highest level of education. This suggests that it will be difficult for people from the local community of Hlabisa progress up the ranks to become managers who earn higher salaries and be in a position to make key decisions about tourism in the area.

Figure 21 Community Respondents by occupation



The aim was to establish the occupation of the respondents with the sole purpose of understating their involvement in tourism activities. The results indicated that government employees constitute 30%, they work for the municipality and other government agencies, tourism industry employees constitute 51%, they work in tourism establishments, pensioners constitute 2%, business owners constitute 12%, they own tour operator, guiding services, and accommodation businesses and those unemployed constitute 5%. These results support the fact that the majority of respondents are involved in tourism.

Figure 22 Community Respondents by income



The results indicated that respondents earning between R0-R500 constitute 5%. These respondents constitute those who are not employed and those who are employed on a part time basis. The respondents earning between R501-R1000 constitute 39%, these respondents are mainly employed as cleaners and maintenance in the tourism industry or support industry i.e. plumbers. The respondents earning between R1001-R5000 constitute 28% and these include frontline employees. The respondents earning between R5001-R10 000 constitute 16%, and these respondents are those employed as game rangers. The respondents earning between R10 001-R20 000 constitute 7% and respondents earning between R20 000 and above



constitute 5% and these are both respondents employed in government and those who own tourism businesses.

#### **4.3.1.1 Type of employment in tourism**

In the previous section, the findings showed that almost 53% of the employed respondents reported being employed in the tourism sector. The table below provides information on the main type of positions held e.g. management level, administration, etc.

Table 9 Nature of employment in tourism

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Senior Management	2	5%
Middle Management	3	7%
Junior Management	5	12%
Frontline / Administration	14	32%
Maintenance	10	23%
Gardner	6	14%
Other types	3	7%
Total	43	100%

The findings show that approximately 32% of respondents working in tourism are employed as administrative / frontline positions. The study revealed that most of these respondents have grade 08-12 education. The respondents working in tourism as maintenance staff constitute 23%, respondents working as gardeners constitute 14%. The study revealed that the majority of both these respondents either have no schooling or grade 01-07 education level. The respondents working in tourism employed as junior management and those categorised as “other types” constitute 97% each. The category called other types entail respondents employed as waitresses, chefs, drivers, tour guides etc. Senior Managers constitute only 5%, and middle management constitute 7% and junior management constitute 12%. The study

revealed that the majority of both these respondents have grade 12 and tertiary education, namely; National Certificate, Diploma or Degree.

Table 10 Analysis of each question per objective, categorized and presented according to theme groups

	Category A Community members	Category B Traditional Authorities	Category C Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park
<b>Objective 1</b>	<p><b>Socio economic well-being (Theme one)</b></p> <p>One community member stated that “We are happy with the economic opportunities presented to us by tourism and tourism businesses in the area. They are really improving our lives. I work at the B&amp;B in the area and I am grateful for my job because I am able to support my family”.</p> <p>“Tourism is a key area that improves our lives here in the rural areas. We have a craft shops where we display our artefacts and tourists come to buy. Before I came to work here in the craft shop I was unemployed but the craft shop has really improved my life, even though the money is not lot but its good enough for me to feed my family”.</p> <p>One member of the community employed in the Alien Plant Programme by the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park in the Mdletsheni area stated that “Sir please explain what is Tourism as I do not have an understanding. I always see a lot of tourists in the area. I have no clue how they benefit me or what I should do when I see them. I earn my money by eradicating weed on the plants.”</p> <p>The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is located on our land as the people Hlabisa. It's important that whatever benefits accrue from the park come to us the local people. At this stage I don't see that happening except for the fact that I am employed in</p>	<p><b>Socio economic well-being (Theme one)</b></p> <p>According to the Administrator of AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority. The area of Hlabisa and the Hluhluwe offers a number of tourism opportunities for the local community; ranging from employment and owning a tourism business. The local communities are employed in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park in various position. In addition, there are small tourism business such as B&amp;Bs and lodges in the area that employ local people. As a result, their livelihoods have been improved through these opportunities”.</p> <p>The Administrator from Mpembeni Traditional Authority stated that newly developed Lodge called Rhino Ridge near the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has resulted in a number of employment opportunities for the local people especially the youth. This lodge is playing a major role in improving the livelihoods of the local people of Hlabisa. It also brings a sense of pride and belonging. By developing more tourism businesses in the area, more people get employed not only by the park but by other small businesses.</p> <p>The Administrator from the Mdletsheni Traditional Authority stated that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park offers a number of business opportunities to local people. We have a seen a number of local people employed by tour operators who conduct tours in the Park and some people becoming qualified tourism guides and making an income for themselves.</p>	<p><b>Socio economic well-being (Theme one)</b></p> <p>First of all, let me respond on this question by indicating that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is but one outlet of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife. Therefore, Ezemvelo has in the past years identified the need to implement programmes which, will in its pursue to conserve nature, also benefit the community adjacent to its parks.</p> <p>These programmes include amongst others the implementation of the community levy by collecting a special fee from its guests coming from local and far afield. The above fee is accessed from Ezemvelo by those local communities by putting through applications to implement projects in their homestead.</p> <p>The said lodge has 10 chalets which can accommodates 20 people per night and has a game drive vehicle to take out its guests on tours. This lodge enjoys around an average of 60% occupancy per annum. In addition to the above, Ezemvelo also allowed the community adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to conduct two craft centres.</p> <p>Another Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife official dealing with community issues in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park stated “The impact the above has on our local community is that today it has able to guaranteed real jobs to people employed on the above mentioned Nselweni Bush Lodge which has been able to make positive contribution to an extent that the ten Inkosi's are in the</p>

	<p>the park in the maintenance unit and the salary is very low.</p> <p>When it comes to tourism, tourists only go to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, and they don't come to our villages to see how we leave. If tourists can come to our villages to interact with us as local people, learn more about our culture and stay in our homes, we can generate some form of income through these communities. At this stage what I see is the park taking all the tourist who are supposed to be coming to us.</p> <p>The community is very excited about tourism initiatives in the area as they provide jobs. I work in one of the tour operator companies in the area and I enjoy my job because I know there is a salary coming at the end of the month.</p>		<p>position to expand their businesses even outside the park as they were able to generate around R 7 million since its inception in November / December 2010. In addition, to the above the park alone contributes an immense real jobs opportunity to the local community as it has employed more or less 425 people".</p>
<b>Objective 2</b>	<p><b>Strategies / rural tourism models (Theme two)</b></p> <p>In my view we good partnerships with the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, and the Park has a clear plan on how they will develop us the local community.</p> <p>The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is going all out to make our lives better as local communities where they assist us to build lodges inside and outside the Park.</p> <p>The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has assist to establish our community game reserve in the Mpembeni area right at the border of the Park.</p> <p>We also received a number of accredited training programmes from the Park ranging from Field Rangers, horse riding and brush cutter maintenance.</p> <p>I do know that the Park supports the local community as it implements its African Wildlife Foundation programme which supports the field ranger corridor security project, which funds the rhino security monitors on the R618 Corridor road that transects the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park</p>	<p><b>Strategies / rural tourism models (Theme two)</b></p> <p>The local Board is responsible for devising management plans for the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and other protected areas in the area The objectives of these plans are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the development needs of the people living in or adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and other protected areas in the area;</li> <li>Promote educational programmes; and</li> <li>Determine local policies, including resource management and zonation, the development of ecotourism, and scientific research.</li> </ul> <p>As part of the management plans fort the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, the local Board is tasked with the distribution of funds from the Community Trust. This fund was started with the sole purpose of ensuring that local communities residing adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park benefit directly from tourism activities. The funds can then be used to uplift communities by way of funding and developing any community proposal brought to the local Board.</p>	<p><b>Strategies / rural tourism models (Theme two)</b></p> <p>According to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife official, their organisation has put in place sound strategies to empower communities adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. These strategies include the following:</p> <p>The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has a Community Conservation Unit in place to engage with local communities, to create awareness of the interdependence of biodiversity, tourism and sustainable human development.</p> <p>This is achieved through the creation of working partnerships with local communities adjacent to the Park thus ensuring sustainable use of resources and fostering biodiversity conservation and tourism value in the society.</p> <p>These partnerships are created and nurtured through various programmes aligned to the National People and Parks Programme.</p> <p><b>Human Wildlife Conflict</b> - "during the 2016/2017 financial year, 64 valid claims were processed by the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park management totaling an amount of</p>

	<p>which is good strategy to preserve our wildlife for future generation.</p>		<p>R896, 300.00, which was paid to claimants around the Traditional Authorities, as a result, our relationship with our communities improved dramatically and eased tensions around the Park. In addition, 510 enclosures were built for communities, to protect their livestock at night while addressing the social ills around the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park”.</p> <p><b>Community Conservation and Projects -</b> the entire boundary fence (160.2km) of Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is under refurbishment and 113km of fence has been completed. Plans are under way to construct smart fencing for incursion detection. This will ensure that the risk exposure of local communities of Hlabisa to wild animals is reduced and illegal poaching / hunting of wild animal is prevented. This will ensure that game animals are conserved for future generations and communities will be able to sustain their live hoods through rural tourism.</p> <p>The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park engages with land claimants to ensure tangible benefits and acceptance of responsibilities and develop strategic partnerships to enable sound management.</p> <p>The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park ensures that conservation strategies are implemented to ensure the successful conservation of endangered species and habitats (black rhino, vultures, wild dog, scarp forest, rare plant species, and rare habitat types).</p> <p>Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife continues to collect community levy which is the main revenue assisting its local community of Hlabisa in implementing strategic projects which depend on their clear motivation to Ezemvelo.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is continually monitoring the performance of the established businesses within and outside its boundaries and is also</p>
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			<p>continually transferring its skills to those working closely with them.</p> <p>We also have programmes such as alien plant control whereby we employ around 600 people annually. This is an ongoing programme which does not necessarily happen within the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park alone but also on the outskirts of the park itself. Through our Community Conservation Officers, we conduct protracted engagement with the local community of Hlabisa for the benefit of all through our co-management arrangements.</p> <p>Every year, tour operators have to renew their open game drive permits by presenting their vehicles for inspection. The Park generates revenue estimated at R600 000 annually, on permits only.</p> <p><b>Conservation Land</b></p> <p>To date, land claims relating to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park Corridor has been settled and co-management agreements entered into with the claimants. In terms of the land settlement agreements, the immovable assets situated on this land could be transferred to the new owners. However, there remains significant uncertainty as to the identity of the new owners as the title deeds have not been finalised.</p>
<b>Objective 3</b>	<p><b>Community participation and representation (Theme Three)</b></p> <p>The community participates in tourism planning and to a certain extent implementation.</p> <p>We are represented by local Co-management boards in the structures of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.</p> <p>We are allowed to contribute to management plan of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and we are able to influence community based tourism activities.</p> <p>We are truly satisfied with how the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park prioritizes and engage local communities. The community is engaged all the time where potential development is planned in the</p>	<p><b>Community participation and representation (Theme Three)</b></p> <p>The community participates in tourism in the area and are represented in a number of platforms. They form part of Local Board which is responsible for the promotion of local decision-making regarding the management of rural tourism in and around the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.</p> <p>The local Board has the power to influence decision-making in relation to the development of management plans for the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and surrounding protected areas in their areas and monitoring thereof.</p> <p>Local Community Committees are in place to oversee tourism development in and around the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and</p>	<p><b>Community participation and representation (Theme Three)</b></p> <p>According to the Ezemvelo officials the community is involved in the planning phase of tourism development. There are also community structures in place where communities are represented.</p> <p>The Park has a good stakeholder relationship with its neighbours, "our engagement includes local Board, co-management, Amakhosi and tour operators around the Park". "Every year, tour operators have to renew their open game drive permits by presenting their vehicles for inspection. The Park generates revenue estimated at R600 000 annually, on permits only".</p>

	<p>area, for instance, the Big 5 Reserve was proclaimed with the intention that the local communities would be able to benefit through tourism development in these areas, with access the greater Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. During 2016, a lodge development was approved for each of the three areas with communities involved in the process (Biyela Lodge, Zulu Lodge and Mthembu Lodge) and construction work has started. The proclaimed areas are also being fenced into the greater Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, following which the existing fence on the former, protected area boundary, will be able to be removed. This will result in direct benefits to the communities located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.</p> <p>It feels good to be part of decision makers in terms of planned developments in the Park, this land is our and it must benefit us the local people. I am happy that the Park management involves us all the time when they plan for new development.</p> <p>My view on this matter is that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park only favours those who are politically connected or who shouts the loudest. I feel as the ordinary person; I do not benefit. Yes, I agree there are community structures where communities are represented but even those people who represent us prioritizes their Agendas and their families.</p>	<p>surrounding protected areas to represent the interests of the local communities leaving adjunct to the park.</p> <p>This has assisted in strengthening engagements and partnerships the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has with our surrounding local communities to achieve rural tourism value and opportunities for the people.</p> <p>The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park management has shown great enthusiasm in working very closely with the local communities by initiating and supporting a number of rural tourism programmes in our communities.</p>	<p>In addition, more than 50% of the people who serve in the local Board for the Hluhluwe –iMfolozi Park come from the local community of Hlabisa. On the other hand, less than 50% of the people who come from the local community of Hlabisa are employed as Senior and Junior Managers. Whilst over 50% of the people coming from the local community of Hlabisa are employed in entry level positions such as cleaners, maintain ace and administration.</p> <p>Another Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife official involved in the Community Nursery Project Co-Management Stated that “The Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994 (“Restitution Act”), gives effect to the right to restitution by providing for restitution of rights in land to persons and communities who were dispossessed of those rights, as a result of past racially discriminatory laws and practices. Section 25(7) provides for a person or community dispossessed of property after 19 June 1913, as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices, who are entitled to restitution or equitable redress. The Park now enjoys full support from the three land owners after long negotiations and a beneficiation model on an annual basis, all three claimants are managed as one co-management forum”.</p>
<b>Objective 4</b>	<p><b>Tourism activities (Theme four)</b></p> <p>According to one community member who is employed as game ranger in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park “the iMfolozi wilderness trails are one of the breath-taking tourism draw cards in the park, they are popular to those who visit the park for tranquillity and a sense of solitude”. Through these trails the park raises a lot of money which in turn gives to the communities through levies.</p>	<p><b>Tourism activities (Theme four)</b></p> <p>A number of tourism activities happen in and around our area. Firstly, we have the popular Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park which offers wildlife experience to both national and international tourists. The Park offers morning and evening guided game drives but there are also self-drives during the day. There are community and privately owned accommodation facilities and businesses in the area.</p>	<p><b>Tourism activities (Theme four)</b></p> <p>Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is one of Ezemvelo's flagship parks, known as the “epicenter of rhino conservation” and one of the first designated protected areas on the African Continent, established specifically to prevent the extinction of the Southern white rhino when it was realized that the area was the last remaining refuge for white rhino in the world.</p> <p>Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park is now considered a key donor population for black and white rhino and is rated one of 6 “key one”</p>

	<p>Another respondent from the community stated that, “the park has given us two craft centres that we run and manage in the park which is able to assist us with income generation”.</p> <p>Another community member stated “there is a lot of tourism activities here, ranging from hotels, spa facilities, conference venues, safari experience, bird watching, art and craft centres, camping etc.”</p> <p>Another community member stated that “I know that our Traditional Authorities, namely; AbaKwaHlabisa and Mdletsheni have the Nselweni Bush lodge inside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park which provides accommodation to the tourist's thus generating income”.</p> <p>Another community member “stated that in our area there is Umkhombe Tourism in the Mdletsheni traditional authority”.</p> <p>Another community member stated that “know there are serious plans to develop the Mpembeni Community Conservancy Nature Reserve which is on the community land and this development truly change our lives”.</p>	<p>There are craft centres where community members sell their artefacts in order to support their families and these offer:</p> <p>Indigenous arts and craft (wooden trays, wooden spoons, doormats) Ilala Weavers and etc.</p> <p>The park has a range of accommodation facilities such as the Hilltop and Mpila Resorts as well as Muntulu and Munyaweni lodges. A variety of accommodation options exist in close vicinity to the park and these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotels;</li> <li>• Game Lodges;</li> <li>• Guest Houses;</li> <li>• Bed and Breakfast's; and</li> <li>• Self-catering accommodation.</li> </ul>	<p>populations globally by the African Rhino Specialist Group.</p> <p>The Park manages more than 68 % of rhino population within Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife.</p>
<b>Objective 5</b>	<p><b>Challenges (Theme five)</b></p> <p>The rising price of rhino horn on the black market continues to stimulate the illegal trade, and as a result, an increased number of poaching incidents are being experienced in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. Illegal poaching of the rhinos may lead to the extinction of these animals and that will have a negative impact on our tourist numbers visiting the Park to experience the Safari.</p> <p>The proposed Fuleni coal mine at Esiyembeni, on the boundary of the IMfolozi Wilderness section of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park keeps me awake at night. How can we have tourism and mining happening in our area?</p>	<p><b>Challenges (Theme five)</b></p> <p>The challenges we have in our local communities cannot only be addressed by rural tourism development. Rural Tourism development and community participation is one vehicle to improve the lives of our rural people but more needs to be done.</p> <p>Whilst the main roads leading to and from villages are being, however, the road going to Mdletsheni and the town of Hluhluwe needs to be tarred. Accessing the town of Hluhluwe from the Mdletsheni area is a big challenge. Tarring that road can improve tourism and we can see more tourist past our area.</p> <p>In the area we have challenges of high prevalence of HIV and AIDS,</p>	<p><b>Challenges (Theme five)</b></p> <p>According to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife official, “The rising price of rhino horn on the black market continues to stimulate the illegal trade, and as a result, an increased number of poaching incidents are being experienced. In Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, it has become business as usual whereby, Conservation Management teams are responding to majority law enforcement incidents. This has taken priority over saving the rhino species, over and above a number of other conservation requirements. The 2016/17 financial year was one of the worst years on rhino poaching, which resulted in management developing various interventions, aimed at curbing the scourge”.</p>

	<p>Our area is thriving on tourism and now they would like to start mine right at our door step. That will have negative effects on our tourism revenues and once the mining companies are done extracting our natural resources, they will leave us with a lot of side effects and it will be difficult to revive tourism.</p> <p>The estimated life of this mine is 32 years. The mine will operate day and night, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for 32 years. Our natural environment will be adversely affected. We who work in the tourism industry will at risk, we are likely to lose our jobs as no tourist will want to come to a polluted area. The place will be dirty, there will be air, water and environmental pollution. Our lives will be at risk; government must ensure that they don't grant mining rights to this proposed mine in order to secure our future in tourism.</p> <p>Our position is not only about the fact that this coalmine will degrade the environment within the Park but its effect will also be felt outside the Park. The quality of goods and services that we enjoy from nature, like clean air, water, and a healthy environment, will be badly affected.</p>	<p>unemployment, we have also seen the increase of crime.</p>	
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#### **4.3.2 Theme one: *The level of tourism development and the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa***

One of the main objectives of the study was to determine the level of tourism development and the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa. This was relevant to ascertain the tourism development initiatives in the area and whether those initiatives were changing the lives of the community for the better. To further determine whether the local community get any benefits from tourism development such as jobs, business opportunities, income etc. According to Howell (2002) the socio-economic impacts of tourism relate to population growth, changing employment patterns, an increased level of income, and rising poverty levels.



Moreover, tourism development in developing countries has positive socio-economic impacts on host communities Visser, 2003; Saayman & Saayman, 2004 and Mbaiwa, 2003).

Table 11 Tourism development and the socio economic well-being

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	38	88%
No	5	12%
Total	43	100.00

The aim here was to establish the level of tourism development and the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa and how rural tourism development impact on their lives. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. The respondents have presented various responses in this regard. Almost 88% of the 43 respondents stated that tourism development is taking place in their area and it is improving their livelihoods. This was expected due to the fact that results revealed that there are a number of tourism development initiatives which include the development of community lodges inside and outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and the community game reserve in Mpembeni as well as other private lodges around the Hlabisa area which have been developed. These developments have impacted the lives of the rural people adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park in a very positive way as they are employed in these facilities. These developments stimulate rural tourism and creates the necessary employment and business opportunities for the rural communities. They also increase the tourism infrastructure found in the area and contribute to the Growth Domestic Product of the Hlabisa area. Whereas 12% which is a small portion of the respondents interviewed stated that whilst there was tourism development taking place in the area but they were not benefiting from these developments due to the fact that this think only few high profile families / individuals benefit.

#### **4.3.5 Theme two: *Ascertain rural tourism strategies / rural tourism models in place to empower the local community of Hlabisa socially and economically***

Table 12 Strategies / rural tourism models

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	41	95%
No	2	5%
Total	43	100.00

The aim here was to establish whether there are strategies / rural tourism models put in place by the game park and other role players in the area to ensure that the local community of Hlabisa is empowered socially and economically. The findings indicated approximately 95% of the respondents interviewed stated that there are strategies put in place by the park and other government institutions to empower the local community of Hlabisa. The respondents stated that there is a local Board put in place which represents their interest in the Park and to ensure that they benefit from the Park. This local Board is responsible for putting together management plans for the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and other protected areas in the area which includes the building of lodges inside and outside the Park. In addition, the respondents attested to the fact that the Park assisted the community to establish their own community game reserve in the Mpembeni area right at the border of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The respondents further stated that they received accredited training programmes from the Park ranging from Field Rangers, horse riding and brush cutter maintenance. This is true reflection of the fact that the Park has a sound strategy or a rural tourism model that works to empower the local community of Hlabisa. The Park also has a Community Conservation Unit in place to engage with local communities, to create awareness of the interdependence of biodiversity, tourism and sustainable human development. During the interviews it emerged that the Park processed 64 valid claims which was paid to claimants around the Traditional Authorities and the relationship between the communities and the Park has improved dramatically and eased tensions around the Park. The Park further built 510 enclosures for communities to protect their livestock. The Park further entered into co-management agreements entered into with the claimants. The respondents further stated that government institutions were

assisting them with bursaries, wine service training and Work Integrated Learning opportunities. Whereas, a few respondents who constitute 5% they are of a different opinion stating that the Park has no clear strategy for or partnership programmes for the community at large but the Park opportunities are only accessed by a few prominent individuals who hold high ranking positions in the community.

#### **4.3.4 Theme three: *The level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa***

Table 13 Community participation and representation

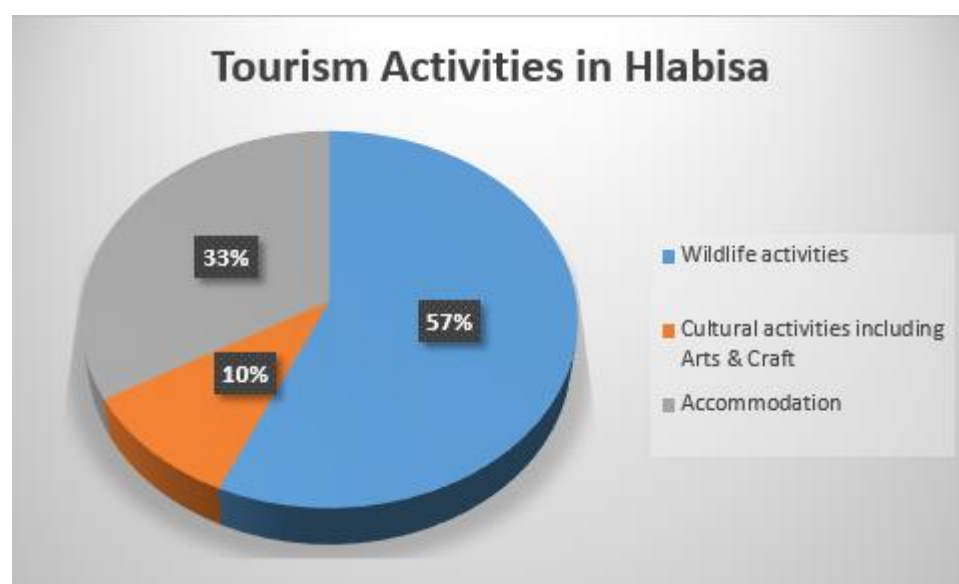
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	33	77
No	10	23
Total	43	100.00

According to Lee (2013) community involvement can be defined as the magnitude to which the residents are involved in the daily activities within the communities that they live in. “Hence, tourism development will be more successful with the involvement of the local communities as their perception and attitudes are important for the decision makers to achieve sustainable rural tourism” (Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012). According to Hatipoglu, 2015: 28 community participation is a dynamic progression by which beneficiary client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish. The purpose was to examine the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking place in Hlabisa. The outcomes of the interviews indicated that the majority of the respondents 77% say that the community participates in tourism development activities in the area. In addition, the respondents stated that there are structures in place such as Co-management boards in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and community Trust that represent communities in decision making processes in relation to tourism. About 23% of the respondents are of a different opinion. They believe that the local people do not participate in tourism and are not represented in tourism structures. These respondents further stated that they felt tourism was only meant for people who hold high influential positions in area and if they not part of that grouping, they are unlikely

to be considered. These people seemed very despondent and had lost hope in tourism development as a possible sector to improve their lives.

#### **4.3.3 Theme four: *The level of tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa***

Figure 23 Tourism activities



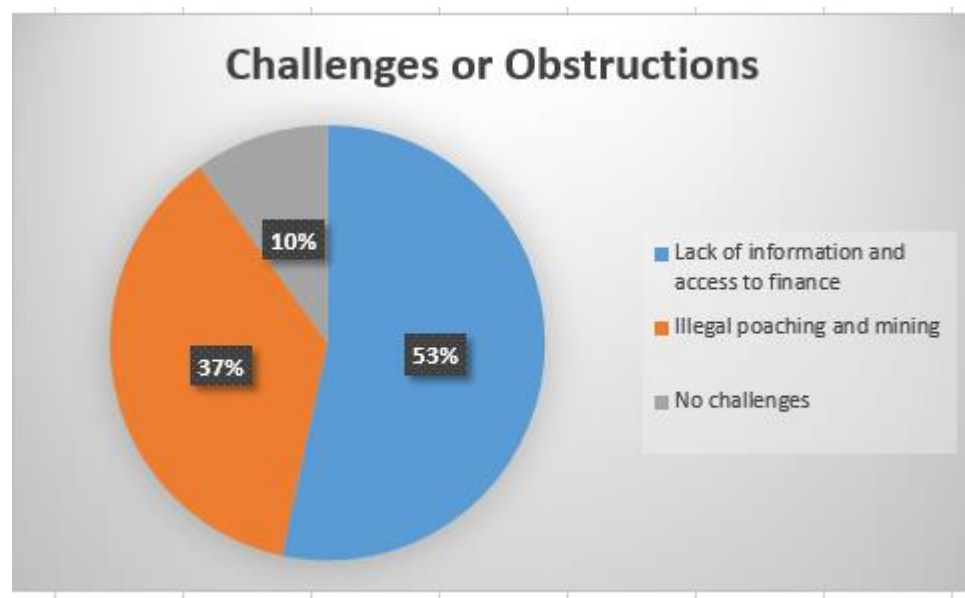
The aim here was to establish the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa area. The respondents from the three focus groups presented various responses in this regard. The results indicated that the majority of respondents which constitute 57% say it is wildlife / safari activities (game interpretation (education) centre, game drives, game walks and morning walks) which are mostly taking place in the area of Hlabisa. This again is attributed to the fact that there is Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and other community conservancy parks such as the Mpembeni Game Reserve in the area. Therefore, a lot of people are employed by the park and there is a lot of local tourism businesses doing business with the park, i.e. tour operators and tour guides who offer guided services to tourists visiting the park to experience wildlife. However, it was also noted that some tourists prefer self-drives for the safari experience.

The second type of tourism activity which is believed to be taking place in the area of Hlabisa is accommodation where about 33% of the respondents argue that it is taking place. This is because tourists make use of accommodation facilities both inside and

outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. However, some tourists sleep in nearby places such as St Lucia and Mtubatuba. Approximately 10% of respondents indicated that cultural tourism is taking place in the area of Hlabisa. This are probably those people who are involved in the cultural tourism activities in the area as well as those involved in the community-run craft market and refreshment kiosk at the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park as well as the producers of arts and crafts such as the Ilala weavers.

#### 4.3.6 Theme five: *Ascertain the challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa*

Figure 24 Challenges or obstructions



The aim here was to establish challenges or obstructions that impede community participation in rural tourism development, owning tourism related businesses and any other social ills in Hlabisa as the study area. The findings indicated approximately 53% of the respondents from the three focus groups interviewed stated whilst there are structures in place that represent the community in tourism through Co-Management Boards, however, the key challenges mentioned were that there was no information on how locals should start a tourism business in the area including cooperatives, non-profit organisations, what tourism businesses they can start, where to access finance, where, how to register the business and let alone running a successful tourism business. This creates a challenge for the local people who would like to start their own business, as it is so difficult to start a tourism business and end up seeking

employment in already established businesses including the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. In addition, these respondents stated that throughout the whole year, their area is abuzz with tourists, and they compete for their space with tourists which makes it difficult for them to enjoy their spaces. Moreover, the food prices have consistently gone up due to tourism demand in the area. Whereas, the other respondents who constitute 37% identified illegal poaching of the rhinos in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and the proposed Fuleni coal mine at Esiyembeni, outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park among the main challenges which impede on rural tourism development in the area. Whereas, the other respondents who constitute 10% stated that they had no challenges with regards to rural tourism development and were happy with the fact that they were part of tourism development and are represented in tourism structures and they form part of the decision making process.

#### **4.4 Theme two: Tourism in Hlabisa: Economic Development Managers Perspective**

The questionnaire for economic development managers covered the theme for strategies - rural tourism models or socio economic empowerment programmes planned and implemented by the government institutions at a local, provincial and national levels.

##### **4.4.1 Theme two: *Strategies / rural tourism models***

The aim here was to ascertain what strategies - rural tourism models or tourism socio economic empowerment programmes have been planned and implemented by local, provincial and national government tourism institutions to support the local community of Hlabisa. The respondents from the seven local, provincial and national government institutions presented various responses in this regard.

**Respondent one** from the local municipality indicated “the municipality is currently undertaking the following interventions to empower the local communities including those involved in tourism; capacity building and training, incubator, mentoring, support to existing enterprises and availing municipal land to SMME to those that need it.” Respondent one further indicated that “it is important to recognise that supporting

SMME development at a local government level, involves creating linkages and networking among the local agencies concerned with the different components of SMME development, as well as building sustainable partnerships among local government bodies, government organizations, the private sector, NGOs, and communities, in order to ensure continuing support for SMMEs to grow, sustain and expand their businesses". Respondent one continued indicating that "despite our efforts to change the situation, the socio-economic ills have persisted throughout the years and the local economy has failed to absorb the local labour force and minimize poverty levels, hence we focus on growing the SMMEs especially in tourism".

**Respondent two** from the local economic development agency indicated that "we have the Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) accredited Tourism Skills Programme such as Bursaries; Wine Service Training & Work Integrated Learning that we offer to the local community in the area of Hlabisa.

**Respondent three** from the District Municipality indicated that "the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative, LubomboTransfrontier Conservation Area and UMkhanyakude District Municipality all identifies tourism as a leading economic and growth sector that needs to be promoted within the district. A number of initiatives such as enterprise and skills development as well as mentorship programmes for the tourism SMME's".

**Respondent four** from the provincial tourism authority indicated that "Tourism KwaZulu-Natal (TKZN) is responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of tourism into and within the province. The province has a tourism strategy and the tourism master plan which are strategic documents that guide tourism development including rural tourism in the province and areas such as Hlabisa in the province. This includes infrastructure support, skills and enterprise development which is very important in unlocking tourism, particularly in rural areas". Respondent four further indicated that "our programmes are not only specific to the area of Hlabisa but we service the whole province in terms of tourism development and promotion including the rural areas such as Hlabisa". Moreover, "TKZN in collaboration with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, we are developing the Zulu Heritage Route which does not only cover Zulu Culture and

Heritage but also takes us through unique eco-tourism reserves, natural hot springs and community initiatives and the world known Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Game Reserve lies next to this route” respondent four said.

**Respondent five** from the provincial trade and investment agency indicated that “our organisation is working very closely with other sister agencies in the province to develop communities in the area of Hlabisa. In collaboration with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, we have initiated a process to develop the uMfolozi Big Five Game Reserve which consists of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (HiP) and eMhakosini-Ophathe Heritage Park as the core conservation areas. Our role in the main was to facilitate private sector investment and community equity in the project”. Respondent five continued indicating that “moreover, through private sector support, communities adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (HiP) have established a Trust called the iMfolozi Big Five Trust to connect portions of tribal land to the protected area to develop wildlife industries that contribute to conservation”.

**Respondent six** from provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs indicated that “The Department has three main entities that are responsible for tourism development, investment and conservation in the province. These entities have put in place sound strategies to improve the lives of rural communities including the area of Hlabisa. For instance, one of our entities which is Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife is managing the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and works with the community through local boards to ensure economic benefits accrue to the community. The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has number of community programmes ranging from capacity building, awareness creation on nature and tourism, enterprise development including concessions etc”.

**Respondent seven** from the National Department of Tourism indicated that “The Department has provided funding for tourism interpretative signage and universal accessibility initiatives at Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park’s Hiltop camp” This will no doubt create employment for the local contractors and people in the area”.



**4.4.1.1 Theme one: What impact have the tourism socio-economic empowerment programmes indicated above had on the local community of Hlabisa?**

**Respondent one** from the local municipality indicated “the more tourism SMMEs we support, especially those that own accommodation; the more jobs these small businesses are able to create in the area thus reducing poverty”. The accommodation SMMEs has a huge multiplier effect, from maintenance, supplies, laundry etc.”

**Respondent two** from the local economic development agency indicated that “the empowerment programmes we offer have yielded positive results as the youth is becoming more skilled and the youth is able to pursue tertiary education in tourism which will result in the youth having a brighter future”.

**Respondent three** from the District Municipality indicated that “the programmes we offer to local enterprises, are able to equip the small business owners with the technical know-how on how to run their businesses with success. The mentorship programmes helps small businesses to be focused in reducing operational costs and increase profit margins”.

**Respondent four** from the provincial tourism authority indicated that “through our programmes and the development of the Zulu Heritage Route will see a lot of product enhancement and skilling of people along the route. At this stage this has not materialised but we are confident that benefits will accrue as soon as we get the development of the route going.

**Respondent five** from the provincial trade and investment agency indicated that “the project is expected to create employment and business opportunities for the local people”.

**Respondent six** from provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs indicated that “the local community of Hlabisa benefits through employment, concessions in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park”.

**Respondent seven** from the National Department of Tourism indicated that “the community of Hlabisa benefits from the attractive tourism infrastructure and products”.

**4.4.1.2 Them one: What tourism socio-economic empowerment programmes are planned for the next three to five years for the local community of Hlabisa?**

**Respondent one** from the local municipality indicated “the Municipality is in the process of developing a consolidated LED Strategy and Investment Attraction Strategy which provides an overview of the economic situation in the area and it seeks to guide future economic development”.

**Respondent two** from the local economic development agency indicated that “the future planned Programmes include enterprise development and skills development which will revolve around the main project which is the Hlabisa Tourism Node: (currently at pre-feasibility stage), the Node is proposed to consist of following facilities:

- Accommodation (3-star: 100 sleeper);
- Conference Centre and Outdoor event site (300 delegates);
- Historical Museum;
- Curio shop;
- Restaurant; and
- Art and Music Centre.

**Respondent three** from the District Municipality indicated that “the District is planning to implement a number of tourism destination marketing and promotion, heritage tourism, and community tourism development initiatives in the next five years. In addition, there is a Working Group 4 which is responsible for job creation and governance in the District which is looking into diversifying the tourism economy beyond big five, accommodation and catering in the area of Hlabisa”.

**Respondent four** from the provincial tourism authority indicated that “as indicated above, we focus in the whole province, covering the area of hlabisa, therefore in terms of our tourism master plan, this what we plan to do in the province to develop tourism:

enhance the KZN wildlife experience, enhance the Rural Tourism Experience, setting up an independent Tourism Development Fund or dedicated tourism fund within an existing provincial funding entity with funding for projects, SMMEs, communities and infrastructure, and create Tourism Awareness and Understanding to communities”.

**Respondent five** from the provincial trade and investment agency indicated that “development of the uMfolozi Big Five Game Reserve and three lodges”.

**Respondent six** from provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs indicated that “the clear plans are contained in the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife strategy for the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and the KZN Tourism Master Plans”.

**Respondent seven** from the National Department of Tourism indicated that “Market assessments and evaluations for market intelligence on how to benefit the previously disadvantaged”.

**4.4.1.3 Theme one: What impact will the tourism socio-economic empowerment programmes indicated above have on the local community of Hlabisa?**

**Respondent one** from the local municipality indicated “the Strategy will guide future economic development for the local community of Hlabisa”.

**Respondent two** from the local economic development agency indicated that “the development of the Hlabisa Tourism Node will result in enterprise development (tourism and other sectors), employment, tourism skills development, crime levels may subdue”.

**Respondent three** from the District Municipality indicated that “to create more jobs and business opportunities for the people of Hlabisa in order to reduce poverty and inequality”.

**Respondent four** from the provincial tourism authority indicated that “to enhance tourism infrastructure, have a skilled work force in the tourism sector and offer quality service to tourists thus ensuring increase tourist arrivals, repeat visits and revenue for the local community”.

**Respondent five** from the provincial trade and investment agency indicated that “the benefits for the area include 290 short-term jobs associated with the lodge construction, fencing, infrastructure and eradication of alien species and 201 associated with long term jobs, increased revenue received by the game reserve and rental income received by the communities amounting to at least R1.2m in the first year increasing to R1.9m after five years”.

**Responded six** from provincial Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs indicated that “no comment”.

**Respondent seven** from the National Department of Tourism indicated that “the Provide information to decision makers that will enable to grow the economy through tourism, offer employment opportunities and small businesses development”.

#### **4.5 Tourism in Hlabisa: The Hlabisa Tourism Establishments Perspective**

Representatives from 10 tourism establishments in the Hlabisa area completed the questionnaire for the tourism employers regarding the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa and the challenges or obstructions that impede community participation in rural tourism development in Hlabisa. The questionnaire addressed issues relating to the type of tourism business, number of employees employed in the establishment, the positions occupied by locals, salaries / wages for employees, level of education and training programmes offered by establishments and any government support and challenges or obstructions that impede community participation in rural tourism development in Hlabisa. The main objective was to speak to top managers of the establishments.

Figure 25 Representatives of Tourism Establishments

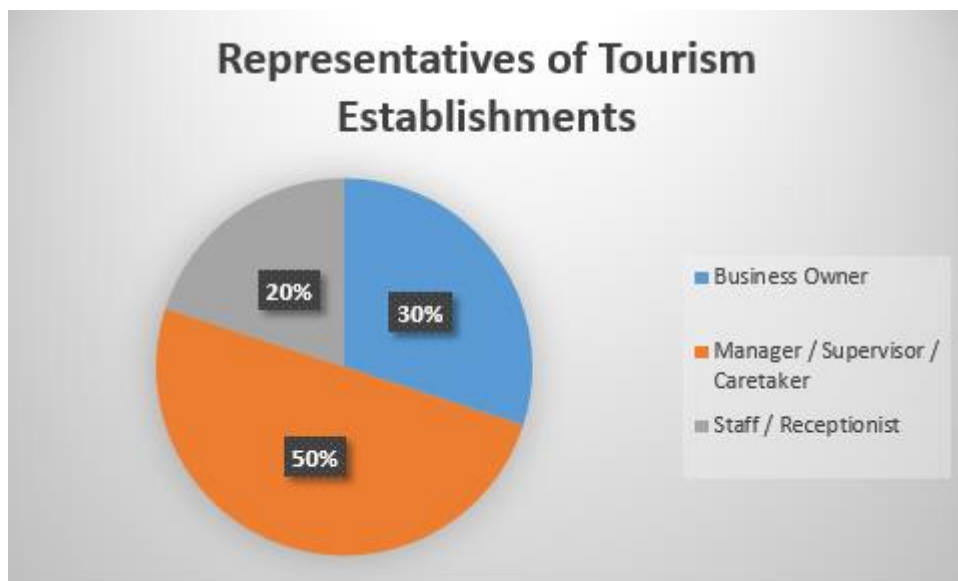


Figure 25 above, reflects that 50% of the respondents constitute managers of tourism establishments, whilst the results show that the 30% of the respondents constitute business owners of the establishments and 20% constitute general staff / receptionists. The tourism businesses that participated in the study ranged from accommodation establishments such as hotels, lodges, bed and breakfasts as well as guest houses, whilst other business businesses included arts and craft (curio shops), tour operators, and tour guides.

Figure 26 Business Type

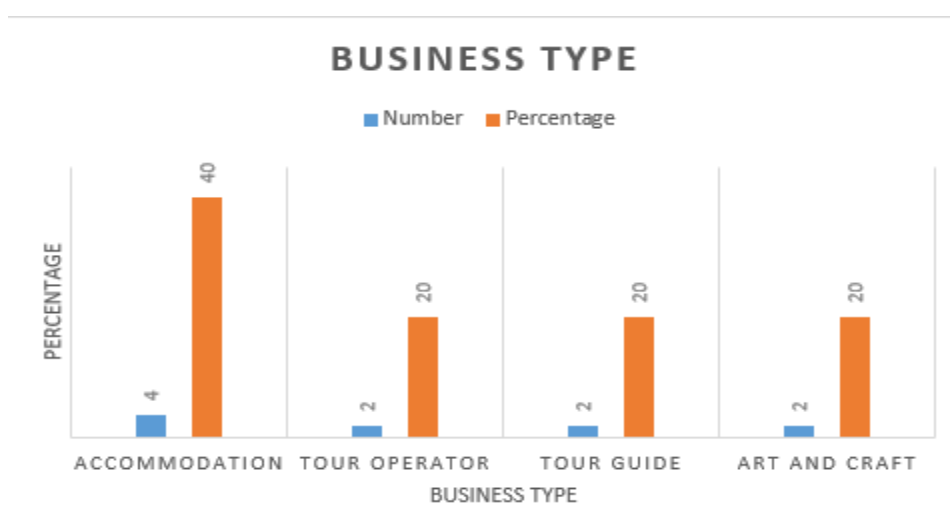


Figure 26 above, reflects that 40% of the businesses that participated in the study constitute accommodation establishments such as bed and breakfast, lodges, and hotels, whereas, 20% of the businesses that participated in the study constitute tour operators, another 20% constitute tour guides and lastly the other 20% constitute arts and crafts /curio shops.

**The Perspective of Tourism Establishments in Hlabisa in relation to Tourism is as follows:**

#### **4.5.1 Theme one: *Socio economic well-being***

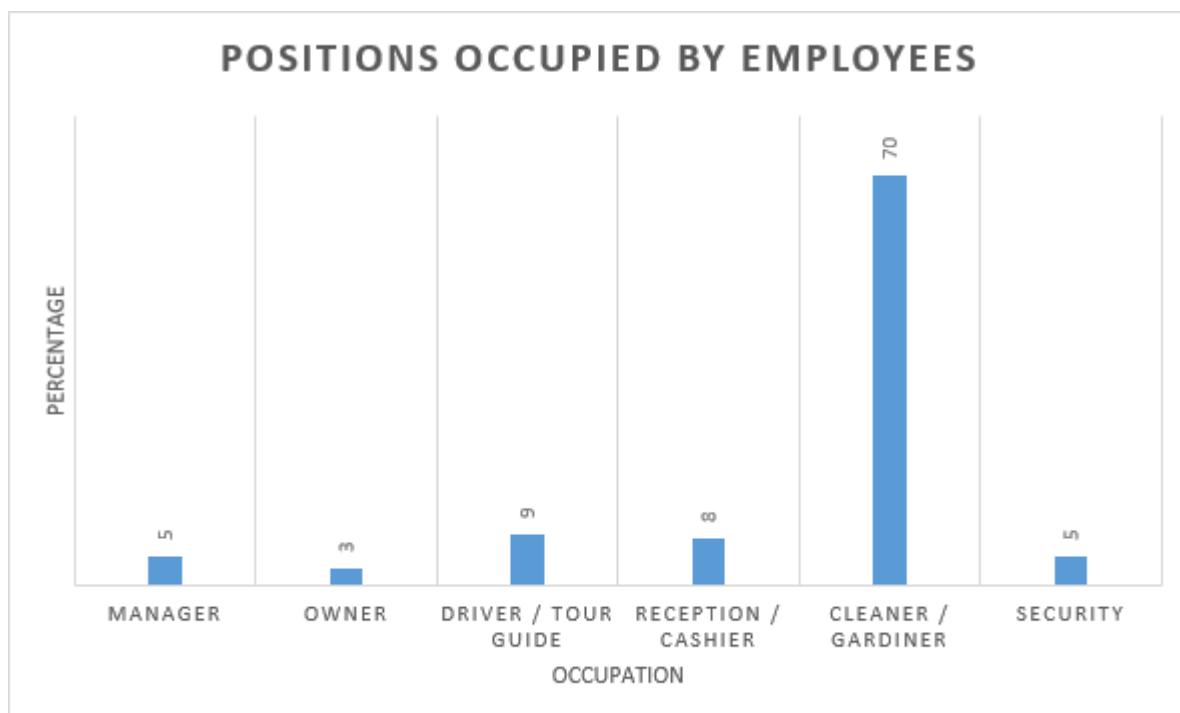
Table 14 Type of employer

<b>Tourism Business Type</b>	<b>Number of People Employed</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Part Time</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Accommodation	87	85%	66	76%	21	24%
Tour Operator	7	7%	2	29%	5	71%
Tour Guide	2	2%	0	0%	2	100%
Art & Craft	6	6%	6	100%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>					

The data showed that 102 people were employed by the 10 tourism businesses that participated in the study and the accommodation subsector is the largest employer in the area. The accommodation subsector constitutes 85% of the 102 employees in the area. Approximately 76% of the employees who worked in the accommodation subsector in the area were employed full time, whilst 24% were working as part time employees. The tour operator businesses that participated in the study employed approximately 7% of the 102 employees and approximately 29% were employed full time, whilst 71% were part time employees. The tourist guide businesses that participated in the study employed 2% of the 102 employees and were all part time employees. The art and craft shops that participated in the study employed 6% of the 102 people and were employed on a full time basis. The accommodation subsector was highly represented in the study; this was expected due to the fact that they make up the majority of tourism establishments in the area. An important objective of this

study was to determine the role of tourism as an employer in the Hlabisa area, and since the accommodation subsector is larger than other tourism establishments, it is likely that they could contribute the most to employment in the area. The Hlabisa area also has a lot of family-owned bed and breakfasts and they contribute a lot to the development of tourism in the area as host employers for employment and learnership programmes for the local people.

Figure 27 Type of positions occupied by employees



The results show that out of the 102 employed by the tourism business which participated in the study, approximately 70% of the employees are employed as cleaners / gardeners. There were 9% employed as drivers / tourist guides for tour operator businesses, approximately 8% were employed as receptionists / cashiers, whereas the people employed as managers and security were 5% each and a very small fraction of 3% were self-employed / business owners. The results further showed that the people who were self-employed in their small businesses, they would have more than one role to fulfil, such as manager, receptionist, driver and tour guide.

Table 15 Number of Businesses interviewed per Traditional Authority and employees place of origin

Traditional Authority	Number of business	Number of employees	Employee place of origin
AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority	5	28	Majority are from AbaKwaHlabisa
Mpembeni Traditional Authority	1	65	Majority are from Mpembeni
Mdletsheni Traditional Authority	4	9	Majority are from Mdletsheni
Other	Unknown	Unknown	Marketing Agencies are outside of Hlabisa.
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>102</b>	

The aim here was to establish the location and concentration of tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area and where people employed in these area come from. The results showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed, about 05 of those are located in the AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority with the majority of the workers coming from the same area. The businesses interviewed in the AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority account for about 28 full time and part time employees in total who come from the area. These businesses included accommodation establishments such as Lodges, B&Bs, a curio shop and a tour guide business. The results further showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed, about 01 of those is located in the Mpembeni Traditional Authority with the majority of the workers coming from the same area. This single establishment is a lodge located in the Mpembeni Traditional Authority accounting for about 65 full time and part time employees whom the majority come from the area. This lodge is second largest tourism employer in the area after the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. Moreover, the results showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed, about 04 of those are located in the Mdletsheni Traditional Authority with the majority of the workers coming from the same area. The businesses interviewed in the Mdletsheni Traditional Authority account for about 9 full time and part time employees in total who come from the area. These businesses included mainly tour operator and tour guiding businesses and a curio shop. The results further



showed that whilst businesses are located in the three abovementioned traditional authorities, however, they have sales and marketing agents located in big cities such Johannesburg and Durban.

Table 16 What is their salary per month per employee

Salary Per month	R0-R500	R501-R1000	R1001-R5000	R5001-R10 000	R10 001-R20 000	Did not disclose
Business Frequency	3	3	2 (one business appears twice)	1	1	1

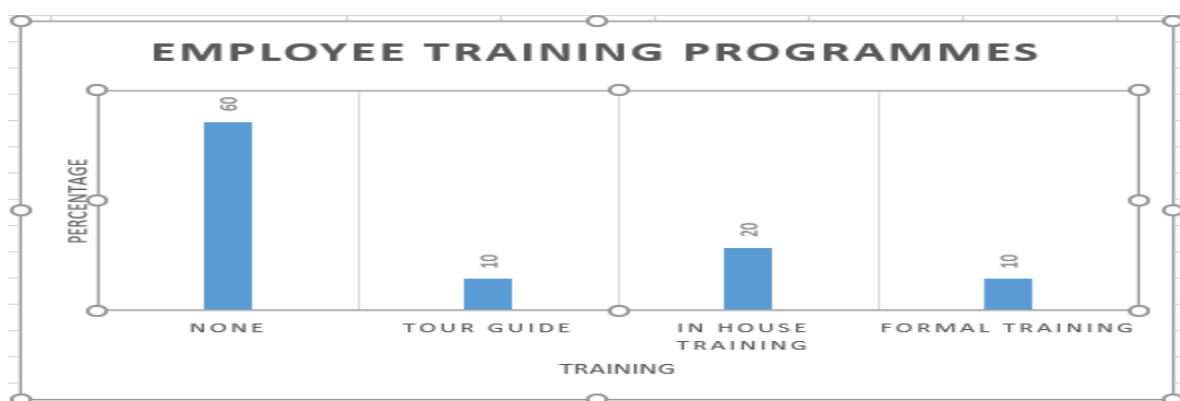
The aim here was to establish the salary scales of employees in the different businesses that participated in the study. The results showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed, about 3 indicated that their employees were paid between R0-R500 per month, whilst another 3 indicated that their employees were paid between R501-R1000 per month, whereas 1 business indicated that their employees were paid between R1001-R5000, in addition one business selected all the following three options; R1001-R5000, R5001-R10 000 and R10 001-R20 000 and lastly 1 business did not disclose the salaries per month. From the results above, it is clear that the majority of the companies pay their employees between R0-R1000 per month. This is expected due to the fact that these are fairly small businesses which are mainly family owned and mainly tour operators, tour guiding and B&Bs. On the other hand, the one business which pays its employees between R1000-R20 000 is a fairly big lodge with marketing offices in the big cities. Moreover, this lodge has shareholders as opposed to the small run family businesses with no proper sound marketing resources.

Table 17 What is their level of education?

Education	Frequency
No Matric	4
Matric	6
Tourist Guiding Certificate	3
Any tertiary Qualification	2
Tourism specific qualification	1
No Idea	1

The aim here was to establish the type of qualifications and skills set the employees at these tourism establishments possess. The results showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed, about 4 businesses stated that their employees did not have matric, whilst about 6 indicated that their employees had matric, about 3 businesses specified that they had employees who are qualified tourist guides with accredited certificate and badges, about 2 businesses specified that they had graduates who were qualified in other areas such as marketing and communication, only 1 businesses specified that they had employees with a tourism qualification and 1 business had no idea of the qualifications possessed by employees. It was not expected that only one establishment would specify that they employ tourism graduates, more establishments were expected to employ tourism graduates due to the fact that they are in a tourism space and should employ people who are qualified in this field.

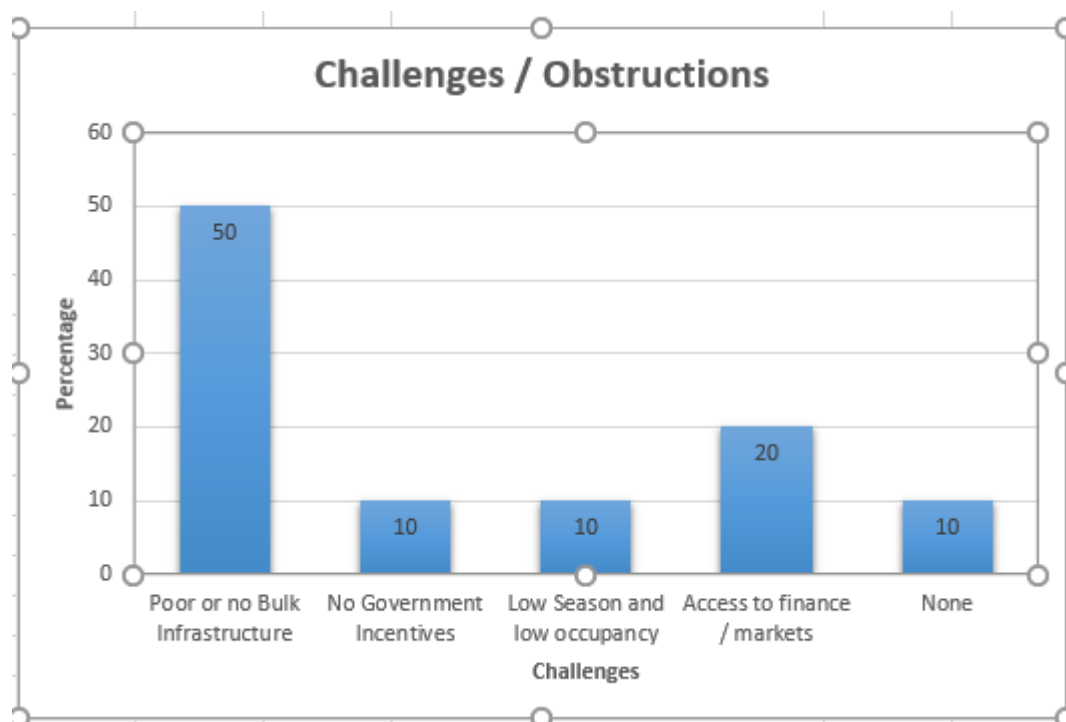
Figure 28 Training Development Programmes for Employees



The aim here was to establish what programmes are offered to employees in order to empower and capacitate them to carry out their duties and to further their careers. The results showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed, about 60% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they do not offer any training and development to employees, about 20% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they train their employees in-house. These in-house training programmes include customer care, laundry, plumbing, answering telephones, emails and making bookings, about 10% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they offer tour guide training which include nature guide, trails guide and professional guides training through Field Guide Association of South Africa, whilst another 10% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they received formal training from the municipality.

#### 4.5.2 Theme five: *Challenges and obstructions faced by small tourism businesses in the area*

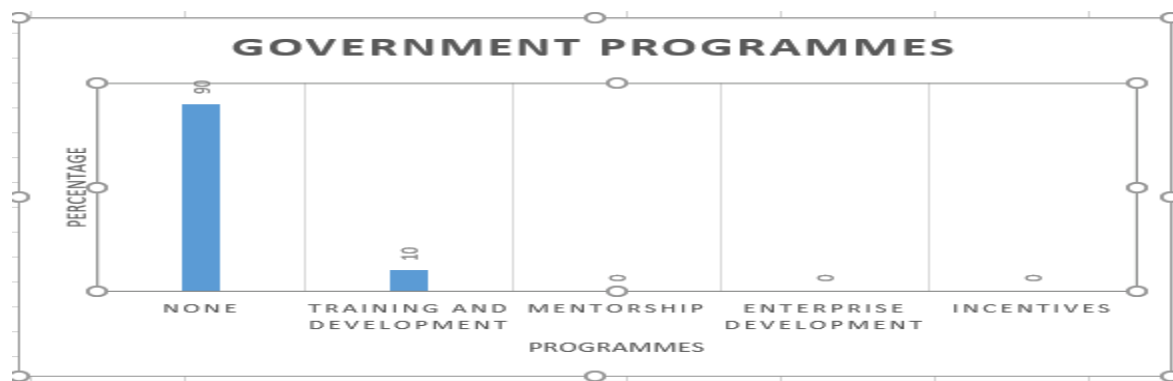
Figure 29 Challenges / Obstructions



The aim here was to ascertain the challenges faced by small tourism businesses in the area of Hlabisa. The results showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses

interviewed, about 50% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated the challenges and obstructions they experience relate to the bulk infrastructure. They businesses stated there is poor road access leading to and from their tourism establishments, very limited water supply, unreliable electricity supply and load shedding. About 20% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they have no access to finance and markets. This limits their participation in bidding for concessions issued by the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park as they do not have finance to buy or convert safari vehicles. In addition, the tour operator interviewed stated that they tend to hire safari vehicles from their competition, at time the completion would charge them very unreasonable high price for their vehicles or would say on the day of the tour that the cars are broken or not available. Linked to this, about 10% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they do not have government support in a form on incentives to buy the required equipment, services and training for their businesses. These services include having qualified Chefs where one business owner stated that to take one of their employees to be trained as a chef would be very expensive, yet they are not able to attract that skills set due to budgetary constraints. In addition, the business owner further stated that it is very expensive to acquire booking engines where tourists can pay safely online. However, they suggested that government could come in and incentivise them to acquire all these expensive services. About 10% of the tourism businesses interviewed running a small B&B indicated during low season they tend to experience low occupancy rate or at times they find themselves losing tourists to bigger companies due to the fact that big tour operators tend to block book accommodation with big lodges in the area and hotels outside the Hlabisa area and this has a negative effect in the business. Lastly, another 10% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they had no challenges and obstructions. This was not expected and rather surprising, however, it seems the business owner withheld a lot of information as was not keen in speaking a lot during the interview.

Figure 30 Government Empowerment Programmes received by your Business



The aim here was to establish the type of support or empowerment programme offered by government to tourism businesses in the area of Hlabisa from a business point of view. The results showed that out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed, about 90% of the tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they do not receive any form of support government. These businesses indicated that there was no mentorship, enterprise develop and incentives support from government. However, only 10% of the businesses stated that they received some formal training from the municipality. However, when the researcher asked for the details on the type of training from the municipality, the details were not fourth coming.

#### 4.6 Discussion of Research Findings

The purpose of discussing research findings of the study was to interpret and describe the significance of the findings in view of what is already known about the research problem being examined, and to give details on any new insights that arose as a result of the examining the research problem. This discussion of research findings connects to the introduction by way of the research questions and the literature reviewed. The discussion section of this study will also explain how the socio-economic effects of tourism development impact on the rural communities in general.

**4.6.1 Theme one: *The socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa, i.e. employment, income, skills development, entrepreneurial opportunities, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa.***

According to Lanao and Saarinen (2015) rural tourism should ideally sustain and create local incomes, employment and growth, contribute to the costs of providing economic and social infrastructure, encourage the development of other industrial sectors, contribute to local resident amenities and services, contribute to the conservation of environmental and cultural resources. Tourism is known to offer opportunities for direct, indirect, and induced employment and income, spurring regional and local economic development at community levels.

One of the study objectives was to look into the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa, i.e. employment, income, skills development, entrepreneurial opportunities, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa.

#### **4.6.1.1      Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

In the study area, the findings reveal that the majority of respondents are happy with the economic opportunities presented by tourism development in the area. The respondents stated that tourism development in the area has improved their lives, as they either own a small tourism business or work in B&B's, lodges, craft shops and in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. However, the key challenges that emerged from the findings were that the majority of the locals employed in tourism occupied low paying positions, with grade 08-12 and no tourism qualifications. This means locals do not have the necessary qualifications and skills to qualify to be employed in Senior Management positions in the tourism establishments in the area. The lack of a tourism qualification, training and skills would prohibit locals to progress up the ranks to become managers who earn higher salaries and be in a position to make key decisions about tourism in the area. Whilst Umhlosinga Development Agency offers bursaries and learnership programmes in place for the youth in the area, there is a need to scale up this programme in order to have greater reach and impact in advancing the careers of the local people in the local tourism industry.

#### **4.6.1.2      Tourism in Hlabisa: Economic Development Managers Perspective**

In addition, the local and district municipality, provincial and national government tourism institutions should consider providing bursaries to the youth of Hlabisa who

have passed matric to study tourism at tertiary institution with the objective of coming back to work in the tourism sector in the area and grow their career in tourism. The finding further revealed that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park alone contributes an immense real jobs opportunity to the local community as it has employees around 425 people. The majority of the respondents acknowledged that their income is not high, however, its sufficient to support their families on a monthly basis. This is evident that the Park should put in place a sound educational programme to improve the education of the local people of Hlabisa so that they can advance to high ranking positions in order to earn high income. It further emerged that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park collects the community levy from its guests and this allows the community to submit applications to implement projects in the area, thus improving the livelihood of the local community of Hlabisa. Moreover, it emerged that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has developed the Nselweni Bush Lodge within the park which belongs to the local Inkosis, such as Inkosi Hlabisa and Mdletshe around Hlabisa. This lodge has 10 chalets which can accommodates 20 people per night and has a game drive vehicle to take out its guests on tours. The lodge enjoys around an average of 60% occupancy per annum. In addition to the above, Ezemvelo also allowed the community adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to conduct two craft centres in order to improve the livelihoods of the local community of Hlabisa. In addition, some people are trained to become qualified tourism guides and making an income for themselves. However, it emerged from a few respondents that their lives were not improving, due to the fact that tourism in the area seemed to benefit few high ranking individuals and families such as the leaders of Traditional Authorities and their families. The challenge seemed to be the traditional authorities not clearly communicating their relationships with the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park with all community members. Therefore, it is recommended that traditional authorities together with the Park have joint community awareness sessions to explain to the community how their relationship is managed, the tourism plans that have been put in place and all other structures available for the public to participate in tourism such as Co-Management Boards, Management Committees and etc. In that way all people in the area will feel that they have been involved tourism development.

#### **4.6.1.3      Tourism in Hlabisa: Tourism Establishments Perspective**

The findings of the business respondents support those of the community as it also emerged from the businesses that the majority of the companies pay their employees between R0-R1000 per month. This level of income is expected due to the fact that these are fairly small businesses which are mainly family owned and mainly tour operators, tour guiding and B&Bs with no proper sound marketing resources to attract more tourists. The second challenge with family run business, is that even if they were to get marketing budget, their establishments would be small to accommodate large volumes of tourists thus not able to keep up with the demand. This would mean they will have to raise or borrow more capital to adjust their establishments to meet tourist demand. Whereas access to capital was one main challenge cited by businesses in the questionnaire dealing with challenges / obstructions below. Therefore, it is recommended that the small businesses in the area of Hlabisa enter into joint marketing agreements with one another, travel trade, destination marketing organisations in order to increase tourist volume and revenue but also to meet with tourist demand in the interim. This would assist the small businesses where there is an overflow of tourists, they can be moved over to the next establishment. On the other hand, local, provincial and national tourism institutions should put in place sound tourism dedicated incentives and capital to assist small tourism business businesses to grow and expand their businesses to enable these small tourism businesses to employ more local people and pay them high income.

Moreover, the findings from the tourism businesses support those of the community where they revealed that the majority of the employees in their businesses were a combination of those with matric and those without matric. However, companies with those with matric were slightly higher than those who employed people without matric. Only one company specified that they had an employee with a tourism qualification, whilst others mentioned tourist guiding as a relevant qualification whilst other companies specified qualifications outside tourism. It is therefore, recommended that tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area engages with tertiary institutions training tourism students to negotiates placement of tourism students as interns in their establishment. In this way, they will be able to groom their own employees qualified in



tourism over the years. In return establishments will have suitably qualified employees who understand the tourism business models and value chain.

The finding from the businesses further revealed that the majority of tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they do not offer any training and development to employees. Therefore, it is recommended that small tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area begin to set aside a small budget for training of employees over a period of time. Where the establishment is not able to set aside a portion of their budget for training, they should approach local development agencies and government institutions or big tourism firms a part of corporate social investment for assistance with training of their employees. This will assist the business to have skilled and qualified employees over time. The courses may include, hospitality training, catering, tourism, tourist guiding, customer care, finance, book keeping, plumbing, laundry and etc.

#### **4.6.4 Theme two: *To ascertain strategies / rural tourism models in place to empower the local community of Hlabisa socially and economically.***

According to Lenao & Saarinen (2015) rural areas are experiencing major socio-economic changes with a need to transform and diversity rural livelihoods. In this context, tourism industry is increasingly used as a tool for local development with an aim to facilitate participation and integration of communities in tourism planning and operations. According to Saxena et al. (2007) the process of rural tourism development ordinarily involves a number of stakeholders including government, local communities, private investors, service providers and tourists. "Therefore, rural tourism development is inevitably a complex process that involves potential conflicts and negotiation of landscape as different actors with different aims and values interact" (Daugstad, 2008). According to Lenao & Saarinen (2015) this raises the need to explore issues of rural tourism development using other tools which offer a more holistic approach. "The use of Integrated Rural Tourism concept has been identified as one way of addressing this challenge" (Saxena & Ilbery 2007). "A well-integrated tourism, in fact, seeks to empower local communities for the benefits of the wider rural economy through a type of tourism that observes high standards of environmental, economic and socio-cultural sustainability" (Mitchell & Reid 2001). According to

Saarinen & Lenao (2014) the aim of the Integrated Rural Tourism concept is to centralise the role of local actors and communities in rural transformations by highlighting the local needs, benefits and control in rural development. Whereas on the other hand, Akyeampong (2011) states that at the community level, approaches to tourism development which focus on the poor in society are described as “pro-poor”. Hussmann (2010) posits that because most attractions that constitute the basis for tourism development in rural areas tend to be publicly owned, and because tourism affects the lives of host communities for better or worse, using tourism as a tool for rural development requires the collaborative efforts of residents, communities, business firms and intermediary agencies, whether public or private (Hussmann 2010). In contrast Ashley (2004) suggests that Pro Poor Tourism is tourism that results in increased net benefits for poor people. It enhances the linkages between tourism businesses and poor people, so that tourism’s contribution to poverty reduction is increased and poor people are able to participate more effectively in product development (Ashley 2004).

One of the study objectives was to look into the rural tourism strategies / models put in place to empower the local community of Hlabisa socially and economically.

#### **4.6.4.1 Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

In the study area, the findings reveal that the majority of respondents indicated there are strategies put in place by the park and other government institutions to empower the local community of Hlabisa. The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park seem to have put in place sound strategies to empower communities in the Hlabisa area. In the findings it emerged that the Park has a local Co-Management Board put in place which represents the interest of the local community in the Park and to ensure that they benefit from the Park. This local Board is responsible for putting together management plans for the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and other protected areas in the area which includes the building of lodges inside and outside the Park and the establishment of a community owned game reserve in the Mpembeni area right at the border of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The results further revealed that the Park offers accredited training programmes to the local community of Hlabisa ranging from Field Rangers, horse riding and brush cutter maintenance. Park collects community levy from tourists

which is the main revenue assisting the local community of Hlabisa in implementing strategic projects. It further emerged that the Park has a Community Conservation Unit in place to engage with local communities, to create awareness of the interdependence of biodiversity, tourism and sustainable human development. In addition, it emerged that the Park processed 64 valid claims which were paid to claimants around the Traditional Authorities and the relationship between the communities and the Park has improved dramatically and eased tensions around the Park. The Park further built 510 enclosures for communities to protect their livestock and entered into co-management agreements with the claimants. Moreover, it emerged that Park supports the local community by implementing its African Wildlife Foundation programme which supports the field ranger corridor security project, which funds the rhino security monitors on the R618 Corridor road, that transects the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park which is good strategy to preserve the wildlife for future generation.

#### **4.6.4.2 Tourism in Hlabisa: Economic Development Managers Perspective**

The aim here was to ascertain what strategies - rural tourism models or tourism socio economic empowerment programmes have been planned and implemented by local, provincial and national government tourism institutions to support the local community of Hlabisa. The respondents from the seven local, provincial and national government institutions presented various responses in this regard.

The findings revealed that the local municipality is currently implementing various programmes to empower local communities involved in tourism in the area of Hlabisa and these programmes / interventions include the following: capacity building and training, incubator, mentoring, support to existing enterprises and availing municipal land to SMME to those that need it. However, the results further revealed that the local municipality lacks a clear comprehensive strategy or plan for tourism planning and development. Therefore, it is recommended the municipality should develop a sound tourism strategy and plan on how they would plan and develop tourism in the area of Hlabisa. The strategy should further outline the approaches on how the local community would be involved in tourism in the area. The results further revealed that the Umhlosinga Development Agency and Umkhanyakude District Municipality have

wine service training and Work Integrated Learning opportunities in place for the local people in Hlabisa. The development agency further stated that these interventions have yielded positive results as they now have skilled workforce in the area. It was further noted that the Umhlosinga Development Agency is the entity of the Umkhanyakude District Municipality. The results further revealed that the Umhlosinga Development Agency was planning future Programmes that would include enterprise and skills development in the Hlabisa Tourism Node, and these entail the following:

- Accommodation (3-star: 100 sleeper);
- Conference Centre and Outdoor event site (300 delegates);
- Historical Museum;
- Curio shop;
- Restaurant; and
- Art and Music Centre.

In addition, Umkhanyakude District Municipality is planning to implement a number of tourism destination marketing and promotion, heritage tourism, and community tourism development initiatives in the next five years. In addition, there is a Working Group 4 which is responsible for job creation and governance in the District which is looking into diversifying the tourism economy beyond big five, accommodation and catering in the area of Hlabisa.

The results further revealed that the provincial tourism authority has a tourism strategy and the tourism master plan in place which guide tourism development including rural tourism in the province and areas such as Hlabisa in the province. The results indicated that the provincial tourism authority was developing the Zulu Heritage Route which does not only cover Zulu Culture and Heritage but also takes us through unique eco-tourism reserves, natural hot springs and community initiatives and the world known Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Game Reserve lies next to this route. Whilst Trade and Investment KZN is assisting the community residing adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (HiP) and eMhakosini-Ophathe Heritage Park to facilitate private sector investment and community equity in the project. The results revealed that the National Department of Tourism has provided funding for tourism interpretative signage and

universal accessibility initiatives at Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park's Hiltop camp thus creating employment for the local contractors and people in the area.

The provincial tourism authority plans to continue with the rolling out of its tourism master plan, to enhance the KZN wildlife experience, enhance the Rural Tourism Experience, setting up an independent Tourism Development Fund or dedicated tourism fund within an existing provincial funding entity with funding for projects, SMMEs, communities and infrastructure, and create Tourism Awareness and Understanding to communities. Whilst the province has a clear tourism strategy and tourism masterplan in place, it does seem that there is no integration between what the National Department of Tourism, provincial tourism agencies, the District Municipality and Local Municipality does in terms of tourism planning and development in the Hlabisa area. Each government sphere is planning and implementing its own project without the other knowing. There is a need for the three government spheres to integrate their tourism planning and development efforts in the area of Hlabisa. This is evident by the fact that some of the tourism initiatives implemented in the area by various government spheres either do not feature in the municipal Integrated Development Plan or Provincial Tourism Master Plan. This lack of integration affects community participation, tourism planning and development in the area. During the interview, it further emerged that some local economic development managers were not aware that there was a provincial tourism master plan which guides tourism planning and development in the province. It is also recommended that the tourism authorities create awareness to both local municipalities and communities about its tourism master plan and ensure that tourism initiatives from the tourism master plan are included in the municipal integrated development plans.

#### **4.6.3 Theme three: *To determine the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa***

According to Kepe (2004, p. 45) local communities should play a proactive role to ensure positive benefits from rural tourism. In addition, Hall et al., (2005) argue that local communities must be able to identify potential tourism resources and attractions within their communities to support rural tourism development in order to derive tourism benefits. Whereas Koaita and Saarinen (2015: 83) posit that participation of

communities in tourism is expected so that it ensures that the benefits of tourism trickle down to the local level, the level where tourist activities actually take place. Whilst on the other hand Lee (2013) argues that community involvement can be defined as the magnitude to which the residents are involved in the daily activities within the communities that they live in. "Hence, tourism development will be more successful with the involvement of the local communities as their perception and attitudes are important for the decision makers to achieve sustainable rural tourism" (Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012). According to Hatipoglu, 2015: 28 community participation is a dynamic progression by which beneficiary client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish.

One of the study objectives was to look into the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa.

#### **4.6.3.1 Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

In the study area, the findings reveal that the majority of respondents indicated the community participates in tourism planning and development activities in the area. The respondents stated that there are structures in place such as Co-management boards in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and, Local Community Committees and Community Trust that represent communities in decision making processes in relation to tourism. This process allows the community to contribute to management plan of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and stated that they are able to influence community based tourism activities. The respondents stated that they were involved in the planning process of a lodge development was approved for each of the three areas with communities involved in the process (Biyela Lodge, Zulu Lodge and Mthembu Lodge) and construction work which has started. According to the Ezemvelo officials the community is involved in the planning phase of tourism development. The findings further revealed that there the Park has a good stakeholder relationship with its neighbours where they have regular engagements with Amakhosi, community and tour operators around the Park. In addition, the findings reveal that every year, tour operators have to renew their open game drive permits by presenting their vehicles for inspection to enable the Park to generate further revenue estimated at R600 000

annually, on permits alone. The Park further has full support from the three traditional authorities (AbakwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni) land owners after long negotiations and a beneficiation model on an annual basis, all three traditional authorities are managed as one co-management forum.

However, a few of the findings show that a few of the community respondents felt and believed that the local people do not participate in tourism and are not represented in tourism structures. They stated that tourism was only meant for people who hold high influential positions in area such as politically connected and traditional leaders and if they not part of that grouping, they are unlikely to be considered. These people seemed very despondent and had lost hope in tourism development as a possible sector to improve their lives. This challenge or phenomenon featured prominently and was mentioned repeatedly by respondents throughout the research questions as it also came up on the socio economic conditions theme above. Therefore, the recommendation would be similar to the one provided above on theme one (socio economic conditions), with an elaboration on the challenge of politically connected individuals. In order to address issue of benefiting those who are politically connected only, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should consider having a code of conduct in place for its officials to prohibit them from abusing power, and prevent them from being involved in unethical conduct. The Park should then enforce the code of conduct in order to ensure that all officials adhere to the rules. The code of conduct should also protect whistle blowers. The Park is the property of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife which is a state owned entity and therefore, it is recommended that Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife opens a call centre for reporting unethical behaviour where people reporting such behaviour could remain anonymous. According to Saxean et al. (2007) the process of developing rural tourism ordinarily involves a number of stakeholders including government, local communities, private investors, service providers and tourists. "Therefore, rural tourism development is a complex process that involves potential conflicts and negotiation of landscapes of different actors with different aims and values" (Daugstad 2008, Paniagua & Moyana 2007).

#### **4.6.2 Theme four: *To determine level of tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa.***

According to Godfrey & Clarke (2000) tourism activities entail the following categories: **recreational activities** (nature trails, horse trails, gliding; hang-gliding; parachuting; ballooning; horse riding, ice rink, water sports bungee jumping and etc.), **Services** (retail, art galleries; craft galleries, health resorts; conference centre; meeting rooms and etc.) and **Facilities** (winery tours /tasting, zoo / sea-life centre; wildlife sanctuary; game park; farm park; aviary; aquarium; arboretum; botanical garden; planetarium, theme park, dams and etc.). One of the study objectives was to look into the level of tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa.

##### **4.6.2.1 Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

In the study area, the findings reveal that the majority of respondents indicated wildlife / safari activities (game interpretation (education) centre, game drives, game walks and morning walks) were the main tourism activities taking in the area of Hlabisa. This was expected due to the fact that the area of Hlabisa is thriving on tourism with the Hluhluwe-iMfolizi Park, Mpembeni Community Conservancy Nature Reserve, Community Nselweni Bush lodge inside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, Umkhombe Tourism, a range of accommodation facilities such as hotels, game lodges, guest houses, bed and breakfasts, self-catering, craft centres, spa facilities, conference venues, safari experience, bird watching, art and craft centres and camping etc. Therefore, a lot of people (425) are employed by the park and there is a lot of local tourism businesses doing business with the park, i.e. tour operators and tour guides who offer guided services to tourists visiting the park to experience wildlife. The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park offers the popular iMfolozi wilderness trails and with these trails alone the Park's target for 2016/2017 was R1, 157, 050.00 million rand and the actual was R 2, 592, 724.24, exceeding the target by R1, 576, 631.06. This is evident that tourism activities can generate income and improve lives for local communities. The findings also revealed that the provision of accommodation and hospitality services were the second largest tourism activities in the area with a few tourists engaging in cultural activities. The results further revealed that there is a lot of money



generated by the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park which in turn goes into the community levies for the community to use for community projects. The Park has also given the two craft centres within the Park to the local community of Hlabisa to run and manage on their own to assist with income generation. Whilst this is good initiative meant for community empowerment. However, the key challenge that emerged with the community members that run these craft centres lack training in relation to product development and market insights. There is a need for the Hluhluwe-iMholozi Park to offer specific training to community members managing the two craft centres in the Park in order for them to produce craft that is of high quality and which will respond to the needs of the tourists or appeals to the market.

#### **4.6.5 Theme five: *Challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa***

According to Mitchell & Hall (2005) some major challenges related to rural tourism include lack of understanding and knowledge on demand factors, incapability of product presentation, and constraints in marketing, cooperation and networking in rural tourism development. Whereas Ring et al. (2009) states that due to the small size of rural enterprises, resources tend to be limited and there is often a lack of qualified workers, many people working in such enterprises being family members whose involvement is not conditional on the possession of formal qualifications. Fitjar & Rodriguez-Pose (2011) suggests that small rural tourism enterprises cannot achieve economies of scale for marketing activities and social capital to overcome barriers on their own. In addition, Raupeliene (2015) posits that the internal factors disturbing the development of rural tourism is the lack of professional knowledge, poor knowledge of foreign languages, imperfect organisational structure, poor facilities or equipment, lack of information and shortage of experience and the external factors by data survey are economic (GDP, salary development), political environment (visa, implementation of state tourism policy), natural environment and its application for recreational activities, seasonality), legislation of rural tourism business, technology (rural infrastructure, accessibility by roads, water supply, access to internet) and social (demographics, lifestyle, celebration of the traditions, and their change, medical assistance and training arrangements) factors.

One of the study objectives was to look into the challenges / obstructions that impede community participation in rural tourism development, owning tourism related businesses and any other social ills in Hlabisa as the study area.

#### **4.6.5.1 *Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective***

In the study area, the findings revealed that the majority of respondents stated that whilst there were structures in place that represent the community in tourism through Co-Management Boards, however, the key challenges mentioned were that there was no information on how locals should start a tourism business in the area including cooperatives, non-profit organisations, what tourism businesses they can start, where to access finance, where, how to register the business and let alone running a successful tourism business. Therefore, it is recommended that the local municipality (Local Economic Development Unit), the District municipality and its development Agency develops a brochure which will provide information on how to start and grow a tourism successful tourism business. It will be appropriate to have the brochure in isiZulu and English considering that the majority of the population in the Hlabisa area speak isiZulu. This brochure should further provide information on the various funding mechanisms offered by different financial institutions in South Africa and outside the country such as the European funding. The brochure should be available in electronic and printed versions, distributed at local and district municipal offices and websites. In addition, the local economic development agency should consider hosting awareness sessions to education communities in the area about these brochures and the information contained in them on how to start a tourism business. The community further highlighted that throughout the whole year, their area is abuzz with tourists, and they compete for their space with tourists which makes it difficult for them to enjoy their spaces. In addition, the food prices have consistently gone up due to tourism demand in the area. The town centre of Hlabisa needs to be extended in order to spread development due to tourism demand. This calls for the city council to undertake future town planning that takes into account pleasant public spaces to cater for both the locals and tourists. The results further revealed that food prices are higher for the locals due to tourism demand in the area. The recommended strategy to curb this challenge is for the local development agency to create awareness for locals to start

their own tourism businesses so that more people can be employed and be able to afford buying food for their families. The Hlabisa area has subsistence farming activity taking place. Therefore, it is recommended that the municipality and traditional authorities make more land available for the locals to scale up their farming activities. The local development agency should then consider making incentives available in order for the small scale farmers to produce more and supply shops, restaurants and accommodation facilities in the area to meet the tourism demand and this may keep the food prices fair and stable.

The community further revealed that they were not happy with the illegal poaching of the rhinos in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and the proposed Fuleni coal mine at Esiyembeni, outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and they viewed these issues a major challenge that impede on rural tourism development in their area. In order to combat illegal poaching in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, it is recommended that the park authority consider employing a combination of interventions which include but not limited to the following; conduct regular patrols covering strategic areas in the Park, prosecution of any offender caught committing an offence, regular documented reports on security incidents, work hand in hand with the media houses to inform and educate the public at large regarding rhino poaching. In addition, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should have a Reaction Unit that is fully capacitated to respond to crime incidents within the Park. In order to deal with the challenge of a proposed mine outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, the Park authority and affected stakeholders should work together to find solutions. It is recommended that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park conducts two critical studies; namely, the Economic Impact Study and Environmental Impact Study. The Economic Impact Study will provide all parties affected with quantitatively estimated economic benefits the proposed mine could bring to the surrounding community in the Hlabisa area compared to tourism. The Environmental Impact Study will provide all the affected parties with sufficient level of detail to demonstrate that the proposed mine will have no negative impacts on the natural features or ecological functions of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and surrounding communities.

#### **4.6.5.2 Tourism in Hlabisa: Tourism Establishments Perspective**

The results further revealed that about 80% of small tourism businesses in the area experience challenges related to bulk infrastructure; namely, poor road access, very limited water supply, unreliable electricity supply and load shedding. In addition, the results revealed that small tourism businesses in the area have no access to finance, markets, incentives and training support from government. It is therefore recommended that the local municipality utilises the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) to upgrade the roads leading to and from tourist attractions and accommodation facilities in the area in order for tourism to thrive. In addition, the municipality needs to ensure that there is reliable supply of electricity. The municipality should inspect and maintain its electricity and water infrastructure all the time and have people on the ground to ensure that their bulk infrastructure is working efficiently and effectively.

The results further revealed that tourism support programmes in terms of incentives and grant funding tend to be mainly available at the national government sphere, and these include the Tourism Incentive Programme, Tourism Green Fund, Tourism Transformation Fund and Working for Tourism Programme Fund to name a few which are offered by the National Department of Tourism and other National State Owned Entities. However, another challenge is that whilst these programmes are available but small tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area are not aware of them. Out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed in the Hlabisa area only one business received part funding from the National State Owned Entity during construction phase. It is therefore important for the three spheres of government to work together to create awareness about the different support programmes available for small tourism businesses. In addition, out of the 10 small tourism businesses interviewed the results revealed that no funding or incentive was received from local government except for training programmes and only limited financial support was received from the provincial entity for market access. The results further revealed that whilst there are various programmes to support small tourism businesses at all three spheres of government but none there are none dedicated to start ups. Therefore, it is recommended that the three spheres of government should consider working together to come up with programmes that would cater for start-ups in tourism, and business growth incentives when businesses are emerging until businesses are well established.

#### **4.7 Summary of the chapter**

This chapter presented the data collected from the respondents in the Hlabisa area and the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to make meaning of conceptualization presented in Chapter two. This chapter further reports on the results of the research that was conducted to investigate the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The concept and literature discussed in chapter two were matched or tested in this chapter in line with the identified themes namely: the socio economic well-being, tourism development and the nature of tourism activities, community participation and representation in Hlabisa, rural tourism strategies / rural tourism models in the area, and challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa.

## CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE TRAJECTORIES

### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise and draw some conclusions arising from the main findings of the research study and its contribution to the field of knowledge. In addition, it discusses and analyses the results of the research as presented in chapter five. It further draws conclusions and recommendations on the effects of tourism development on rural communities adjacent to game parks (Hlabisa) and suggest possible solutions, strategies to be used to ensure that the community of Hlabisa is involved and benefits from tourism activities in their area.

### 5.2 Summary of the Study

The fundamental aim of this study was to determine and examine the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. As the socio economic conditions of the local communities are attributed and associated with tourism activities under the microscope, challenges faced by the local community and the respective tourism related business stakeholders entrusted with the obligation to expedite and fast track the objectives of social and economic development in the area of Hlabisa, were also taken into cognisance. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. The content of the chapters are summarised below:

The **first chapter (Overview of the Study)** provided a brief introduction to the background of study including a discussion of the research problem, aim of the study, objectives and rationale for the study, as well as delimitation and limitations of the study.

The **second chapter (Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework (IRT) model)** focused on the connection between community participation, rural

tourism, community development and socio economic impact reflecting on previous empirical studies, literature and models. Community participation in rural tourism is one of the most important practices that has to be implemented by local tourism developers within the public and private sectors. However, meaningful participation is often disregarded by developers. As a result, this chapter presented important variables of this research in relation to rural tourism. In addition, international and national perspective of rural tourism development models and its effects on local communities and key role players were discussed as well as the Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) theoretical framework.

The **third chapter (Research Design and Methodology/ Spatial setting of the study)** described the details of the research design, methodology, the target population, sampling techniques employed and instruments used to gather and analyse data for this study as well as the spatial setting of the study. This chapter further explains how the study was conducted and the methods of investigation undertaken by the researcher to address the research objectives and questions.

The **fourth Chapter (Data presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation)** presented the data collected from the respondents in the Hlabisa area and the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to make meaning of conceptualization presented in Chapter two. This chapter further reported on the results of the research that were conducted to investigate the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The concept and literature discussed in chapter two were matched or tested in this chapter in line with the identified themes namely: the socio economic well-being, tourism development and the nature of tourism activities, community participation and representation in Hlabisa, rural tourism strategies / rural tourism models in the area, and challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa.

The **fifth chapter (Findings, Conclusions and Recommendation for Future Trajectories)** concludes this research study by providing a general overview of what the study entailed and what it achieved. In conclusion this chapter provides a summary of the findings and then proposes recommendations.

### 5.3 Conclusions from the Research Objectives

This section summarises the research findings generated from the qualitative data presented in Chapter 5. The objectives of this study are a guide that has channelled the direction and the progression followed by this research project. The discussion in this chapter is guided by the research objectives stated in Chapter 1 which are as follows:

- To determine the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa, i.e. employment, income, skills development, entrepreneurial opportunities;
- To ascertain rural tourism strategies / rural tourism models in place to empower the local community of Hlabisa socially and economically?
- To determine the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa;
- To determine level of tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa;
- To ascertain the challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa?

The research aim of this study was to determine and examine the socio-economic effects of tourism development on the rural community of Hlabisa, Northern KwaZulu-Natal adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The research is centred on rural tourism and its socio-economic effects on the local community of Hlabisa located adjacent to the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, investigating and disclosing the socio-economic conditions, tourism activities and community participation as well as challenges faced by the local community and businesses in the area. The socio-economic conditions include employment, income, education, quality of life and other relevant infrastructure contributed by rural tourism to the local economy of Hlabisa. The succeeding section of this chapter discusses and presents the conclusions of the study based on the objectives set out in Chapter 1. All the conclusions presented in this chapter were generated from the interviews that were held with study respondents.



### **5.3.1 Theme one: *The first objective was to determine the socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa, i.e. employment, income, skills development, entrepreneurial opportunities***

The socio economic well-being of the local community of Hlabisa is outlined below:

#### **5.3.1.1 Tourism in Hlabisa: community perspective**

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents are happy with the economic opportunities presented by tourism development in the area. Tourism development in the area has improved their lives of the local community, as they either own a small tourism business or work in B&B's, lodges, craft shops and in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. However, the key challenges that emerged from the findings were that the majority of the locals employed in tourism occupied low paying positions, with grade 08-12 and no tourism qualifications. This means locals do not have the necessary qualifications and skills to qualify to be employed in Senior Management positions in the tourism establishments in the area. The lack of a tourism qualification, training and skills would prohibit locals to progress up the ranks to become managers who earn higher salaries and be in a position to make key decisions about tourism in the area. Whilst Umhlosinga Development Agency offers bursaries and learnership programmes in place for the youth in the area, there is a need to scale up this programme in order to have greater reach and impact in advancing the careers of the local people in the local tourism industry.

#### **5.3.1.2 Tourism in Hlabisa: Economic Development Managers Perspective**

The local and district municipality, provincial and national government tourism institutions should consider providing bursaries to the youth of Hlabisa who have passed matric to study tourism at tertiary institution with the objective of coming back to work in the tourism sector in the area and grow their career in tourism. The finding further revealed that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park alone contributes an immense real jobs opportunity to the local community as it has employees around 425 people. The majority of the respondents acknowledged that their income is not high, however, its sufficient to support their families on a monthly basis. This is evident that the Park should put in place a sound educational programme to improve the education of the

local people of Hlabisa so that they can advance to high ranking positions in order to earn high income. It further emerged that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park collects the community levy from its guests and this allows the community to submit applications to implement projects in the area, thus improving the livelihood of the local community of Hlabisa. Moreover, it emerged that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has developed the Nselweni Bush Lodge within the park which belongs to the local Inkosis, such as Inkosi Hlabisa and Mdletshe around Hlabisa. This lodge has 10 chalets which can accommodate 20 people per night and has a game drive vehicle to take out its guests on tours. The lodge enjoys around an average of 60% occupancy per annum. In addition to the above, Ezemvelo also allowed the community adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to conduct two craft centres in order to improve the livelihoods of the local community of Hlabisa. In addition, some people are trained to become qualified tourism guides and making an income for themselves. However, it emerged from a few respondents that their lives were not improving, due to the fact that tourism in the area seemed to benefit few high ranking individuals and families such as the leaders of Traditional Authorities and their families. The challenge seemed to be the traditional authorities not clearly communicating their relationships with the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park with all community members. Therefore, it is recommended that traditional authorities together with the Park have joint community awareness sessions to explain to the community how their relationship is managed, the tourism plans that have been put in place and all other structures available for the public to participate in tourism such as Co-Management Boards, Management Committees and etc. In that way all people will in the area will feel that they have been involved tourism development.

#### **5.3.1..3      Tourism in Hlabisa: Tourism Establishments Perspective**

The findings of the business respondents support those of the community as it also emerged from the businesses that the majority of the companies pay their employees between R0-R1000 per month. This level of income is expected due to the fact that these are fairly small businesses which are mainly family owned and mainly tour operators, tour guiding and B&Bs with no proper sound marketing resources to attract more tourists. The second challenge with family run business, is that even if they were to get marketing budget, their establishments would be small to accommodate large volumes of tourists thus not able to keep up with the demand. This would mean they

will have to raise or borrow more capital to adjust their establishments to meet tourist demand. Whereas access to capital was one main challenge cited by businesses in the questionnaire dealing with challenges / obstructions below. Therefore, it is recommended that the small businesses in the area of Hlabisa enter into joint marketing agreements with one another, travel trade, destination marketing organisations in order to increase tourist volume and revenue but also to meet with tourist demand in the interim. This would assist the small businesses where there is an overflow of tourists, they can be moved over to the next establishment. On the other hand, local, provincial and national tourism institutions should put in place sound tourism dedicated incentives and capital to assist small tourism business businesses to grow and expand their businesses to enable these small tourism businesses to employ more local people and pay them high income.

Moreover, the findings from the tourism businesses support those of the community where they revealed that the majority of the employees in their businesses were a combination of those with matric and those without matric. However, companies with those with matric were slightly higher than those who employed people without matric. Only one company specified that they had an employee with a tourism qualification, whilst others mentioned tourist guiding as a relevant qualification whilst other companies specified qualifications outside tourism. It is therefore, recommended that tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area engages with tertiary institutions training tourism students to negotiates placement of tourism students as interns in their establishment. In this way, they will be able to groom their own employees qualified in tourism over the years. In return establishments will have suitably qualified employees who understand the tourism business models and value chain.

The finding from the businesses further revealed that the majority of tourism businesses interviewed indicated that they do not offer any training and development to employees. Therefore, it is recommended that small tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area begin to set aside a small budget for training of employees over a period of time. Where the establishment is not able to set aside a portion of their budget for training, they should approach local development agencies and government institutions or big tourism firms a part of corporate social investment for assistance with training of their employees. This will assist the business to have skilled and

qualified employees over time. The courses may include, hospitality training, catering, tourism, tourist guiding, customer care, finance, book keeping, plumbing, laundry and etc.

### **5.3.2 Theme two: *The second objective was to determine level of tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa.***

The Tourism development and the nature of tourism activities taking place in the Hlabisa area are as follows

#### **5.3.2.1. Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents indicated wildlife / safari activities (game interpretation (education) centre, game drives, game walks and morning walks) were the main tourism activities taking in the area of Hlabisa. This was expected due to the fact that the area of Hlabisa is thriving on tourism with the Hluhluwe-iMfolizi Park, Mpembeni Community Conservancy Nature Reserve, Community Nselweni Bush lodge inside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, Umkhombe Tourism, a range of accommodation facilities such as hotels, game lodges, guest houses, bed and breakfasts, self-catering, craft centres, spa facilities, conference venues, safari experience, bird watching, art and craft centres and camping etc. Therefore, a lot of people (425) are employed by the park and there is a lot of local tourism businesses doing business with the park, i.e. tour operators and tour guides who offer guided services to tourists visiting the park to experience wildlife. The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park offers the popular iMfolozi wilderness trails and with these trails alone the Park's target for 2016/2017 was R1, 157, 050.00 million rand and the actual was R 2, 592, 724.24, exceeding the target by R1, 576, 631.06. This is evident that tourism activities can generate income and improve lives for local communities. The findings also revealed that the provision of accommodation and hospitality services were the second largest tourism activities in the area with a few tourists engaging in cultural activities. The results further revealed that there is a lot of money generated by the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park which in turn goes into the community levies for the community to use for community projects. The Park has also given the two craft centres within the Park to the local community of Hlabisa to run and manage on their own to assist with income generation. Whilst this is good initiative meant for community empowerment. However,

the key challenge that emerged with the community members that run these craft centres lack training in relation to product development and market insights. There is a need for the Hluhluwe-iMholozi Park to offer specific training to community members managing the two craft centres in the Park in order to for them to produce craft that if of high quality and which will respond to the needs of the tourists or appeals to the market.

### **5.3.3 Theme three: *The third objective was to determine the level of community participation and representation on tourism activities taking in Hlabisa***

The community participation and representation the Hlabisa area is outlined below:

#### **5.3.3.1 Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents indicated the community participates in tourism planning and development activities in the area. The respondents stated that there are structures in place such as Co-management boards in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and, Local Community Committees and Community Trust that represent communities in decision making processes in relation to tourism. This process allows the community to contribute to management plan of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and stated that they are able to influence community based tourism activities. The respondents stated that they were involved in the planning process of a lodge development was approved for each of the three areas with communities involved in the process (Biyela Lodge, Zulu Lodge and Mthembu Lodge) and construction work which has started. According to the Ezemvelo officials the community is involved in the planning phase of tourism development. The findings further revealed that there the Park has a good stakeholder relationship with its neighbours where they have regular engagements with Amakhosi, community and tour operators around the Park. In addition, the findings reveal that every year, tour operators have to renew their open game drive permits by presenting their vehicles for inspection to enable the Park to generate further revenue estimated at R600 000 annually, on permits alone. The Park further has full support from the three traditional authorities (AbaKwaHlabisa, Mpembeni and Mdletsheni) land owners after long negotiations and a beneficiation model on an annual basis, all three traditional authorities are managed as one co-management forum. However, a few of the findings

show that a few of the community respondents felt and believed that the local people do not participate in tourism and are not represented in tourism structures. They stated that tourism was only meant for people who hold high influential positions in area such as politically connected and traditional leaders and if they not part of that grouping, they are unlikely to be considered. These people seemed very despondent and had lost hope in tourism development as a possible sector to improve their lives. This challenge or phenomenon featured prominently and was mentioned repeatedly by respondents throughout the research questions as it also came up on the socio economic conditions theme above. Therefore, the recommendation would be similar to the one provided above on theme one (socio economic conditions), with an elaboration on the challenge of politically connected individuals. In order to address issue of benefiting those who are politically connected only, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should consider having a code of conduct in place for its officials to prohibit them from abusing power, and prevent them from being involved in unethical conduct. The Park should then enforce the code of conduct in order to ensure that all officials adhere to the rules. The code of conduct should also protect whistle blowers. The Park is the property of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife which is a state owned entity and therefore, it is recommended that Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife opens a call centre for reporting unethical behaviour where people reporting such behaviour could remain anonymous.

#### **5.3.4 Theme four: The fourth objective was to ascertain strategies / rural tourism models in place to empower the local community of Hlabisa socially and economically?**

The Rural tourism strategies / models in the area of Hlabisa are outlined as follows:

##### **5.3.4.1 Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents indicated there are strategies put in place by the park and other government institutions to empower the local community of Hlabisa. The Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park seem to have put in place sound strategies to empower communities in the Hlabisa area. In the findings it emerged that the Park has a local Co-Management Board put in place which represents the interest of the local community in the Park and to ensure that they benefit from the Park. This local Board is responsible for putting together management plans for the Hluhluwe-

iMfolozi Park and other protected areas in the area which includes the building of lodges inside and outside the Park and the establishment of a community owned game reserve in the Mpembeni area right at the border of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The results further revealed that the Park offers accredited training programmes to the local community of Hlabisa ranging from Field Rangers, horse riding and brush cutter maintenance. Park collects community levy from tourists which is the main revenue assisting the local community of Hlabisa in implementing strategic projects. It further emerged that the Park has a Community Conservation Unit in place to engage with local communities, to create awareness of the interdependence of biodiversity, tourism and sustainable human development. In addition, it emerged that the Park processed 64 valid claims which were paid to claimants around the Traditional Authorities and the relationship between the communities and the Park has improved dramatically and eased tensions around the Park. The Park further built 510 enclosures for communities to protect their livestock and entered into co-management agreements with the claimants. Moreover, it emerged that Park supports the local community by implementing its African Wildlife Foundation programme which supports the field ranger corridor security project, which funds the rhino security monitors on the R618 Corridor road, that transects the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park which is good strategy to preserve the wildlife for future generation.

#### **5.3.4.2      Tourism in Hlabisa: Economic Development Managers Perspective**

The findings revealed that the local municipality is currently implementing various programmes to empower local communities involved in tourism in the area of Hlabisa and these programmes / interventions include the following: capacity building and training, incubator, mentoring, support to existing enterprises and availing municipal land to SMME to those that need it. However, the results further revealed that the local municipality lacks a clear comprehensive strategy or plan for tourism planning and development. Therefore, it is recommended the municipality should develop a sound tourism strategy and plan on how they would plan and develop tourism in the area of Hlabisa. The strategy should further outline the approaches on how the local community would be involved in tourism in the area. The results further revealed that the Umhlosinga Development Agency and Umkhanyakude District Municipality have wine service training and Work Integrated Learning opportunities in place for the local

people in Hlabisa. The development agency further stated that these interventions have yielded positive results as they now have skilled workforce in the area. It was further noted that the Umhlosinga Development Agency is the entity of the Umkhanyakude District Municipality. The results further revealed that the Umhlosinga Development Agency was planning future Programmes that would include enterprise and skills development in the Hlabisa Tourism Node, and these entail the following:

- Accommodation (3-star: 100 sleeper);
- Conference Centre and Outdoor event site (300 delegates);
- Historical Museum;
- Curio shop;
- Restaurant; and
- Art and Music Centre.

The Umkhanyakude District Municipality is planning to implement a number of tourism destination marketing and promotion, heritage tourism, and community tourism development initiatives in the next five years. In addition, there is a Working Group 4 which is responsible for job creation and governance in the District which is looking into diversifying the tourism economy beyond big five, accommodation and catering in the area of Hlabisa.

The results further revealed that the provincial tourism authority has a tourism strategy and the tourism master plan in place which guide tourism development including rural tourism in the province and areas such as Hlabisa in the province. The results indicated that the provincial tourism authority was developing the Zulu Heritage Route which does not only cover Zulu Culture and Heritage but also takes us through unique eco-tourism reserves, natural hot springs and community initiatives and the world known Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Game Reserve lies next to this route. Whilst Trade and Investment KZN is assisting the community residing adjacent to Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (HiP) and eMhakosini-Ophathe Heritage Park to facilitate private sector investment and community equity in the project. The results revealed that the National Department of Tourism has provided funding for tourism interpretative signage and universal accessibility initiatives at Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park's Hiltop camp thus creating employment for the local contractors and people in the area.



The provincial tourism authority plans to continue with the rolling out of its tourism master plan, to enhance the KZN wildlife experience, enhance the Rural Tourism Experience, setting up an independent Tourism Development Fund or dedicated tourism fund within an existing provincial funding entity with funding for projects, SMMEs, communities and infrastructure, and create Tourism Awareness and Understanding to communities. Whilst the province has a clear tourism strategy and tourism masterplan in place, it does seem that there is no integration between what the National Department of Tourism, provincial tourism agencies, the District Municipality and Local Municipality does in terms of tourism planning and development in the Hlabisa area. Each government sphere is planning and implementing its own project without the other knowing. There is a need for the three government spheres to integrate their tourism planning and development efforts in the area of Hlabisa. This is evident by the fact that some of the tourism initiatives implemented in the area by various government spheres either do not feature in the municipal Integrated Development Plan or Provincial Tourism Master Plan. This lack of integration affects community participation, tourism planning and development in the area. During the interview, it further emerged that some local economic development managers were not aware that there was a provincial tourism master plan which guides tourism planning and development in the province. It is also recommended that the tourism authorities create awareness to both local municipalities and communities about its tourism master plan and ensure that tourism initiatives from the tourism master plan are included in the municipal integrated development plans.

### **5.3.5 Theme five: *The fifth objective was to ascertain the challenges / obstructions faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs of Hlabisa?***

The challenges / obstructions in the area of Hlabisa are outlined as follows:

#### **5.3.5.1 Tourism in Hlabisa: Community Perspective**

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents stated that whilst there were structures in place that represent the community in tourism through Co-Management Boards, however, the key challenges mentioned were that there was no information

on how locals should start a tourism business in the area including cooperatives, non-profit organisations, what tourism businesses they can start, where to access finance, where, how to register the business and let alone running a successful tourism business. Therefore, it is recommended that the local municipality (Local Economic Development Unit), the District municipality and its development Agency develops a brochure which will provide information on how to start and grow a tourism successful tourism business. It will be appropriate to have the brochure in iSiZulu and English considering that the majority of the population in the Hlabisa area speak isZulu. This brochure should further provide information on the various funding mechanisms offered by different financial institutions in South Africa and outside the country such as the European funding. The brochure should be available in electronic and printed versions, distributed at local and district municipal offices and websites. In addition, the local economic development agency should consider hosting awareness sessions to education communities in the area about these brochures and the information contained in them on how to start a tourism business.

The community further highlighted that throughout the whole year, their area is abuzz with tourists, and they compete for their space with tourists which makes it difficult for them to enjoy their spaces. In addition, the food prices have consistently gone up due to tourism demand in the area. The town centre of Hlabisa needs to be extended in order to spread development due to tourism demand. This calls for the city council to undertake future town planning that takes into account pleasant public spaces to cater for both the locals and tourists. The results further revealed that food prices are higher for the locals due to tourism demand in the area. The recommended strategy to curb this challenge is for the local development agency to create awareness for locals to start their own tourism businesses so that more people can be employed and be able to afford buying food for their families. The Hlabisa area has subsistence farming activity taking place. Therefore, it is recommended that the municipality and traditional authorities make more land available for the locals to scale up their farming activities. The local development agency should then consider making incentives available in order for the small scale farmers to produce more and supply shops, restaurants and accommodation facilities in the area to meet the tourism demand and this may keep the food prices fair and stable. The community further revealed that they were not happy with the illegal poaching of the rhinos in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and the

proposed Fuleni coal mine at Esiyembeni, outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and they viewed these issues a major challenge that impede on rural tourism development in their area. In order to combat illegal poaching in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, it is recommended that the park authority consider employing a combination of interventions which include but not limited to the following; conduct regular patrols covering strategic areas in the Park, prosecution of any offender caught committing an offence, regular documented reports on security incidents, work hand in hand with the media houses to inform and educate the public at large regarding rhino poaching. In addition, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should have a Reaction Unit that is fully capacitated to respond to crime incidents within the Park.

In order to deal with the challenge of a proposed mine outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, the Park authority and affected stakeholders should work together to find solutions. It is recommended that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park conducts two critical studies; namely, the Economic Impact Study and Environmental Impact Study. The Economic Impact Study will provide all parties affected with quantitatively estimated economic benefits the proposed mine could bring to the surrounding community in the Hlabisa area compared to tourism. The Environmental Impact Study will provide all the affected parties with sufficient level of detail to demonstrate that the proposed mine will have no negative impacts on the natural features or ecological functions of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and surrounding communities.

#### **5.3.5.2      Tourism in Hlabisa: Tourism Establishments Perspective**

The results further revealed that about 80% of small tourism businesses in the area experience challenges related to bulk infrastructure; namely, poor road access, very limited water supply, unreliable electricity supply and load shedding. In addition, the results revealed that small tourism businesses in the area have no access to finance, markets, incentives and training support from government. It is therefore recommended that the local municipality utilises the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) to upgrade the roads leading to and from tourist attractions and accommodation facilities in the area in order for tourism to thrive. In addition, the municipality needs to ensure that there is reliable supply of electricity. The municipality should inspect and maintain its electricity and water infrastructure all the time and have people on the

ground to ensure that their bulk infrastructure is working efficiently and effectively. The results further revealed that tourism support programmes in terms of incentives and grant funding tend to be mainly available at the national government sphere, and these include the Tourism Incentive Programme, Tourism Green Fund, Tourism Transformation Fund and Working for Tourism Programme Fund to name a few which are offered by the National Department of Tourism and other National State Owned Entities.

However, another challenge is that whilst these programmes are available but small tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area are not aware of them. Out of the 10 tourism businesses interviewed in the Hlabisa area only one business received part funding from the National State Owned Entity during construction phase. It is therefore important for the three spheres of government to work together to create awareness about the different support programmes available for small tourism businesses. In addition, out of the 10 small tourism businesses interviewed the results revealed that no funding or incentive was received from local government except for training programmes and only limited financial support was received from the provincial entity for market access. The results further revealed that whilst there are various programmes to support small tourism businesses at all three spheres of government but none there are none dedicated to start ups. Therefore, it is recommended that the three spheres of government should consider working together to come up with programmes that would cater for start-ups in tourism, and business growth incentives when businesses are emerging until businesses are well established.

#### **5.4 Study Recommendations**

The Province of KwaZulu-Natal has a clear tourism strategy and tourism masterplan in place for the planning, development and promotion of tourism in the province. It is therefore, important for the local, District Municipality Umhlozinga Development Agency to develop and align its tourism plans and policies to the provincial tourism strategy and tourism master plan. The local tourism plans and policies must promote community participation in tourism project planning, design implementation, management and monitoring. The objectives of these local tourism plans for the

Hlabisa area should take into enhancement of equitable distribution of tourism revenues; increased local participation in decision making; increasing the multiplier effects of tourism; and, minimization of social and environmental impacts of tourism in the Hlabisa area.

The following recommendations can assist to minimize detrimental effects of tourism, and enhance active participation for sustainable tourism development:

- ❖ Whilst tourism development has improved the lives of the local community of Hlabisa, however, the majority of the local people employed in tourism occupy low paying positions, with grade 08-12 and no tourism qualifications. This means locals do not have the necessary qualifications and skills to qualify to be employed in Senior Management positions in the tourism establishments in the area. The local and district municipality, provincial and national government tourism institutions should consider providing bursaries to the youth of Hlabisa who have passed matric to study tourism at tertiary institution with the objective of coming back to work in the tourism sector in the area and grow their career in tourism. In addition, the above mentioned government departments and entities should consider scaling learnership programmes in order to have greater reach and impact in advancing the careers of the local people in the local tourism industry. Moreover, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should put in place a sound educational programme to improve the education of the local people of Hlabisa so that they can advance to high ranking positions in order to earn high income. The Hluhluwe-iMholozi Park should also offer specific training to community members managing the two craft centres in the Park in order to for them to produce craft that if of high quality and which will respond to the needs of the tourists or appeals to the market.
- ❖ Whilst the results revealed that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park has put sound tourism strategies in place to empower communities in the Hlabisa area including structures such as Co-management boards in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and, Local Community Committees and Community Trust that represent communities in decision making processes in relation to tourism as well as the

collects the community levy. However, a very few number of the community members in the Hlabisa area felt that tourism in the area benefited few high ranking individuals and families such as the leaders of Traditional Authorities and their families. It further emerged that the traditional authorities do not clearly communicate their relationship with the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park with all community members. It is recommended that traditional authorities together with the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park have joint community awareness sessions to explain to the community how their relationship is managed, the tourism plans that have been put in place and all other structures available for the public to participate in tourism such as Co-Management Boards, Management Committees and etc. In that way all people in the area will feel that they have been involved tourism development. Moreover, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should consider having a code of conduct in place for its officials to prohibit them from abusing power, and prevent them from being involved in unethical conduct. The Park should then enforce the code of conduct in order to ensure that all officials adhere to the rules. The code of conduct should also protect whistle blowers. The Park is the property of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife which is a state owned entity and therefore, it is recommended that Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife opens a call centre for reporting unethical behaviour where people reporting such behaviour could remain anonymous.

- ❖ There was no information on how locals should start a tourism business in the area. It is recommended that the local municipality (Local Economic Development Unit), the District municipality and its development Agency develops a brochure which will provide information on how to start and grow a tourism successful tourism business. It will be appropriate to have the brochure in iSiZulu and English considering that the majority of the population in the Hlabisa area speak isiZulu. This brochure should further provide information on the various funding mechanisms offered by different financial institutions in South Africa and outside the country such as the European funding. In addition, the local economic development agency should consider hosting awareness sessions to education communities in the area about these brochures and the information contained in them on how to start a tourism business.

- ❖ In order to deal with overcrowding in the town of Hlabisa during peak season, the local municipality should consider extending the town centre of Hlabisa in order to spread development due to tourism demand. This calls for the city council to undertake future town planning that takes into account pleasant public spaces to cater for both the locals and tourists. The results further revealed that food prices are higher for the locals due to tourism demand in the area. The recommended strategy to curb this challenge is for the local development agency to create awareness for locals to start their own tourism businesses so that more people can be employed and be able to afford buying food for their families. The Hlabisa area has subsistence farming activity taking place. Therefore, it is recommended that the municipality and traditional authorities make more land available for the locals to scale up their farming activities. The local development agency should then consider making incentives available in order for the small scale farmers to produce more and supply shops, restaurants and accommodation facilities in the area to meet the tourism demand and this may keep the food prices fair and stable.
  
- ❖ The community further revealed that they were not happy with the illegal poaching of the rhinos in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and the proposed Fuleni coal mine at Esiyembeni, outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. It is recommended that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park authority considers employing a combination of interventions which include but not limited to the following; conduct regular patrols covering strategic areas in the Park, prosecution of any offender caught committing an offence, regular documented reports on security incidents, work hand in hand with the media houses to inform and educate the public at large regarding rhino poaching. In addition, the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park should have a Reaction Unit that is fully capacitated to respond to crime incidents within the Park. In order to deal with the challenge of a proposed mine outside the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, the Park authority and affected stakeholders should work together to find solutions. It is recommended that the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park conducts two critical studies; namely, the Economic Impact Study and Environmental Impact Study. The Economic Impact Study will provide all parties affected with quantitatively estimated economic benefits

the proposed mine could bring to the surrounding community in the Hlabisa area compared to tourism. The Environmental Impact Study will provide all the affected parties with sufficient level of detail to demonstrate that the proposed mine will have no negative impacts on the natural features or ecological functions of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and surrounding communities.

- ❖ The majority of the tourism businesses pay their employees between R0-R1000 per month. This level of income is expected due to the fact that these are fairly small businesses which are mainly family owned and mainly tour operators, tour guiding and B&Bs with no proper sound marketing resources to attract more tourists. The second challenge with family run business, is that even if they were to get marketing budget, their establishments would be small to accommodate large volumes of tourists thus not able to keep up with the demand. This would mean they will have to raise or borrow more capital to adjust their establishments to meet tourist demand. Whereas access to capital was one main challenge cited by businesses in the questionnaire dealing with challenges / obstructions below. Therefore, it is recommended that the small businesses in the area of Hlabisa enter into joint marketing agreements with one another, travel trade, destination marketing organisations in order to increase tourist volume and revenue but also to meet tourist demand in the interim. This would assist the small businesses where there is an overflow of tourists, they can be moved over to the next establishment.
- ❖ On the other hand, local, provincial and national tourism institutions should put in place sound tourism dedicated incentives and capital to assist small tourism business businesses to grow and expand their businesses to enable these small tourism businesses to employ more local people and pay them high income.
- ❖ The tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area should consider engaging with tertiary institutions training tourism students to negotiates placement of tourism students as interns in their establishment. In this way, they will be able to groom



their own employees qualified in tourism over the years. In return establishments will have suitably qualified employees who understand the tourism business models and value chain.

- ❖ The small tourism businesses in the Hlabisa area should consider setting aside a small budget for training of employees over a period of time. Where the establishment is not able to set aside a portion of their budget for training, they should approach local development agencies and government institutions or big tourism firms a part of corporate social investment for assistance with training of their employees. This will assist the business to have skilled and qualified employees over time. The courses may include, hospitality training, catering, tourism, tourist guiding, customer care, finance, book keeping, plumbing, laundry and etc.
- ❖ Whilst the local municipality is currently implementing various programmes to empower local communities involved in tourism in the area of Hlabisa. However, the local municipality lacks a clear comprehensive strategy or plan for tourism planning and development. Therefore, it is recommended the municipality should develop a sound tourism strategy and plan on how they would plan and develop tourism in the area of Hlabisa. The strategy should further outline the approaches on how the local community would be involved in tourism in the area.
- ❖ Whilst the province has a clear tourism strategy and tourism masterplan in place, it does seem that there is no integration between what the National Department of Tourism, provincial tourism agencies, the District Municipality and Local Municipality does in terms of tourism planning and development in the Hlabisa area. Each government sphere is planning and implementing its own project without the other knowing. It is therefore recommended that the three government spheres consider integrating tourism planning and development efforts in the area of Hlabisa.

- ❖ Small tourism businesses in the area experience challenges related to bulk infrastructure; namely, poor road access, very limited water supply, unreliable electricity supply and load shedding and have no access to finance, markets, incentives and training support from government. It is therefore recommended that the local municipality utilises the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) to upgrade the roads leading to and from tourist attractions and accommodation facilities in the area in order for tourism to thrive. The municipality should inspect and maintain its electricity and water infrastructure all the time and have people on the ground to ensure that their bulk infrastructure is working efficiently and effectively. It is further recommended that the three spheres of government should consider working together to come up with programmes that would cater for start-ups in tourism, and business growth incentives when businesses are emerging until businesses are well established. The three spheres of government to work together to create awareness about the different support programmes available for small tourism businesses.

## **5.5 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter concludes this research study by providing a general overview of what the study entailed and what it achieved. In conclusion this chapter provides a summary of the findings and then proposes recommendations. Using the case study of Hlabisa and Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, the study has made a significant contribution to understanding tourism development and community participation. The outcomes of this study are anticipated to be valuable to policy-makers, scholars, and companies in the tourism industry and community development sector.

The conclusion is that tourism development in the Hlabisa area has improved the lives of the local community in the area, however, local people occupy low paying positions in tourism with grade 08-12 and no tourism qualifications. This calls for more training interventions by both government and tourism business. Craft centres in the Park in order for them to produce craft that is of high quality and which will respond to the needs of the tourists or appeals to the market. The results further revealed that the community participates meaningfully in tourism activities through co-management

boards and community committees even though a few community members feel aggrieved that tourism is only for a few selected individuals. It is also important for the local, District Municipality Umhlozinga Development Agency to develop and align its tourism plans and policies to the provincial tourism strategy and tourism master plan to promote community participation in tourism project planning, design implementation, management and monitoring in the area of Hlabisa.

The findings further revealed that bulk infrastructure, access to finance, markets and government incentives were required by small tourism businesses in the area of Hlabisa. It is therefore recommended that the local municipality utilises the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) to upgrade the roads leading to and from tourist attractions and accommodation facilities in the area in order for tourism to thrive. The municipality should inspect and maintain its electricity and water infrastructure all the time and have people on the ground to ensure that their bulk infrastructure is working efficiently and effectively. It is further recommended that the three spheres of government should consider working together to come up with programmes that would cater for start-ups in tourism, and business growth incentives when businesses are emerging until businesses are well established. The three spheres of government to work together to create awareness about the different support programmes available for small tourism businesses.

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## **List of Annexures**

Annexure 1: Letter to Authorities and Participants

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## **Annexure 1**



Department of Ecotourism  
Faculty of Management Sciences  
P O Box 10112  
Scottsville, 3209  
South Africa

**15 October-2018**

**Subject:** Permission to allow Xolani Dlamini to conduct research

Dear Authorities/ participants

The letter serves to confirm that Mr Xolani Dlamini is a post-graduate student who is doing a masters' degree in the department of ecotourism, Faculty of Management Sciences at the university of Durban Technology (DUT). He is in the process of collecting Research Data which could under no circumstance benefit co-authors but him to obtain the degree. The privacy and anonymity of those who will assist as participants when divulging sensitive and confidential information will not be disclosed. The study is just conducted for academic reasons, which means it is undertaken for him to finish his master's degree in tourism. The participants or officials are requested to give him a permission to conduct the study. Participants in particular need to be made aware that for them to participate is voluntarily. Queries could be referred to his supervisor whose full details appear below. Thank you in advance.

Yours Sincerely,

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Nsizwazikhona Chili, Dr  
Research Supervisor / Senior Lecturer  
Durban University of Technology  
nsizwazikhonac@dut.ac.za  
072 995 2586 / 033 845 8810

## **Annexure 2**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OF HLABISA**

1. What tourism activities take place in Hlabisa?

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2. What is the level of community participation in the tourism activities indicated above?

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3. What socio-economic benefits are derived by the local community of Hlabisa from the tourism activities indicated on question 1 above?

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4. What is the level of local community involvement in the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park?

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5. What socio-economic benefits are derived by the local community of Hlabisa from the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park?

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6. What challenges are faced by the rural community and tourism entrepreneurs in Hlabisa?

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7. What tourism business do you own? (Please tick in box)

Hotel	Guesthouse	B & B	Self-Catering	Tour Operator	Arts and Craft	Other (specify)	Not Applicable
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8. If you own a business above, what type of economic empowerment support do you receive from the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park?

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9. What is the monthly income generated by your business? (Please tick in box)

R0-R500	R501-R1000	R1001-R5000	R5001-R10 000	R10 001-R20 000	R20 001 >
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10. What traditional authority do you reside in? (Please tick in box)

AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority	
Mpembeni Traditional Authority	
Mdletsheni Traditional Authority	

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

11. What is your age?

<20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 >
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12. What is your employment status/occupation?

\_\_\_\_\_

13. What is your sector of employment? Tick appropriate box

Tourism	Government	Security	Agriculture	Self employed	Other (specify)
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14. If employed, what is your salary per month? (Please tick in box)

R0- R500	R501- R1000	R1001- R5000	R5001-R10 000	R10 001-R20 000	R20 001 >
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15. What is your highest education level completed?

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

**Thank you very much for your time and for participating in this survey!**

### **Annexure 3**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGERS**

1. What tourism socio-economic empowerment programmes have been implemented by your organisation to support the local community of Hlabisa?

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2. What impact have the tourism socio-economic empowerment programmes indicated above had on the local community of Hlabisa?

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3. What tourism socio-economic empowerment programmes are planned for the next three to five years for the local community of Hlabisa?

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4. What impact will the tourism socio-economic empowerment programmes indicated above have on the local community of Hlabisa?

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5. What is the annual total direct contribution of rural tourism into the economy of Hlabisa (GDP)?

R	%	None	Unknown
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**Thank you very much for your time and for participating in this survey!**

## Annexure 4

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MANAGERS AT TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS

1. Indicate business type

Hotel	Guesthouse	B & B	Self-Catering	Tour Operator	Tour Guide	Arts and Craft	Other (specify)	Not Applicable
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2. How many people do you employ from the local community of Hlabisa? Please tick a box

None	0-01	02-03	04-05	06-07	08-9	10-11	12-13	14-15	16 >
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3. How many employees are part time? Please indicate number below.

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4. How many employees are full time? Please indicate number below.

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5. What type of positions do they occupy?

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6. What traditional authority is your business in? (Please tick in box)

AbaKwaHlabisa Traditional Authority	
Mpembeni Traditional Authority	
Mdletsheni Traditional Authority	
No idea	

7. What is their salary per month? (Please tick in box)

R0-R500	R501-R1000	R1001-R5000	R5001-R10 000	R10 001-R20 000	R20 001 >
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8. What is their level of education?

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9. What training development programmes are offered to your employees?

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10. What type of challenges you face as a small tourism business in the area, i.e. road access, bulk infrastructure, government red tape, low occupancy rate etc.?

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11. What type of empowerment support programmes do you receive from government or government agencies, if any i.e. training and development, mentorship, enterprise development etc.?

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**Thank you very much for your time and for participating in this survey!**