

**COMMUNITY SENSITIVITY REGARDING ANIMAL CRUELTY IN A  
NUMBER OF THOHOYANDOU VILLAGES**

**by**

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## **DEDICATION**

This mini-dissertation is dedicated to my late mother Martha Tshililo Makhado, my father Piet Makondelele Makhado and my grandmother Mudzunga Mudanalwo for their vital role throughout my upbringing.



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## ABSTRACT

This mini-dissertation is an attempt to ascertain community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty in a number of Thohoyandou villages. The inquiry took place in Ngwenani village among the Venda ethnic group, which forms part of Greater Thohoyandou. The study explores the research problem through the combination of two qualitative research designs, including interviewing and observation.

Eight representative members of the village assumed to elicit appropriate information relevant to the study were selected. Two areas in Ngwenani village including Mutshundudi and Murara valley, were observed for a period of a week.

The aims and objectives of the study entail determining factors that could promote awareness towards wildlife species.

The research findings revealed that attitude, poverty, lack of monitoring and environmental awareness play a significant role to drive away some species from villages. It was also found that stakeholders such as civic organisations, tribal authority, youth, parents, schools and the government have a significant role to play in protecting wildlife species. Factors such as the formation of environmental forums, community workshops and seminars were identified as a means of raising environmental awareness.

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# **SECTION 1**

## **ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This section will present a brief discussion on the context of the study, the background of the study, motivation for the inquiry, clarification of concepts, aims and objectives of the study as well as research methods and design.

### **1.2 CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE STUDY**

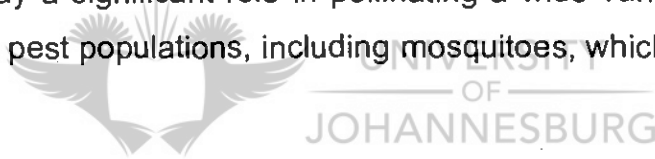
At Ngwenani village in greater Thohoyandou it is rare these days to come across wild animals such as small deer, tortoise, warthog, rabbit and hedgehog unlike in the past two decades. This raises the question of what could have happened to the abundant animal population that used to be found in the villages. This study will attempt to establish the role villagers played in the reduction of some of the animal species. It will also attempt to determine whether awareness could be raised to preserve the remaining species for future generations. The community who lived in Ngwenani village will be involved in the inquiry in order to establish what contribution they could make to ensure the preservation of wildlife species.

### **1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Why do children in Thohoyandou villages practice cruelty towards animal species? The researcher's claim in this study is that children in villages in the Greater Thohoyandou do this because their relationship with animals and also their parents ultimately is exploitation rather than nurturing and warmth. For example, parent's and children's attitude towards exquisite birds and other species indicate less caring attitude.

Despite this behaviour, it is essential to establish intimacy where humans co-exist with animal species as some species are on the verge of extinction or are already extinct, due to the lack of awareness and appropriate action (Hale 1993:26). Integrating environmental education into the curriculum is essential to enhance environmental awareness among growing children. For example, caring for small animals, establishing small nature reserves and parks should form part of the school curriculum and daily living in the community.

Miller (1997:437) points out that certain characteristics of nocturnal animals such as bats place them at risk because of human activities. These species are frequently driven away from villages because of people's unjustified fear of them and misunderstanding concerning their vital ecological roles. Nevertheless, certain species are liked or disliked, communities in villages need to be informed about the importance of such species for humans benefit. For example, species such as bats play a significant role in pollinating a wide variety of edible plants and also control pest populations, including mosquitoes, which are detrimental to human life.



A further threat to animal species derives from subsistence agriculture. A significant number of villagers rely heavily on cultivation to meet their basic food needs. This has resulted in habitat loss of wildlife species due to cultivation expanding into rangelands. It is therefore important to establish stringent laws that regulate the unnecessary expansion of cultivation, in order to preserve the complexity of the ecosystem.

#### 1.4 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The study is relevant and worthwhile as it attempts to determine the etiology of animal cruelty and to explore possible solutions that could be implemented by the community, the government and educational planners when dealing with environmental problems.

Furthermore, this research is essential as communities in villages are not sensitised and fully aware of the danger posed to the environment through human activities. It is worthwhile to raise awareness and to get rid of peoples' misconceptions about the variety of species in villages.

Animal species do not have rights like human beings. They cannot choose to live or when to die. The capacity for suffering which all wild animals experience, is the baseline of concern for every individuals. People therefore become moral custodians for them on the basis of the knowledge of human interest in infant care, severely retarded persons and others who are completely unaware of having any interests.

By accepting a custodial trust for animal species people can speak for them and protect them from unnecessary harm, whenever their interests are misunderstood. Throughout history humans have exploit animals for ritual practice, as they felt morally supported by their religion. When considering the pain inflicted on animals, the significance of this study becomes apparent.

## **1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The primary aim of this inquiry is to assess community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty in a number of Thohoyandou villages.

The aims and objectives of the study include the following:

- Firstly, the envisage outcome of this study, is to identify factors that could promote awareness towards wildlife species.
- Secondly, to identify factors that contributes to the extinction of wildlife.
- Thirdly, to determine what contribution the community could make to preserve the natural environment for the sake of preserving the species.
- Lastly, to recommend solutions for the problem.

## **1.6 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**



The following qualitative questions will be used for the research:

- (i) What are the factors that contribute to the extinction of wildlife?
- (ii) What contribution can the community make to promote safety of the wildlife species?
- (iii) What can be done to raise awareness towards wildlife animals?

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN**

### **1.7.1 Qualitative research method**

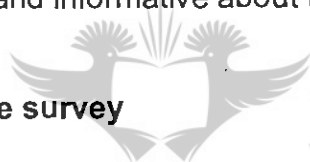
The qualitative research method will be employed during data collection. This method includes observation, interviewing and document analysis. For the

purpose of this study, observation in given settings and interviews or conversations with the community members will be used. The observations will take place at Ngwenani village, and data relevant to the study will be recorded. The interviews will be conducted with eight representative members of Ngwenani village, including a civic member, an ordinary citizen, a learner, citizen who cares and nurtures wildlife species, a teacher, parents, a tribal authority member and an environmental officer.

### **1.7.2 Sampling**

Purposeful or judgmental sampling will be employed when selecting respondents, as this is convenient for yielding information relevant to the study. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:378) point out that purposeful sampling enables the researcher to select information rich respondents, as they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon being investigated.

### **1.7.3 Literature survey**



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A literature survey will also be undertaken to determine the development of environmental awareness in rural South Africa and Uganda. The findings of the literature study will be used to construct an interview question encompassing the most prominent factors assumed to contribute to animal cruelty.

Finally, the data collected during observations and interviews will be processed, analysed and coded, categorised and clustered depending on suitability.

## **1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

### **1.8.1 Community sensitivity**

Before explaining the concept community sensitivity, it is important to clarify the concept community and its definition. According to Matre (1995:113), community refers to "socially meaningful territories". Thus, it can refer to a group of people living together, occupying a specific area of land or a mixed group of plants and animals. All these groups live together in a specific area to best meet their energy and material needs.

Human society consists of a wide variety of interdependent institutions and social groups. Businesses, NGO's, churches and schools are examples of such institutions found within the community. Matre (1995:113) states that among others the community comprises of individuals with specific interests. They interact within their living space in a variety of ways to meet their needs. The advocated view indicates that their common interests, for instance religion, affiliations, common beliefs and customs tend to bind them together. On the other hand, sensitivity involves a set of affectionate attributes such as appreciation, caring or valuing which results in individuals viewing issues from an empathetic perspective (Sward, 1999:204).

For the purpose of this study, community sensitivity refers to the affectionate attributes that human society show towards their surroundings in general (Emmonds, 1997:331). This includes a basic awareness and valuation of the environmental and one's position within it. Thus, it can be concluded that community sensitivity is determined by the way in which the individual cares, appreciates and values his or her living environment.

### **1.8.2 Animal cruelty**

The Oxford Paperback Dictionary (1994:192) defines the concept cruelty as the feeling of pleasure in another's suffering or as causing pain or suffering. In this study, the emphasis will be on animal cruelty, which can be explained as the hurting animals either directly or indirectly through attacking them or subjecting them to painful suffering without realising how devastating the attack is. Although the pain might be inflicted on both domesticated and wild animals, the main focus will be on wild animals, which can be regarded as an endangered species.

### **1.8.3 Village**

The term refers to a group of houses and associated buildings, larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town, especially in a rural area (Readers Digest Illustrated Oxford Dictionary, 1998: 930).

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study will be confined to an investigation of community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty in Uganda and among a Venda ethnic group in Ngwenani village, which forms part of the Greater Thohoyandou. Only eight representative citizens will be selected from this village to form part of the study, due to time constraints and the number of pages required for a mini-dissertation.

## **1.10 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

This study will comprise of four sections, which will be organised as follows:

**Section 1: Orientation to the study**

The background of and motivation for the study, the aims and research methodology will be presented in this section.

**Section 2: The literature review**

Literature sources addressing similar or related aspects will be discussed.

**Section 3: Research methods and design**

The methods employed during data collection and analysis will be presented.

**Section 4: Findings, recommendations and conclusions**

The final section of the study will present the findings, recommendations and conclusions.

**1.11 CONCLUSION**

Community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty, particularly in villages, is of great importance to preserve the ecosystem. It is therefore essential that the community should be informed about the benefits of nature as a whole to human life. As a result, the base line for the proposed inquiry will be informing the community to respect and approach the natural system with humility, care and compassion.



## **SECTION 2**

### **THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this section will firstly be on the state of environmental awareness in rural South Africa as compared to the development of environmental awareness in Uganda as these are both developing countries. Secondly, this section will focus on ethics and wild animals, cultural beliefs and attitudes, schooling and other related factors. The evidence to support the abovementioned factors will be obtained from literature sources, theories and views that address similar or related problems.

#### **2.2 THE STATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN RURAL SOUTH AFRICA**



The state of environmental awareness in rural South Africa can be largely linked to the legacy of the past. According to Ramphela and McDowell (1993:13), the approach to ecological concerns has been fragmented and conservative, reflecting the interests of the privileged white South African society. The unsound conservation policy on ecological concerns was employed by the government and non-governmental organisations to preserve endangered species such as rhinoceros by establishing and maintaining parks.

However, the poor local blacks living in the affected areas were not involved in using natural resources for the benefit of all parties. This approach contributed to an uncaring attitude towards the natural environment. Communities in rural areas were unable to recognise their impact on long-term environmental outcomes. In 1999, the Kwazulu-Natal government was engaged in a

confrontation with the indigenous people of the Dukuduku area who cut grass for economic purposes in the local park.

Insensitive conservation policies alienated black communities from ecological concerns. As a result, land in rural communities was left barren, due to poor farming methods and other human activities. It is predicted that by the year 2050 most of the rural area will be like a desert where only succulents will grow.

In addition, the betterment programme initiated in 1930 where settlements were divided into residential, arable and grazing lands to address massive soil erosion in the homelands did little to protect the natural environment from exploitation. Although it was the government's intention to rehabilitate the environment and to create a viable agriculture, the programme failed to materialise and caused widespread social distress. The programme enforced the establishment of villages through manipulating tribal authorities without consulting the people affected by it. This programme left the majority of the rural poor with little space to practice good farming methods.

Ramphela and McDowell (1993:36) assert that the policy of apartheid, systematically furthered by the National Party government after it came into power in 1948, should bear the responsibility of the ecological damage, especially in Bantustans, which used to be the cornerstone of apartheid. Although poverty can be blamed for the grave imbalance in wider ecological systems, economic empowerment will be needed to develop people at the lower level of the economic sector to minimise ecological destruction. The new government, headed by the African National Congress since the democratic election in 1994, should devise policies, to encourage and facilitate empowerment of local communities to reverse past imbalances. A policy of forestation could be initiated as part of national job creation public work programmes, where the state uses part of its budget for long- term infrastructure investment.

A crucial component of such a strategy should be to manage new forests in such a way that local communities could become actively involved in and benefit from the process. In this way, communities' love of land and respect for their natural environment, especially wildlife will be enhanced. Barrow (1995:167) maintains that the involvement of local people in tree planting and management could ensure that forest areas expands as the local people will be benefiting rather than outsiders. This approach would also help to sustain wood supplies and other commodities for local people and therefore reduce pressure to clear new areas.

### **2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN UGANDA**

The environmental problems experienced by Uganda are closely linked to the South African situation, as both are developing countries. Hale (1993:23) maintains that environmental problems mounted as they were not adequately resolved by the rural communities. These environmental problems include bush fires, overgrazing, over-fishing, over-cultivation, deforestation, soil erosion, population control, waste dumping in water and poaching animals from national game reserves.

In Uganda, as in South Africa, local communities destroy the natural environment, as they are not aware of the dangers posed to the environment. They also do not regard their activities as an immediate risk. In both countries, a number of animal and plant species are on the verge of extinction or are already extinct, due to a lack of awareness and appropriate action. Hyenas, which used to be found in abundance in Northern Uganda are no longer found there. Although primary school pupils participate actively in destructive activities, they are taught about the danger of cutting trees and not replanting them, as well as the effect this has on their lives and on the general welfare of future generations.

Children should be assisted to take responsible decisions while interacting with their natural environment.

Another programme currently being developed in Uganda is the teacher education programme at the institute of teacher education Kyamboro. This programme is intended for primary teacher colleges, which comprises of activities that integrate school and community life. The programme encourages non-literate adults to tell stories and histories or identify problems of major concern in the community. This could be taped and transcribed for educational purposes. In this way, environmental issues and problems can be dealt with in both the school and the community.

Innovative teachers are encouraged to design study units such as "our environment" to enable pupils to explore their immediate environment (Hale, 1993:28). Such a study unit tends to expose pupils to a wide variety of living and non-living components in their everyday lives. Young children are provided with an opportunity to discuss the value of the components they had observed and how such components affect each other in the environment. The children are also encouraged to expand their knowledge to national and global environmental issues by exposing them to a variety of information sources such as environmental talks, stories, magazines, radio talks and newspaper cuttings, as well as role play and simulation activities. Van Rooyen (1998:108) points out that it has been stated in recent official policy documents known as curriculum 2005 that teacher education institutions should provide training in environmental education to education' students. In the South African context this remains an ideal, as many teacher education institutions have not yet made provision for environmental education in their curricula.

## 2.4 ETHICS AND WILDLIFE

Allers (1997:34) states that "ethics" is a sense of what is fundamentally right or wrong. It enables individuals to make decisions and assume responsibility based on a self-imposed moral code. The process of developing a moral code is essential, so that whatever decision is taken; it will involve personal responsibility and accountability. Musgrave (1978:33) maintains that moral choices will guide an individual to undertake a reflective monitoring of his/her conduct so as to provide an account that will justify what had been done in a way presumed to be acceptable.

From the above views, it can be argued that to effectively preserve wildlife species, growing children should be assisted to develop a moral code to guide them while interacting with their biophysical environment, as they have not yet fully developed the ability of cognitive and moral reasoning. Simmons (1997:232) further explains ethics as the pursuit of goodness that transcends own interest and human imperfections. It is therefore important to understand that everything on earth not merely exists for human use or manipulation. In some instances, the interest of human beings has to be compromised at the expense of sentient animals, due to stronger rational ground. Impartial moral perspective should deter individuals from unnecessary burning that provide shelter and grazing to endangered species as this would exposed them to the risk of loosing pastures and life.

In addition, the liberal view of viewing issues from different perspectives is proposed, and it will be up to the individual to assess where the truth of any given issue lies. Although it might be culturally and traditionally acceptable among Africans to end the existence of certain animal species for ritual purposes in a painful way, it will be up to the individual to determine the morality behind such practices. While most advanced societies have laws to deal with environmental matters, there are specific problems that cannot be dealt with in a court of law.

Animals cannot speak for themselves. It is up to the individual to realise how things ought to be and how s/he should behave.

## **2.5 CULTURAL BELIEFS AND ATTITUDE**

Allers (1997:61) maintains that the cultural beliefs and attitudes held by different cultural groups regarding wildlife species differ. Even though some of the beliefs associated with certain species concern the provision of "muti", this makes some wild animals susceptible to exploitation. Joseph (1999:12) points out that tortoise urine and droppings are believed to provide powerful "muti" for solving love, marriage and financial problems and for assisting women during pregnancy. In some cases, the animal's throat is cut and the blood drained over the clients to make them invisible to enemies or to bring them luck.

Allers (1997:76) points out that the myths associated with characteristics of most animals tend to put them at risk. A lion's heart assumable provides a person with strength and courage while the presence of the great horn owl is associated with bad luck. The cultural attitudes and beliefs to clear misconceptions with regard to wildlife are important for instilling a culture that would enable children to defend, improve and sustain the quality of the environment. If the community experiences problems with certain species, they should be encouraged to report this to an official of environmental affairs.

It is important that the sentiments towards the extinction of poultry or cattle should be extended to wildlife species. Fruit trees as well as indigenous trees needed by wildlife species such as birds should be planted in their home milieus. Birds also provide a source of meat to the majority of village people. They should be discouraged to kill more than they need.

## **2.6 COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

Sustaining wild species would remain a dream unless the citizens responsible for the destruction of the environment become part and parcel of the solution. Johnson and Morrel (1988:109) assert that human society's attempt to increase food production has influenced both the plant and animal species in the environment. Hedges which used to offer a habitat to countless numbers of animal species are being destroyed at an alarming rate as poverty forces people to exploit their natural resources for survival. It is difficult to restrict people from using natural resources when they are hungry and cold. The initiative where human beings can meet their own needs with minimum impact on the environment is vital.

Another factor that contributes to over-exploitation of resources includes the lack of ownership. This can be referred to as the tragedy of commons, as advocated by Johnson and Morrel (1998:160), who pointed out that people exploit common property resources because they feel that if they don't use the resources, someone else will. In such a situation an organisation within a community, such as a civic organisation with little authority should take responsibility of informing the citizens about the importance of preserving the environment. The citizens could be made aware by means of activities such as campaigns, seminars, meetings, information leaflets, magazines and newspaper articles. Both adults and children should be informed that animal or plant species become extinct because of adverse effects on the environment caused by human beings. This includes various types of animals, which were available while they grew up, but no longer exists.

For effective campaigns and awareness, it will be necessary for local authorities to double their efforts through working with officials from the Department of Environmental Affairs and sharing the expertise with the whole community. As many citizens lack the necessary skills for dealing with environmental issues, such expertise would empower them to identify, investigate and take action towards the prevention and resolution of environmental issues. The experts

could also introduce the programme considered to be most effective in saving endangered species by other parts of the world with similar problem.

To empower the citizens, all members of the community should be involved in local issues, such as new village development, land-use issues and areas of outstanding beauty to be preserved. Citizens should feel that they are not only residents of a municipality where all authority is vested in elected representatives, but that they are people who accept responsibility for what happens politically, socially and environmentally. They should therefore interact with other citizens to establish their own position on issues pertaining to the environment. If community members participate in decision-making, it would greatly increase their understanding of environmental problems and they would feel obliged to care for the environment. They would feel empowered, as they would be operating according to their own views.


In the long run, it would do much good if the existing local nature reserves could be owned and maintained by local authorities. The landowner or top authority could work in co-ordination with local authorities to avoid areas of land being spoiled through mismanagement. In this way, both adults and children irrespective of their age could become involved in rescuing the wild species considered to be at risk for extinction in their areas.

Children could help to develop nesting for birds to be preserved in their local nature reserves. By lending a hand, the children would become environmentally literate and responsible citizens. In the end, the wildlife species would be saved as all citizens would become ecologists in their area and hence change their attitude towards the environment.

## **2.7 SCHOOLING, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**



In the past, the school was regarded as the place where formal education took place to prepare individuals academically. Informal education was expected to be provided by adults at home. As the school represents the culture and stereotype of society, it should extend its role to include the responsibility for the society it serves. Palmer and Neal (1994:76) maintain that schools should become environmental role models by encouraging teachers to approach their lessons with environmental awareness. This could be achieved by the out-of-school or fieldwork approach such as visiting the zoo that would provide children with first hand experience. According to Palmer and Neal (1994:15), such first hand experience provides children with the opportunity of observing real people, real situations, real action and real places. This intimate contact with life seems to enlighten the children. Consequently, the child could identify skills in which s/he can volunteer to rescue endangered species in the community. From the above argument, it can be deduced that by creating an environment friendly school, a child-centred approach to environmental responsibility will be fostered.

The logo of the University of Johannesburg, featuring two stylized birds facing each other with their wings spread, positioned above the text 'UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG'.

In studies conducted by Sward (1999:205), the results indicated that the participants' environmental sensitivity occurred through formal education experiences during primary and secondary grades. The various experiences they acquired through formal education broadened their understanding of the importance of the natural environment. This improved their environmental sensitivity. They feel compelled to act positively towards the environment, due to their exposure. On the basis of this it can be argued that an environmental education programme, which provides ongoing outdoor experiences throughout the individual's formal and non-formal lifetime is essential.

Although environmental education is not a priority in the South African context, environment as a phase organiser is recognised in curriculum 2005. The Department of Education should promote environmental awareness by developing a curriculum that provides teachers with practical suggestions on how to infuse environmental aspects in their school subjects. Providing in-service

courses on environmental education could support teachers. A cross-curricular theme approach could be distributed via manuals so that they could implement proposals in their work scheme. Manuals could include information ranging from significant life-experiences affecting the environment to activities that promote pro-environmental behaviour, varying from simple tasks to more demanding tasks. Nevertheless, the manuals would not provide guidelines for teachers to integrate them into their normal teaching. Teachers could, however, spend time out of their classrooms to investigate and experience their connectedness with the earth.

The Department of Education recently recommended that South African teacher education institutions should train their students in environmental education (Van Rooyen, 1998:108). The constitution of an environmental education policy is essential to ensure that environmental aspects form part of the curriculum. Teachers would be in a position to communicate the message if they had been provided with formal training at higher institutions. Several existing problems regarding the environment would thus be dealt with and addressed within the school context. Fien (1993:65) maintains that environmental values should be extended to encompass the teaching of particular values in an atmosphere of free and critical discussion.

## **2.8 THE ESSENTIAL TASK OF THE STATE**

It is the duty of any government to ensure that the country's natural resources are sustained. This implies that developments to meet the current needs should not be compromised (Atchia & Tropp, 1995:5). Sustainable development would ensure that actions threatening the environment are prevented. It would also promote approaches that take environmental factors into account. This can be made possible by developing environmental policies and by legislating that every individual should be responsible for sustaining the environment.

In order to preserve bio-diversity effectively, the government should instruct all local authorities to have a written policy on dealing with environmental objectives. Guidelines should be provided by the state to raise awareness among citizens.

In addition, local authorities or any public member who fails to comply with the rules should impose legal action or strict penalties. It is therefore essential that the state encourages and provides assistance for the establishment of environmental clubs targeting the youth. Such clubs should focus on raising awareness and should initiate discussion about issues considered to be stumbling blocks for preserving the environment. The youth should also be mobilised to assist in policing their area. They should be empowered to contact top representatives and parliamentarians about policies they disagree with. In this way, the youth would have a role to play, which would lead to them being responsible for their actions.

The government should promote environmental awareness by developing centres that should provide easily accessible information on general and specific environmental issues. This could provide opportunities for grassroots environmental groups to work together with experts to resolve environmental problems threatening the survival of wildlife species. Such experts could conduct workshops within communities or establish centres for regular monitoring of environmental and assessment progress.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

From the above it seems clear that the community needs to be informed about the importance of nature to human life. This is the responsibility of every citizen.

Every member of society should be involved and participate in to ensure the preservation of bio-diversity. The stringent law enforcement could have a positive impact on cultivating respect for the environment.

## SECTION 3

### RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the way this research has been conducted and discuss methods used for data collection. The process where collected data was analysed also forms part of this section. The researcher will employ various data collection methods depending on suitability. Qualitative research methods will be employed.

A researcher follows guidelines not rules. The guidelines to be followed in this study include the following:

- The research design
- Respondents
- Researcher's role
- Research instrument
- Research ethic
- Data analysis procedure



#### 3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to the plan and structure used by the researcher during the investigation to gather evidence to appropriately answer research questions. The design describes the procedures that need to be followed while conducting the research from whom, and under what conditions the data will be obtained. Research designs are classified in two major types, namely quantitative and qualitative. For the purpose of this research, the qualitative method was selected. According to Slavin (1992:65), the qualitative research

method is also known as an ethnographic or naturalistic research method, which involves the researcher exploring an important social phenomenon in a given setting for extended periods. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:408) argue that qualitative research method is a naturalistic inquiry in which non-interfering data collection strategies are used to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them. This implies that the researcher should be in particular setting for an extended period in order to describe and analyse people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. For the purpose of this inquiry a period of four weeks was spent in a given setting during September 1999 to produce information in its richness and complexity.

Qualitative researchers not only analyse activities of people but also interact with selected respondents in their settings, to obtain relevant information. In this context, community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty in a number of Thohoyandou villages will be researched. Various stakeholders who seem knowledgeable and informative about the research problem will be involved. The researcher will be interested in villagers' long established relationship with wild animals.

The qualitative research method is suitable for this study because the researcher is interested in natural occurrences of events. Slavin (1992:66) maintains that qualitative researchers go to particular settings because they are concerned with particular contexts. The researcher feels that actions can be understood better when observed in the setting where it occurs.

Qualitative research also has potential for the proposed inquiry because the researcher plans to analyse data inductively. The objective of this study will not be to collect data by means of the hypotheses purposed before the investigation, but to develop theory after a period of time had elapsed with respondents in a given setting. Booyse (1997:58) support the abovementioned statement when

advocating that qualitative researchers do not assume that enough is known before conducting the research.

### **3.3 RESPONDENTS IN THE STUDY**

Hoberg (1997:48) states that qualitative researchers work with small, distinct groups of respondents to be investigated to enable them to understand the problem in depth.

In this study, eight representative citizens will be selected from the Ngwenani village, which forms part of Greater Thohoyandou. It is also argued that the researcher will only select key informants to participate in the research process until the relevant data has been obtained to allow for meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:382), the sample size selected by the researcher should be related to the purpose of the study, the research problem, the major data collection techniques and the availability of information-rich respondents. These will be chosen on the basis of their roles, in their community and their knowledge ability about the phenomenon of the proposed inquiry.

### **3.4 RESEARCHER'S ROLE**

Ethnographers choose a role appropriate for the study. Miles and Huberman (1994:6) assert that the researcher's role is to gain a holistic overview of the context under study. The personal experience of the researcher in the village will be significant part in determining community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty.

The researcher has resided in the area to be investigated for the past five years. During this time, a close relationship was established with citizens who could

elicit relevant information for the study. In view of the above explanation, it becomes clear that the qualitative researcher should take certain precautions to ensure objectivity and to reduce any form of bias.

### **3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

Lecompte and Preissle (1929:19-29) argue that qualitative research employs a range of data gathering techniques, including observing, interviewing and document analysis. For the purpose of this inquiry, observation and interviewing will be employed for data collection.

#### **3.5.1 Observation**

According to Hoberg (1997:57), observation involves systematic noting and recording of events, behaviour and objects in the social setting chosen for study. Observation is essential in discovering the complex interaction of real life in natural settings. As an observer, the researcher could have no particular role to play except to see, hear and note the incident that fits his or her theory.

In the context of this inquiry, observation will take place in the Ngwenani village, which forms part of Greater Thohoyandou. The research sites will include the Mutshundudi and Murara valleys where most activities occur during weekdays, especially in the afternoon.

In this study, attention will be given to what I want to observe, more importantly, unusual behaviour and events that occur while villagers interact with the biophysical environment. In both valleys, adults and youngsters occasionally rushed to certain places to satisfy their different needs. These are suitable places for caring for domesticated animals such as cattle and goats, as well as for a source of wood and for primitive cultivation.

Field notes will be used to record any events that occur during observation. According to Slavin (1992:70) field notes can be taken during actual observation in a given setting. Where this is not possible, the researcher will write field notes to record of what had happened as soon as possible after the observation period. In the context of this inquiry, a summary of observations together with a tentative interpretation will be jotted down, and a full description will be written immediately after the observation. This could include how the individual interacts with the natural environment in the presence of the researcher. In addition, the researcher will also speak to some individuals to clarify what observed. This will form part of the field notes. Recording minimises errors resulting from faulty memory. It should be done immediately while details are still fresh in the mind of the observer.

Using field notes in qualitative research increases the validity and reliability of the data collected during observation. Reliability implies the extent to which independent researchers could discover the same phenomenon under similar circumstances. Reliability will ensure that other investigators interested in similar problem will draw similar results and conclusions. The researcher's role, respondent selection, social context, data collection, analysis strategies and analytical premises (Schumacher & McMillan 1993:586) further enhance reliability.

Validity of qualitative research comprises internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to the degree to which the explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world. To increase internal validity, a period of time will be spent in a natural setting which will provide ample opportunity for the researcher to continuously analyse data to make comparisons and corroborate to refine ideas and to ensure a match between research based categories and respondents' realities. External validity does not aim at the generalisation of results but at the extension of the understandings and detailed descriptions that enable others to



understand similar situations. Knowledge is not produced by replication but by the evidence found in separate case studies over an extended period.

### **3.5.2 Interviewing**

Interviewing will also be used as a method of collecting qualitative data. Interviewing implies direct interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. In this study, interviews will be conducted privately with one person at a time so that respondents feel free to express themselves fully and truthfully. Seidman (1998:2) points out that interviewing is the basic mode of inquiry.

Before conducting the interview, the interview schedule to guide the process will be constructed. The interview schedule will comprise questions related directly to the objectives of the study, which will provide the interviewer with the opportunity to write down answers.

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:251) maintain that questions can be classified into structured, semi-structured or unstructured questions. The structured interview allows the researcher to present questions in the same way to each respondent. The choice of alternative answers is restricted to a predetermined list. The unstructured interview on other hand contains no pre-planned questions. It is flexible, placing few restrictions on the respondent's answers.

Semi-structured questions are phrased to allow individual responses with no choice in selecting an answer. In this study, semi-structured questions will be used to collect information from interviewees.

Exploratory questions will be used instead of leading questions to enhance the validity and reliability of the data. Probing will be done for further clarification of an answer and for anticipating a potential answer. The notebook will be used to write down the most important facts. A tape recorder will not be used.

### 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Creswell (1994:153) argues that there is no correct way of analysing data. The process of data analysis should rather be eclectic. In other words, the researcher has to be comfortable with developing categories and when making comparisons and contrasts.

Creswell (1994:153-156) noted that several aspects could be employed to guide the development of qualitative data analysis. As an activity, data analysis can be conducted simultaneously with data collection, data interpretation and narrative report writing. This implies that the qualitative researcher could analyse collected field data through sorting the information into categories, formatting it into a story or image and actually writing the qualitative test.

Qualitative analysis also involves reduction and interpretation. This implies that the researcher reduces an extensive amount of information to certain patterns, categories, or themes. This information is then interpreted by using schema. This strategy is called de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation.

Qualitative data analysis also implies that information is presented in matrices. This process includes a spatial format that presents information to the reader systematically. It could also be in the form of tables indicating the relatedness of information categories, and display categories, site, demographic variables, time sequence, role classification and many others.

Qualitative data analysis also involves identification of the coding procedure to reduce information to themes or categories. The researcher is governed by flexible rules on how s/he should sort interview transcriptions, observational notes, documents and visual material. The categories and codes are developed to form the basis for the emerging story to be told by the qualitative researcher.

This process is called segmentation of the information. In the context of this study, data will be analysed through coding, categorising, clustering, matrices and by discussing categories.

### **3.7 THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

The data collection took place during the first week of September 1999 and was completed at the end of the same month. Relevant data to answer the research question was collected.

#### **3.7.1 Observation process**

Two different settings, namely Mutshundudi and Murara valley in Ngwenani village, were visited. A week was spent for observation purposes. Each day I observed for at least three hours at different times of the day. The situation appeared to be similar in all places. I observed that the collection of firewood was a daily duty, especially for young women. In some instances, adults accompanied the young women and assisted them. Young boys looked after the cattle and goats. They threw stone at beautiful birds in an attempt to kill them and sometimes chased wild animals for fun.

I also observed that although villagers have been allocated land for cultivation, they tended to extend their given area illegally in order to produce more crops. In some cases the fountains that supply the main river and a variety of animal species with water are at risk of running dry, as the land is left barren and open. During the entire week when the observations were conducted, I observed that it was rare to come across wild animals such as rabbits, small deer, tortoise, warthog and hedgehog.

#### **3.7.2 Interviewing process**

After five consecutive days of observation, I visited all the individuals I needed to interview in their homes. I had to get permission and make appointments. Due to the limited length of the report, only eight representative citizens were selected and interviewed. Before conducting the interviews, I introduced myself as a student from the Rand Afrikaans University, doing research in the field of environmental education. I then explained my research proposal and the purpose of the interview.

Assurance of confidentiality and anonymity were given to all individuals willingly to respondents in the study. The participants were also informed that they had the choice of participating and that they could withdraw at any time if they wished to do so. Informed consent is a dialogue between the researcher and the respondents where the purpose of study is explained clearly and confidentiality and anonymity are assured. The privacy of respondents was honoured to prevent identification with regard to sensitive information. All respondents were assured that their names would be disclosed with their consent. All the interviews were conducted in Tshivenda as this was the preferred language and then transcribed into English. The interviews were recorded as follows: The letter C was used to indicate citizen and the letter I to indicate the researcher.

#### 3.7.2.1 Citizen A (member of civic)

I: Thank you for allowing me to interview you.

C: You are welcome.

I: How long have you been involved in civic duty?

C: It is about four years.

I: What duties are you expected to perform?

C: Firstly, I was involved in a programme dealing with youth development, but now I have been promoted to be a general secretary. I record all cases from my block that needs civic attention.

I: What problem regarding the environment have you encountered so far that could have a negative impact on wild animals?

C: The first problem that came to the fore recently involves villagers extending their given land for cultivation without the approval of the tribal authority. Some citizens cut down the surrounding trees raising much concern, as the fountain is a source of water not only to humans but also wild animals.

I: How has the authority managed to contain the problem?

C: By calling the perpetrator to account before the tribal authority.

I: What other role does tribal authority play that affects wildlife species?

C: Another role involves approving new areas for residing and cultivation that may have an effect on the available space for wild animals.

I: What do you think needs to be done to save the remaining wild animals?

C: There should be more intervention from the Department of Environmental affairs and stringent laws need to be applied for any person who disturbs nature.

I: Thank you for your participation.

C: My pleasure.

### 3.7.2.2 Citizen B (ordinary person)

I: I am sorry to interfere in your domestic work.

C: Oh, it is not a problem at all.

I: Thank you for sacrificing your time for this interview.

C: It will be a great pleasure if I could help you.

I: How long have you been a citizen in this village?

C: I have been staying here for the past twenty-five years.

I: Which wild animals, if any, are no longer seen today that were common in the early years of you being a resident here and what happened?

C: Animals such as warthog, tortoise, crocodile, rabbits and some bird species. Although hunting was prevalent in my early years, it had little impact on the wild animal population. The expansion of residential areas and cultivation as a result of rapid human population growth tend to expose animals and their numbers started to decrease.

I: What is your feeling about wild animals?

C: Wild animals deserve safety and protection just as human beings do.

I: Why do you say that?

C: Because of their ability to predict the weather, and because they provide food during droughts, among others.

I: What were some attitudes you had towards wild animals when you were a youngster?

C: Fear and anxiety with regard to certain species, influenced by cultural belief. This resulted in some animals being killed unnecessarily.

I: Which law, if any, did you know about when you were young that affected wildlife and the environment?

C: Any person found in possession of firewood, hunting or fishing illegally used to be arrested or were accountable to the tribal authority.

I: What do you think needs to be done to protect wildlife species?

C: The officials from the Department of Environmental affairs and Tourism need to visit villages and explain to people the importance of preserving nature. The

law needs to be tightened to regulate the extension of cultivated land and the clearing of trees.

I: What contributions could the community make to promote the safety of the wildlife species?

C: The community could organise campaigns and plan steps to prevent destructive acts against the environment.

I: What role could other stakeholders in the community play to promote environmental awareness?

C: The tribal authority and civic organisation should organise workshops and seminars to teach the community ways of protecting nature.

I: Thank you for your time.

C: You are most welcome.

3.7.2.3 Citizen C (environmental officer)



I: Thank you very much for allowing me to interview you about your work.

C: I will gladly assist you.

I: What forms part of your work?

C: My work mostly involves evaluating new areas for development to ensure the protection and safety of nature.

I: What is your view of people who kill wild species unnecessarily?

C: I have no problem with people who kill one bird for meat, but it becomes a problem when people kill more than they are allowed to.

I: What can be done to restrict those who kill more than they need?

C: The citizens should alert us so that steps could be taken against particular people.

I: Some citizens kill wildlife species such as snakes because they fear that it poses danger to their life. What is your opinion about that?

C: If citizens experience problems with certain species, they should report the matter to an official of Environmental affairs and Tourism who can take care of such species.

I: What could the community do to ensure the safety of wildlife species?

C: The community could help by establishing environmental clubs to raise awareness among its citizens.

I: In what way can parents be involved, as they are role models?

C: Parents can help by providing their children with the facilities required by the club. If there is a need for developing parks in the area, parents should allow their children to participate and provide them with the necessary requirements.

I: How can the school be involved in raising awareness?

C: The school should provide training and educational programmes that emphasises functional use of the environment.

I: Thank you for your participation, Sir. You were very helpful.

C: Don't mention it. It is my duty.

#### 3.7.2.4 Citizen D (nurtures wild animals in his home milieu)

I: Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to interview you.

C: It is a pleasure to meet you.

I: I heard that you took care of certain wild animals in your home. What species are they?

C: Rabbits, tortoise and different types of birds.



I: Why do you have the desire to take care of such species?

C: Passion about wildlife species and interest motivates me.

I: Do you think the citizens care about wildlife species?

C: No, they occasionally hunt and kill them for meat.

I: Do you think nature conservation played a significant role in the conservation of wild animals?

C: No, only larger animals considered posing threat to human life were preserved.

I: What impact does subsistence farming have on wild species?

C: Subsistence farming put wild species into risk as farmers intrude their rangeland.

I: What can be done to encourage other citizens to care for wildlife species?

C: Through raising awareness and by providing the necessary support to help citizens take care of wildlife species for their benefit.

I: Thank you very much.

C: It's a pleasure to know you.



### 3.7.2.5 Citizen E (learner)

I: Thank you for your precious time, you sacrificed for me.

C: It is also wonderful to meet a kind person like you.

I: What types of outdoor activities have you engaged in that promote sensitivity regarding wild animals?

C: A journey to the Kruger National Park where we saw wild animals such as elephants, zebra, giraffe and many others.

I: When was the journey?

C: September 1998.

I: Which animal do you like or hate?

C: I like birds because of their singing sounds and I don't like snakes.

I: What is wrong with snakes?

C: Snakes bite and kill and there is a myth that if pregnant women see snakes it could result in birth complications.

I: What is the attitude of other learners towards snakes?

C: The same. The majority of learners support the idea that snakes are dangerous and usually kill.

I: What can be done to develop a positive attitude towards species such as snakes?

C: Pupils need to be taught that not all snakes are dangerous, and that it is unnecessary to kill snakes.

I: Which factors in your community contribute to the reduction of wild animals?

C: In previous years it was hunting but nowadays it is deforestation.

I: Why do you say that?

C: If the forest is cut down, the animals migrate and others die due to the shrinking of their habitat.

I: What can be done to protect wild animals?

C: Continuous monitoring by the tribal authority and police intervention can play a significant role in the reduction of deforestation, as this is the major contributing factor to animal extinction.

I: It has been wonderful to talk to you.

C: I have also enjoyed the day with you.

3.7.2.6 Citizen F (member of the tribal authority)

I: Thank you kindly for allowing me to interview you.

C: You are warmly welcome.

I: How long have you been serving in the tribal authority?

C: I have been involved in tribal duty for the past twenty years.

I: What duties are you expected to perform since you started serving in the tribal authority?

C: Community policeman.

I: What are your views about the way your community handles the natural environment?

C: Initially, the communal approach to the environment was positive as their practices used to have little impact on wildlife species. Due to increasing social problems ranging from hunger to unemployment, the community started to

destroy the environment. They cleared forests for firewood and cultivation and hunt the wild animals to meet their basic needs.

I: What problem with regard to the environment have you solved that affected wildlife species?

C: Veldfires and the burning of forests pose a threat to animal life, as they will die without pastures.

I: What factors do you consider contributed to the reduction of wildlife species?

C: Community members occupy land on a daily basis. In addition, they continuously trap and kill animals for meat. Natural disasters such as droughts also played a significant role in the reduction of wildlife species.

I: What was the feeling of the tribal authority regarding wild animals?

C: The tribal authority felt that wild animals and the natural environment need general protection and should be preserved for future generations.

I: Which law used to be applied by the tribal authority that affected wildlife species and the environment?

C: Community policemen appointed by the tribal authority used to patrol the bush to ensure that trees were not cut. They arrested people found hunting, fishing or destroying the fence that divided residential, arable and grazing land.

I: What were the attitudes of the members of your community towards these laws?

C: The laws met with some resistance but were enforced to protect nature.

I: Are these laws still effective, and if not, why?

C: No, they are less effective as a result of increasing social problems and political changes that affects our society.

I: What do you think needs to be done to protect wildlife species?

C: Community members should pass stringent laws to regulate the destruction of the environment.

I: Thank you very much for your contribution.

C: Thank you very much.

### 3.7.2.7 Citizen G (teacher)

I: Thank you very much for allowing me to interview you.

C: It will be a pleasure to assist you.

I: What is your specialised subject of teaching?

C: My specialised subjects are Geography and English.

I: Do your specialisation subjects offer room for integrating environmental aspect with your teaching?

C: Yes, Geography is one of the subjects that include environmental aspects. Land, air and water pollution are discouraged. Arbour day, promoting the planting of trees by various members of community is supported.

I: What activity has your school engaged in to promote environmental sensitivity?

C: Pupils are encouraged to keep their learning environment clean of littering and unhealthy conditions that could affect their studies.

I: What benefits did the environmental activity you engaged in have for the learners?

C: Learners are able to carry these activities to their home and environment where they live. They keep their homes clean and plant not only fruit trees but also shadow trees.

I: Do you think your school is doing enough to raise environmental awareness?

C: Yes, learners are taught the importance of the environment. Cleaning campaigns are run at school and in the community.

I: What do you think a school should do to raise environmental awareness among learners?

C: There should be general cleaning once a week, and all learners should take part.

I: Which outdoor activities did your school engage in that promote sensitivity regarding wild animals?

C: A journey to the zoo where pupils learned about the behaviour of different wild animals.

I: What other benefits did the journey offer the learners?

C: The attitude of most learners changed as some species were regarded with fear and prejudice.

I: What do you think the school needs to do to promote sensitivity regarding wildlife species?

C: The school should provide learners with first hand experience that offer ample opportunity for exploring knowledge such as visiting the zoo.

I: Thank you very much for your time.

C: Thank you too.

I: Do you think curriculum 2005 offer much room for environmental awareness?

C: Yes, because environment is recognised as one of phase organiser.

#### 3.7.2.8 Citizen H (Parents)

I: I am sorry to interrupt you.

C: Don't worry, that is not a problem.

I: How long have you been a resident in this village?

C: For the past forty years.

I: What role can parents play in promoting environmental awareness?

C: Parents should be involved in community activities such as keeping the surrounding area clean and protecting the wildlife species by not hunting and killing them.

I: Do you think parents are playing a role in protecting the environment? If not, motivate.

C: Parents are not playing an effective role in protecting the environment. They lack understanding about their environment. They are still cutting trees for fire-woods and still kill animals unnecessarily. Monkeys are trapped and killed as they allegedly destroy crops.

I: What can be done to encourage parents to be environmental role models?

C: Workshops should be conducted for parents to alert them about the importance of environmental issues. Parents should be encouraged to form a committee to care for their environment.

I: Thank you kindly for talking to me.

C: It has been a pleasure meeting you.

### **3.8 THE DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS**

The data collected during observation and interviews was analysed, coded, categorised and clustered according to suitability. According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:486), coding implies categorising data by means of a

classification system. The researcher provides abbreviations that could be easily understood by the reader.

Categorising represents the meaningfulness of similar themes. This could form part of more than one category. The following diagram represents the coding and clustering of data.

### 3.8.1 Coding and clustering of data

Method of data collection	Codes	Categories
1. Observation	CF FRD PC TSB CWA EAI LLB	Collection of fire wood Fountains at risk of drying up Primitive cultivation Throwing stones at birds Chasing wild animals for fun Extending given areas illegally Land is left barren
2. Interview	CT EP ATA SI SLN ERA EEC SPM GSS DK	Cutting trees Extending land without approval Accountability to the tribal authority Shrinking of habitant Stringent laws are needed Expansion of residential areas Establishing environmental clubs Providing skills for preserving nature Good singing sound Dangerous and kills



3.8.2 Matrix table to summarise the observation and interview data

Categories	Lack of monitoring	Lack of role model	Poverty	Lack of environmental awareness	Lack of environmental ethic
Method of data collection					
1. Observation	There is not much control over what the villagers do when out in the field	Collection of fire-wood is a daily duty especially for young mothers. Adults also accompany the young mothers and assist them	Although villages has been given land for cultivation, they extend their given areas illegally so that they can produce more crops	Fountains that supply the main river and a variety of species with water are at risk of drying up as the land is left barren and open	Throwing stones at beautiful birds and sometimes chasing wild animals for fun
2. Interviews	(CITIZEN B) The law needs to be tightened to regulate the extension of cultivation and clearing of trees	(CITIZEN B) An official from Department of Environmental affairs needs to visit villages and explain to people the importance of preserving nature	(CITIZEN C) I have no problem with citizens who kill only one bird for meat, but it becomes a problem when they kill more	(CITIZEN D) Citizens don't care much about wildlife species. They occasionally hunt and kill them for meat	(CITIZEN B) Fear and anxiety with regard to certain species influenced as a result of cultural belief. This has resulted with some animals being killed unnecessarily.

### **3.9 DISCUSSION OF CATEGORIES**

The researcher will look closely at the observations and eight interviews, with the intention of organising categories. The findings will be arranged in the form of categories in order of importance, together with quotations from the interviews in order to expose the views of interviewees or respondents. From the main categories, the subcategories will be developed and discussed.

#### **3.9.1 Sensitivity**

The respondents supported the idea of environmental awareness to save wildlife species. This concept involves:

- an empathetic outlook
- valuing

This statement implies a basic environmental awareness as well as an evaluation of one's own position within the environment.

##### **3.9.1.1 Sub-categories**

###### **(a) Attitudes**

In the interviews it was noted that attitude contributed to animal cruelty: "Throwing stones at beautiful birds and sometime chase wild animal just for fun".

The above statement indicates that attitude plays a significant role in establishing harmony between humans and wild animals. The implication of the quotation is that positive attitudes such as caring and nurturing need to be inculcated to ensure the survival of wildlife species.

## (b) Concerns and empathy

The following quotation came to the fore when this question was raised: Which factors in your community contribute to the reduction of wild animals and why do you say that?

"If the forest is cut down some animals migrate and others die due to the shrinking of habitat."

This quotation resulted in the researcher realising that the feelings of concern and empathy need to be developed to enable people to take informed decisions regarding activities that could have a negative impact on the natural environment, also affecting animals. This implies that strong morality should be inculcated so that human beings can apply it when interacting with their environment.

### 3.9.2 Extinction



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The interviews concerned the following question: What factors contribute towards the reduction of animal species? Responses included the following:

- shrinking of habitat
- deforestation
- poverty
- fear

According to the respondents, the abovementioned factors play a significant role in community members caring less about wildlife species.

### 3.9.2.1 Shrinking of habitant

The respondents pointed out that the expansion of residential areas and cultivation resulting from social problems such as poverty, unemployment and increasing population growth tend to expose animals, and their numbers start to decrease.

### 3.9.2.2 Deforestation

The interviewees highlighted that if the forest is cut down some animals migrate and others die due to the shrinking of their habitant.

### 3.9.2.3 Poverty

The researcher noted that although villages had been allocated land for cultivation, they extend their given areas illegally to produce more crops. They also kill certain species as a source of meat.

### 3.9.2.4 Fear

Some species tend to be driven away as they are regarded with suspicion. This resulted in some animals being killed unnecessarily. This response was highlighted by "snake bites and kills".

## 3.9.3 Community role

In the interviews with regard to how different community members could contribute to the protection of wild animals, the following came to the fore:

- civic organisation

- tribal authority
- parents
- youth
- government

The involvement of community members will be essential for effective policy implementation and participation.

#### 3.9.3.1 Civic organisation

During the interviews it was highlighted that the civic organisation should utilise their power to help organise workshops and seminars to teach the community ways of protecting nature.

#### 3.9.3.2 Tribal authority

The interview emphasised that the tribal authority plays a role in approving new residential areas and cultivation of land that could have an effect on the living space of wild animals. The tribal authority should minimise the impact on the natural environment by calling the perpetrator to account and by employing stringent measures to restrict other community members' actions.

#### 3.9.3.3 Parents

Parents are environmental role models for their children. They should demonstrate their respect for the environment by providing their children with the necessary support. If there is a need for developing a park in the area, parents should allow their children to participate and provide them with the necessary requirements.

#### 3.9.3.4 Youth

In the interviews it was indicated that the youth could become involved in promoting environmental awareness by establishing environmental clubs. The clubs could be linked to other existing clubs within the community and should be aimed at providing environmentally literate citizens.

#### 3.9.3.5 Government

It became clear during the interviews that a lack of law enforcement on part of top authorities led to some community members taking advantage of the situation. Government should pass a law that any person found in possession of firewood collected from restricted areas, hunting or fishing illegally should be arrested by police or appear before the court of law.

### 3.9.4 Strategies



Environmental awareness could be raised in various ways. According to respondents, some proposed strategies include the following:

- Organising campaigns
- Holding seminars
- Conducting workshops
- Initiate environmental clubs
- Develop small nature reserves where possible

The above strategies indicate that environmental awareness could not be accomplished unless community members are fully involved and feel that they form part of solution to the problem.

### **3.10 CONCLUSION**

In this section, observation and interview data was presented and closely linked. Data was illustrated through coding, categorising and clustering in the form of a table form. The research findings of the collection data will be discussed in detail in section four, followed by recommendations and a conclusion.



## SECTION 4

### FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In section one, the orientation on the methods for conducting the research was presented. Section two of study involved a literature review for gathering information relevant to the research. Data collection and data analysis in section three-formed part of the inquiry.

The research findings will be discussed in this section, followed by recommendations and a conclusion. This section will integrate the information gathered in section two and the processing of the collected data in section three.

#### 4.2 FINDINGS



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##### 4.2.1 Citizens' attitude

The main finding of this study indicates that citizens' attitude plays a significant role in the extinction of wild animals. For the purpose of this study, environmental attitude was defined as positive or negative feelings that members of society have regarding animals. During interviews with the respondents it became apparent that certain animals are liked or admired more than others. Exquisite birds were regarded in a positive light. (Refer to 3.7.2.5).

Apart from certain wildlife species being liked by the community members, some animals were disliked. Most citizens dislike snakes. The idea that snakes are dangerous appears to be widespread even though they are rarely seen by villagers and cannot defend themselves. The main reason given for being



afraid of snakes is that they bite and kill even though there is no evidence of any person who died because of being bitten by a snake (see 3.7.2.5)

Interestingly enough, little is known about large birds such as the Great horn Owl, but it is still feared. Should such an owl incidental appear close to a dwelling place, it would be driven away immediately for fear of bad luck associated with this species. The myths surrounding these birds include village people used it to perform witchcraft.

Some citizens who were interviewed also indicated that people needs to be taught that not all wildlife species are dangerous and that it is unnecessary to kill them (see 3.7.2.5). This suggests that outdoor activities such as visiting the zoo should be encouraged to all members of community. This way, they would learn and observe all the disliked or feared animals and they would overcome their misconceptions. Such activities could help community members to meet biologists who understand the behaviour of most of the wild animals. Community members could have the opportunity to learn about and observe feared and disliked species. Biologists could also clarify any uncertainty that would put wildlife species at risk.

#### **4.2.2 Concerns and empathy**

Most citizens whom were interviewed expressed some level of concern and empathy with regard their feelings about wild animals. They objected to cruelty or exploitative treatment directed towards animals. One of the interviewees indicated that wild animals deserve safety and protection just like human beings, due to their ability of predicting the weather. They also provide food during droughts (refer to 3.7.2.2)

Citizen also understood the effects of deforestation on animal habitant. If forests are cut, the animals migrate or die due to a lack of habitant (refer to 3.7.2.5).

The dialogues showed that citizens felt that wild animals are important and that a mechanism needs to be devised to protect them from any form of exploitation.

### **4.3 CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO WILDLIFE EXTINCTION**

#### **4.3.1 Lack of monitoring**

During the interviews it was discovered that a lack of monitoring tended to contribute to the reduction of wildlife species. Interviewees indicated that it was not known what community members did in the field. Some villagers tended to expand their given land without the approval of the tribal authority (see 3.7.2.1). No strict regulation had been laid down by the local authority and there was no enforcement to restrict people from environmental destruction. It is therefore essential that continuous monitoring be undertaken by the local authority for the preservation of the ecosystem and more importantly, wildlife species.

#### **4.3.2 Poverty**



Village communities cite poverty as being prevalent in rural areas and in most homes. They attributed the reason for this to the fact that people continuously destroy their environment due to increasing social problems ranging from hunger and unemployment. Forests were cleared for firewood and cultivation and wild animal were hunted down in order to meet their basic needs such as food (see 3.7.2.6). Governmental and non-governmental intervention was essential for tackling the poverty problem, which is posing a threat to the environment. A means should be devised to maintain a balance between deforestation and afforestation. Agro-forestation could be a solution that would benefit local residents while saving their natural environment.

#### **4.3.3 Lack of environmental awareness**

During the investigation, a lack of understanding on the part of villagers concerning the sustainable use of natural resources was revealed. This tends to be a major contributing factor to environmental destruction. Because of the greed to produce more crops, it was also revealed that some citizens clear trees surrounding fountains, which is a source of water not only for humans but also for wild animals (see 3.7.2.1). This indicates that environmental awareness is essential to help citizens to not engage in activities that could have a negative impact on their future life.

#### **4.4 THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN PROTECTING WILDLIFE**

In order to preserve animal species for future generations, the respondents indicated that the community need to take the initiative. In this regard, they felt that different stakeholders such as civic organisations, the tribal authority, parents, the youth and the government had a role to play to protect wildlife species.



The citizens indicated that organisations such as the civics and the tribal authority should play a role in raising environmental awareness as they have good contact with people at grassroots level. The tribal authority could protect wild animals by restricting citizens attempting to expand their residential and cultivation areas.

The villagers also emphasised the idea that both the parents and the youth have a role to play in protecting nature for future generations. Parents should become environmental role models for their children by providing them with the necessary support and facilities required to preserve the environment. It was also proposed that the youth should become environmentally literate citizens by involving them in environmental clubs (3.7.2.3). This would help to empower them with skills and knowledge necessary to resolve environmental issues and problems.

## **4.5 WAYS OF RAISING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

The interviews with villagers disclosed the following ways of raising environmental awareness:

- Formation of environmental forums
- Conducting workshops aimed at raising environmental awareness
- Campaigning
- Establishment of environmental clubs
- Holding meetings where environmental issues are discussed.

## **4.6 FINDINGS ACCORDING TO THE LITERATURE SURVEY**

### **4.6.1 The South African and Ugandan situation**

The literature study indicates that both South Africa and Uganda are third world countries and that comparisons can easily be drawn (see section 2).

In South Africa, it appears that damage to environmental awareness could have been the result of the apartheid regime, which promoted conservation of only larger animals considered threat to human life. This contributed to communities having little concern for wildlife species within their natural environment. The legacy of the past creates unfavourable condition for wildlife species leaving little room for movement. Human society and wildlife species therefore compete for habitat. This resulted in the exploitation of animals as humans are compelled to inhabit even rangeland due to an increasing population growth.

The situation in Uganda just like their counterpart, the development of environmental awareness was influenced by problems such as burning veldfires and overgrazing. In response to the problem, the government initiated programmes that offer positive on the protection of wild animals. The

government of Uganda also developed programmes intended to mobilise primary school pupils as agents of change. Pupils were assisted to develop practical, investigative and problem-solving skills, based on immediate environmental needs.

## **4.7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The research findings of this study highlighted significant factors such as attitude, concern and empathy, a lack of monitoring and environmental awareness as major factors contributing to the extinction of animals. From the findings, recommendations will be now made to address the problem where possible

### **4.7.1 Proposal for raising environmental awareness**

In order to preserve wildlife species, a holistic approach towards environmental concerns is essential. This could range from formal to non-formal activities.

#### **4.7.1.1 Formation of an environmental club**

Such a club could involve all the youths within a community to show an interest in the environment. The duties of the club could include the following:

- Co-ordinate and work with existing environmental centres
- Organise meetings to discuss environmental issues
- Conduct environmental audits
- Identify the needs of communities and
- Initiate environmental project.

The environmental club should be capable of answering questions such as:

- What are the factors contributing to the extinction of animals?

- What role can the community play to protect of wild animals?
- What can be done to raise environmental awareness?

#### 4.7.1.2 Other methods of raising environmental awareness

- Environmental talks via the media, e.g. talks, newspaper clippings and magazines/journals
- Publishing numerous information leaflets
- Manual distribution
- Conducting workshops
- Conducting seminars
- Organising campaigns, e.g. cleaning campaigns.

#### 4.7.2 Reduced forest clearing by locals (Barrow, 1995:164)

- Encourage tolerant forest management or extraction
- Involve locals in forest management
- Ensure that locals benefit from forest management
- Promote agro-forestry, conservation, replanting
- Identify why locals damage forests
- Control access to forests.

#### 4.7.3 Community involvement

Community involvement will be important for policy and programme designers who need to engage people in charge. Environmental awareness would not be accomplished unless the community and individuals within it understand what sustainable development means as well as how it relates to national and international objectives. It is important that the community itself should be in a better position to articulate its needs and priorities and in this way, influence decision-makers. The natural environment could be saved if citizens are

involved in decision-making compelling them to respect policies. Barton and Bruder (1995:213) argue that the successful accomplishment of policies and programmes regarding sustainability could only be achieved through individual as well as community actions. The understanding of environmental issues and problems needs to be addressed. This could encourage the community to take steps related to their own environmental priorities.

#### **4.7.4 Local authorities' empowerment**

Representative bodies such as the tribal authority should be empowered to communicate the message to ordinary citizens. Most local authorities are democratically elected, and citizens tend to respect them. This enables members of the community to explain why they are destroying their environment. An open and flexible approach could be employed to solve environmental issues.

By taking into account community views on assessing issues of environmental concern local authorities could ensure that such views are translated into policy development and practice. Local authorities can also facilitate the establishment of environmental forums consisting of liaison groups. Officers, councillors and selected representatives from local environmental groups could meet to discuss a programme of action.

#### **4.7.5 School involvement**

The school is a community asset and its involvement could result in impacting on raising environmental awareness. The school should become involved by providing of training and environmental programmes that emphasise environmental issues. As the cross-curricula approach has been opted for environmental education in curriculum 2005, it offers great opportunity for infusion of environmental aspects in all subjects teaching.

It could also incorporate the environmental sensitivity by engaging them in outdoor activities such as visiting the zoo. This would provide children with first hand experiences of wildlife preservation. It can be crucial in reducing fear for certain species. As the school represents the culture and stereotypes of society, it can also help to shape the moral development of children. According to theorists such as Piaget children develop intellectually and also experience several stages of moral development. It is important that educators introduce appropriate environmental behaviour at an early age, as many children would have later formed attitudes that could prove difficult for change. Nurturing behaviour towards wildlife animals could be stimulated, and the unnecessary killing of species be discouraged.

#### **4.7.6 Environmental centre partnership**

Existing environmental centres are vitally important when local authorities assess what would be the most co-effective means of raising awareness. Through using already existing channels the resources can be optimised when launching a new project without private sector support, which will be risky. The local authority could work together with groups such as Friends of the earth, the local wildlife trust and other environmental groups that have produced information and advice on environmental issues for a number of years. In addition, manuals could be published to help raise environmental awareness. The interdependent co-operation and coherence approach can ensure that officials from such a centre provide continuous monitoring to assess the progress of the initiated project. Even if no progress is forthcoming advice and information could be provided until the project is accomplished.

#### **4.8 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY**

In this study, it was noted that community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty in a number of Thohoyandou villages was not intensive. Data was collected from a



relatively small group of Ngwenani villages and can therefore not be generalised to other areas in the country each having a unique character. Except for the environmental officer, all interviewees are residents of these villages. Only eight interviews were conducted.

In the absence of tape recorder, only pencils and pads were used as instruments for gathering data. Detailed qualitative data was noted to help solve difficulties encountered while transcribing.

Due to the time constraints and the number of pages required for a mini-dissertation, the research covers only a period of four weeks. The researcher believes that more data could have been collected if there was more time. The findings of this study are not disseminated statistically. However a detailed qualitative report was forwarded to clarify uncertainties.

#### **4.9 POSSIBILITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**



This study highlighted valuable information regarding community sensitivity.

The researcher recommends further research on this topic. The focus should be on the following:

- Implementation of pre and post programmes to determine the improvement of citizen attitude in relation to animal cruelty.
- Implementation of a variety of research methods, including questionnaires and close observation.
- Obtaining a broader insight into the problem to benefit all South African citizens.

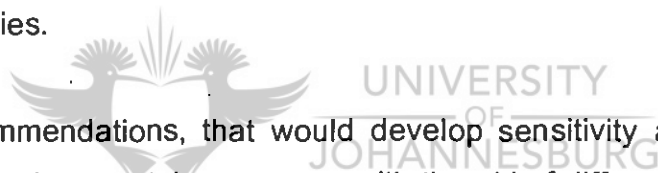
#### **4.10 CONCLUSION**

In this study, an attempt was made to investigate community sensitivity regarding animal cruelty in a number of Thohoyandou villages. The main methods employed for data collection included observation and interviewing.

The findings of this study highlighted citizen attitude in Ngwenani village did contribute to the extinction of animal species. The research findings showed, firstly that fears for certain species tended to put them at risk. Secondly, the findings indicated that a lack of monitoring tended to influence citizens to take advantage of the situation, as they were not accountable to anybody. Thirdly, environmental awareness to enlighten citizens about the importance of preserving the natural environment found to be lacking.

Findings also revealed that direct outdoor experiences could influence the development of positive attitudes and feelings of concern and empathy that could save wildlife species.

One of the recommendations, that would develop sensitivity among citizens, involved raising environmental awareness with the aid of different stakeholders. Such stakeholders could include the local authority, community, school and an environmental centre.



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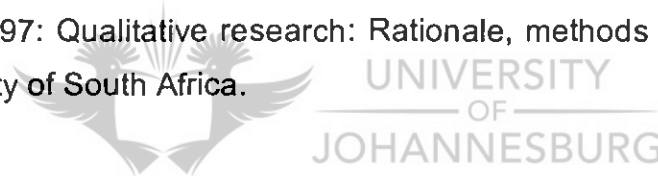
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## **ADDENDUM**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE WITH THE PARTICIPANTS:**

1. WELCOME
2. INDIVIDUAL APPROVAL OF PADS AND PENCIL DURING INTERVIEWING PROCESS
3. CONFORMITY AND ANONYMITY AGREEMENT
4. INTRODUCTION
  - 4.1 FAMILIARISE NAME TO PARTICIPANTS
  - 4.2 EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
5. MAIN QUESTIONS THAT GUIDE THE INTERVIEW:
  - 5.1 WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO THE EXTINCTION OF WILD ANIMALS?
  - 5.2 WHAT CONTRIBUTION CAN THE COMMUNITY MAKE TO PROTECT WILD ANIMALS?
  - 5.3 WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO RAISE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS?
6. END
7. THANK YOU SINCERELY FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION