

# **EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT IN THE NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS OF SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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## **Abstract**

The National Zoological Gardens of South Africa is an animal-based tourist attraction that needs to offer a competitive product in order to remain relevant and to meet its various mandates. Functioning within the experience economy it strives to stage experiences that satisfy the motivations and expectations of its visitors. The study aimed at determining who visits the zoo, what motivates them to visit the zoo as well as what their expectations are and whether the zoo meets their needs in this regard. It also aimed at determining whether or not different demographic groups had different needs and whether their specific needs were being met. The study employed two self-administered questionnaires, using convenience sampling, whereby visitors entering and leaving the zoo were requested to complete the questionnaires. The data was analysed using SAS 9.2 programme and a further G-Test for goodness of fit was performed to determine dependency between race demographic and response. A total of 572 entry questionnaires and 293 exit questionnaires were completed. The two largest demographic groups that visit the zoo are white and black visitors who responded as a relatively homogeneous group. It was concluded that there were not responses in these two groups that indicated dependency between race and response. For the smaller demographic groups some of responses indicated a dependency between race and response but these form a small component of the zoo's visitors. A high revisit and referral intention are good indicators of visitor satisfaction with 279 indicating their intention to revisit and 277 to recommend the zoo to family and friends. This study emphasises the importance of understanding the motivations, expectations and satisfaction of demographic groups as part of effective experience management.

**Keywords:** Animal-based tourist attraction, Experience Economy, Motivations, Expectations, Satisfaction.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	8
1.1	BACKGROUND.....	8
1.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT .....	9
1.3	PURPOSE STATEMENT .....	10
1.4	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES .....	10
1.5	IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED STUDY .....	10
2	DELIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS .....	11
2.1	DELIMITATIONS .....	11
2.2	ASSUMPTIONS .....	12
3	DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS .....	12
4	BACKGROUND TO 21 <sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ZOOS AS TOURIST ATTRACTIONS.....	13
4.1	WILDLIFE TOURISM .....	13
4.2	THE 21 <sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ZOO AS A WILDLIFE TOURISM PRODUCT.....	18
4.3	THE NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS OF SOUTH AFRICA AS A 21 <sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ZOO AND WILDLIFE TOURISM PRODUCT .....	20
5	MARKET SEGMENTATION.....	22
5.1	BACKGROUND.....	22
5.2	MARKET SEGMENTATION: WHO AND WHY ARE PEOPLE VISITING WILDLIFE ATTRACTIONS AND IN PARTICULAR ZOOS.....	24
6	VISITOR EXPECTATIONS AND NEEDS.....	28
6.1	BACKGROUND TO MANAGING EXPECTATIONS.....	28
6.2	EXPERIENCES.....	29
6.3	MANAGING THE EXPERIENCE – THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY .....	30
6.4	MANAGING THE EXPERIENCE: INTEGRATION IN CREATING EXPERIENCES.....	33

6.5	MANAGING THE ZOO EXPERIENCE .....	38
7	QUALITY AND SATISFACTION .....	40
7.1	BACKGROUND.....	40
7.2	ZOO SPECIFIC QUALITY AND SATISFACTION VARIABLES.....	44
8	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS .....	51
8.1	RESEARCH PARADIGM / PHILOSOPHY .....	51
8.1.1	Epistemology.....	51
8.1.2	Ontology.....	51
8.1.3	Axiology.....	52
8.1.4	Research Paradigm.....	52
8.2	DESCRIPTION OF INQUIRY STRATEGY AND BROAD RESEARCH DESIGN.....	52
8.2.1	A description of the proposed study's strategy of inquiry .....	53
8.2.2	Sampling .....	54
8.2.3	Techniques for selecting respondents.....	56
8.3	DATA COLLECTION .....	56
8.3.1	Access to data sources .....	56
8.3.2	Methods used to collect data.....	57
8.3.3	Pilot-testing.....	58
8.3.4	Length of study.....	59
8.4	DATA ANALYSIS .....	59
8.5	ASSESSING AND DEMONSTRATING THE QUALITY AND RIGOUR THE PROPOSED RESEARCH DESIGN.....	60
8.5.1	Bias in interviewer-administered questionnaires .....	60
8.5.2	Data quality in the interviewer-administrated questionnaire .....	61
8.5.3	Validity and reliability in quantitative questionnaires.....	61
8.6	RESEARCH ETHICS .....	62
9	RESULTS.....	63
9.1	INTRODUCTION.....	63

9.2	DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS .....	64
10	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....	72
10.1	INTRODUCTION .....	72
10.2	RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1: TO DETERMINE THE VARIOUS DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS THAT VISIT THE ZOO.....	73
10.3	RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2: TO DETERMINE WHAT MOTIVATES VARIOUS DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS WHO VISIT THE ZOO .....	74
10.4	RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3: TO DETERMINE THE EXPECTATIONS OF VISITORS TO THE ZOO .....	77
10.5	RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 4: TO MEASURE THE SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH EXPERIENCE OF VISITORS TO THE ZOO WITH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF ITS OPERATIONS.....	82
10.6	RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 5: TO DETERMINE WHAT INTERVENTIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR THE ZOO TO POSITION ITSELF AS A FLAGSHIP TOURIST ATTRACTION.....	90
10.7	CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH .....	91
11	LIST OF REFERENCES .....	93
12	APPENDICES	
12.1	ENTRY SURVEY	
12.2	EXIT SURVEY	

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: An overview of wildlife tourism's position within tourism .....	15
Figure 2: The Experience Realms .....	32
Figure 3: Integrated Quality Service Cycle.....	34
Figure 4: The Integration Matrix.....	38
Figure 5: The Indirect Model of Tourist Satisfaction.....	43

Figure 6: Model of path relations between the quality of the provider's performance and behavioural intentions for recreational attractions (the case of zoo) .....	44
Figure 7: Visiting the zoo to see animals (v7) indicated a very strong dependency between race demographics and response.....	76
Figure 8: Visiting the zoo to do something fun (v8) indicated a very strong dependency between race demographics and response.....	76
Figure 9: Visiting the zoo to spend time with family or friends (v9) indicated a dependency between race demographics and response.....	77
Figure 10: Zoos are a good place for spending time with family or friends (v20) showed a strong dependency between race demographic and response .....	79
Figure 11: Zoos offer a relaxing environment (v19) indicated a dependency between race demographic and response .....	79
Figure 12: Zoo staff are knowledgeable about animals (v26) indicated a dependency between race demographics and response.....	80
Figure 13: Effective maintained amenities (v23) indicated a dependency between race demographics and response .....	81
Figure 14: Accurate directional signage (v24) is very important showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response.....	81
Figure 15: Satisfaction levels with parking indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response .....	84
Figure 16: Getting lost in the zoo showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response.....	85
Figure 17: Satisfaction with the composition of the animal collection indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response.....	88
Figure 18: The zoo not being value for money indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response .....	90

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Abbreviations used in this document .....	13
Table 2: Wildlife-tourism spectrum.....	16
Table 3: Range of wildlife tourism products .....	17
Table 4: Zoo attendances around the world.....	19
Table 5: Primary goals of major wildlife tourism stakeholders. ....	23
Table 6: Numbers of visits in the last 12 months to a zoo, wildlife park or aquarium.....	25
Table 7: The motivations of zoo visitors.....	27
Table 8: Why companies lose customers .....	35
Table 9: Components of setting .....	36
Table 10: The key principles of an anthropocentric and ecocentric worldview.....	39
Table 11: Ethical guidelines for operations of animal-based attractions .....	45
Table 12: Six quality factors in Wildlife Tourism.....	49
Table 13: Factors that contribute to or hinder a state of mindfulness of a visitor with a wildlife experience. ....	50
Table 14: Visitor to the NZG for the 2010 / 2011 financial year. ....	54
Table 15: Visitors to the NZG during the data collection period.....	55
Table 16: Demographics of visitors to the NZG .....	64
Table 17: Entry Frequency Analysis .....	65
Table 18: Mean and SD for the entry questionnaires.....	66
Table 19: Exit Frequency Analysis.....	67
Table 20: Mean and SD for exit questionnaires .....	68
Table 21: Frequency of responses to revisit and recommend intention.....	69
Table 22: G-test for goodness of fit indicating a dependence between demographic and response selected for motivation and expectation.....	70



Table 23: G-test for goodness of fit indicating a dependence between demographic and response selected for levels of satisfaction. ....	71
Table 24: Motives for visiting the zoo.....	74
Table 25: Expectations of visitors to the zoo.....	77
Table 26: Satisfaction levels with parking .....	83
Table 27: Satisfaction levels with the way-finding system.....	84
Table 28: Satisfaction levels with the tidiness of the zoo and the ablution facilities. ....	85
Table 29: Satisfaction levels with the restaurant.....	86
Table 30: Satisfaction levels with staff interactions.....	86
Table 31: Satisfaction levels with the animal collection.....	87
Table 32: Satisfaction with the zoo's education offering. ....	88
Table 33: Satisfaction levels with the social component of the zoo visit. ....	89
Table 34: Perception on the zoo being value for money.....	89
Table 35: Revisit and recommend intention.....	90

## ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
<i>Ex Situ</i> conservation	Away from a species' normal habitat (Olney, 2005:69).
<i>In Situ</i> conservation	In a species' usual wild habitat (Olney, 2005:70)
NRF	National Research Foundation
NZG	The National Zoological Gardens of South Africa.

# EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT IN THE NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS OF SOUTH AFRICA

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Zoos have formed part of the wildlife tourism industry for decades - perhaps even centuries - with the earliest recorded collections of animals dating back to ancient Egypt where collections of animals were mainly maintained for religious purposes. Modern zoos made their first appearance during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, with zoos being established in Paris (1793), London (1828), Berlin (1844), New York (1862), and Pretoria's National Zoological Gardens of South Africa in 1899 (Tribe, 2004:35; van den Berg, van den Berg & Hopkins, 2000:28).

The zoo industry has in recent years found it increasingly necessary to find and maintain a balance in its various roles and aims. The roles and aims of zoos have been defined in various manners. Jamieson, in Mason (2000:333), defines the role of zoos as being: amusement, education, scientific research and preservation, whereas Turley (1999:3-5) sees the role of zoos as being a mediation of the functions of conservation through captive breeding, learning and scientific research, and a place for entertaining the visiting public. Most authors state that zoos play a significant role as visitor attractions (Catibog-Sinha, 2008:161-162; Mason, 2000:335; Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999:28; Ryan & Saward, 2004:245-250; Swarbrooke, 2003:369; Tribe, 2001:1-4; Turley, 1999:2-4; Woods, 2002:343-346). Studies have focused on the roles and functions of zoos (Clayton, Fraser & Saunders, 2008:1-21; Tribe, 2001:17-25) and on the motivations that stimulate visitors to visit these facilities (Ryan & Saward, 2004:245-266).

Zoos have the opportunity to attract large numbers of visitors and can benefit from positioning themselves firmly in the realm of the experience economy. This may be achieved through the "staging" or managing of experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:95-100). In order to effectively deliver as a visitor attraction, a detailed understanding of the various market segments is required as well as the extent that the organisation meets the various target audiences' needs (de Guzman, Leones, Tapia, Wong & de Castro,

2006:863-867). In a diverse society, such as the South African society, it is expected that different demographic groups will have different expectations of a visitor or tourist attraction, and a clear understanding of these needs is required to ensure high satisfaction levels (Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999:228-238). Developing a tourist attraction that meets the needs of various demographic groups is a challenge facing many modern zoos. This requires a visitor activities' study. Visitor studies aim to develop a better understanding of the attraction's audience, why they visit, and how they use the physical infrastructure (Bitgood, 2002:461-466).

The concept of experience management refers to the challenges of managing extraordinary experiences in tourist attractions. These challenges can be either external or internal. The external challenge refers to increased competition while internal challenges include different themes, resources and exhibitions. These contribute to visitor knowledge, experience, entertainment, and the organisation and communication within the market (Lyngnes, 2008:1). Within the zoo community visitor experience is measured as the meeting of expectations manifested in visitor satisfaction. Satisfaction levels are determined by the visitors' needs, factors that motivate visits to the attraction, and how the attraction positions itself to meet these expectations (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994:19-31).

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Extensive research has been conducted on positioning zoos in the developed world as tourist attractions (Catibog-Sinha, 2008; Mason, 2000; Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999; Ryan & Seward, 2004; Swarbrooke, 2003; Tribe, 2001; Turley, 1999; Woods, 2002). Limited research has been conducted in South Africa on positioning zoos as tourist attractions within various demographic groups. The understanding of experience management within a South African zoo context is not well-researched. An exploration of the expectations and satisfaction levels of visitors to a South African zoo is thus required to contribute to the zoo industry as a whole within the South African tourism sector. Furthermore there is a need for public entities to become financially more self-sufficient; requiring of their management to be innovative in expanding their markets.

### **1.3 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of the motivations and expectations of various demographic groups who visited the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa. Secondly, the study measured the satisfactions levels of patrons to the zoo with various aspects of its operations thereby managing the experience.

### **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The following research objectives guided the study:

1. To determine the various demographic groups that visit the zoo;
2. To determine what motivates various demographic groups who visit the zoo;
3. To determine the expectations of visitors to the zoo;
4. To measure the satisfaction levels with experience of visitors to the zoo with various aspects of its operations; and
5. To determine what interventions are required for the zoo to position itself as a flagship tourist attraction.

### **1.5 IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED STUDY**

Attendance of zoos has fluctuated over the years with their relevance as a top tourist attraction remaining steadfast. A general trend, worldwide, is that attendance numbers are remaining constant (Davey, 2007:217-225; Tribe, 2004:43) or as is the case in the United Kingdom have declined over the last 20 years due to competition from other attractions (Whitworth, 2012). Hunter and Jones, in Tribe (2004:43) as well as Whitworth (2012) believe that the overriding reason for the numbers remaining constant and not growing in real terms may be ascribed to the fact that zoos are now part of an increasingly competitive leisure market and that if they are to compete effectively they must appreciate their own place in the tourism market. Literature also indicates that a balance between conservation, research, education and the recreational functions of zoos is essential (Catibog-Sinha, 2008; Clayton, *et al.* 2008; Mason, 2000; Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999; Ryan & Seward, 2004; Swarbrooke, 2003; Tribe, 2001; Turley, 1999; Whitworth, 2012;

Woods, 2002). An understanding of the needs, motivations and satisfaction levels of the various demographic groups visiting the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa (NZG), as components of visitor experience, can contribute to other animal-based facilities positioning themselves as attractions in the growing tourism sector (Shani & Pizan, 2007). A further outcome of the study could be the improved financial sustainability of the NZG due to the potential increase in visitor numbers.

## **2 DELIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

### **2.1 DELIMITATIONS**

Lunenburg and Irby (2008:134) identified delimitations as, “boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the study”. Several delimitations are applicable to the study relating to context, constructs and the theoretical perspectives. The context of the study was limited to adults already visiting the NZG. For the purpose of the study adults were deemed to be individuals aged 18 years and older.

Furthermore, the study aimed to determine what motivated adults to visit the NZG and their pre-visit expectations. It also measured the levels of satisfaction with the experience received at the NZG. Therefore the study only focused on visitors already motivated to visit the zoo and did not consider any groups that fell outside this scope.

Thirdly, the study was undertaken during a specific period of time, aimed at measuring motivation or satisfaction levels of visitors to the NZG at that point, and therefore the instruments were not designed to record whether or not there has been a change in motivators, expectations and levels or satisfaction over time.

As a survey data collection method was employed during the study, the number of potential responses was limited thereby allowing for the development of a hierarchy of motivators and expectations. Furthermore, in order to facilitate data analysis and reliability the instruments were only developed in English. According to Gray (2009:219) standardisation in surveys is vital.

Finally, the study's literature review was primarily limited to studies on zoos but also includes literature related to the tourism industry in general. Literature from other disciplines was only consulted in order to clarify concepts.

## **2.2 ASSUMPTIONS**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:5) defined an assumption as a self-evident truth or a condition that is taken for granted. This research proposal contains such assumptions that form the basis for attaching meaning and understanding. It is assumed that:

- The world is too complex to be defined by absolute laws;
- Humans give meaning to their roles based on the perceived context;
- Humans create their own reality based on perceptions;
- All human actions are based on motivations;
- All humans expect outcomes based on their actions or motivations;
- Human satisfaction is influenced by both internal and external factors; and
- The respondents have understood the vocabulary utilised in the data collection instruments.

## **3 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

- Customer satisfaction – An understanding and managing customer expectations of what companies do and what customers want (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:78). Swarbrooke (2003:315) defines it as perceived in terms of the extent to which the product or service satisfies the needs and wants of the customer.
- Experiences – The newly identified offering of experiences occurs whenever a company intentionally uses services as the stage and goods as props to engage an individual (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:11). According to Frost and Laing, in Frost (2011:135) experiences are culturally and spatially organised and engineered phenomena.

- Experience economy – The progression of economic activity where companies stage rich and compelling experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:25). Frost and Laing make the argument that in the experience economy businesses need to attract customers with the promise of enjoying a series of memorable events that a company stages in a personal way to engage them (Frost, 2011:135).
- The terms guest/s, patron/s and visitor/s are used interchangeably and are deemed to mean a person or group of people who patronise a tourist attraction.

A full list and explanation of abbreviations used in this document may be found in Table 1.

**Table 1: Abbreviations used in this document**

Abbreviation	Meaning
<i>Ex Situ</i> conservation	Away from a species' normal habitat (Olney, 2005:69).
<i>In Situ</i> conservation	In a species' usual wild habitat (Olney, 2005:70)
NRF	National Research Foundation
NZG	The National Zoological Gardens of South Africa.

## 4 BACKGROUND TO 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ZOOS AS TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

### 4.1 WILDLIFE TOURISM

Tourism has been defined by Newsome, Dowling and Moore (2005:12), as the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside their normal environment and their activities; normally for leisure purposes; and involves at least an overnight stay. According to Fennel (2008:1) tourism is difficult to define because of its magnitude and its reliance on primary, secondary and tertiary levels of production and service, and the fact that it is interwoven into everyday life, economically, socioculturally and environmentally. However, in an attempt to provide a frame of reference in which to explain ecotourism, Fennel (2008:2) defines tourism as the interrelated system that includes tourists and the

associated services that are provided and utilised (facilities, attractions, transportation and accommodation) to aid in their movement. Furthermore, he defines a tourist as a person travelling for pleasure for a period of at least one night, but not more than one year for international tourists and six months for persons travelling in their own countries, with the main purpose of the visit being other than to engage in activities for remuneration in the place(s) visited. The United Nations' World Tourism Organisation defines a tourist as such if their trip includes an overnight stay.

A key component of the tourism system is the tourism attraction. MacCannell in Fennell (2008:3) has described a tourism attraction as the “empirical relationship between a tourist, a site and a marker. Fennel (2008:3) elucidates this definition by identifying the tourist as the human component, the site includes the actual destination or physical entity, and the marker represents some form of information that the tourist uses to identify and give meaning to a particular attraction. Lew, in Fennell (2008:3), emphasises the objective and subjective characteristics of attractions - the following are the three most important areas of the attraction:

- Ideographic – describes the concrete uniqueness of a site;
- Organisational – focuses on the spatial capacity and temporal nature of the attraction; and
- Cognitive – a place that fosters the feeling of being a tourist.

Goeldner *et al.*, in Fennell (2008:2), loosely categorised tourism attractions as cultural (for example historical sites, museums), natural (for example parks, flora and fauna), events (for example festivals, religious events), recreation (for example golf, hiking) and entertainment (for example theme parks, cinemas). Newsome *et al.* (2005:13) categorised tourism attractions or the area of the tourism system that focus specifically on the wildlife component of natural areas tourism as wildlife tourism. According to van der Merwe and Saayman (2013:9) wildlife tourism can be defined as tourism that is based on encounters with non-domesticated animals in either the animal's natural environment or in captivity. According to Newsome *et al.* (2005:13) wildlife tourism includes the following types of natural area tourism:

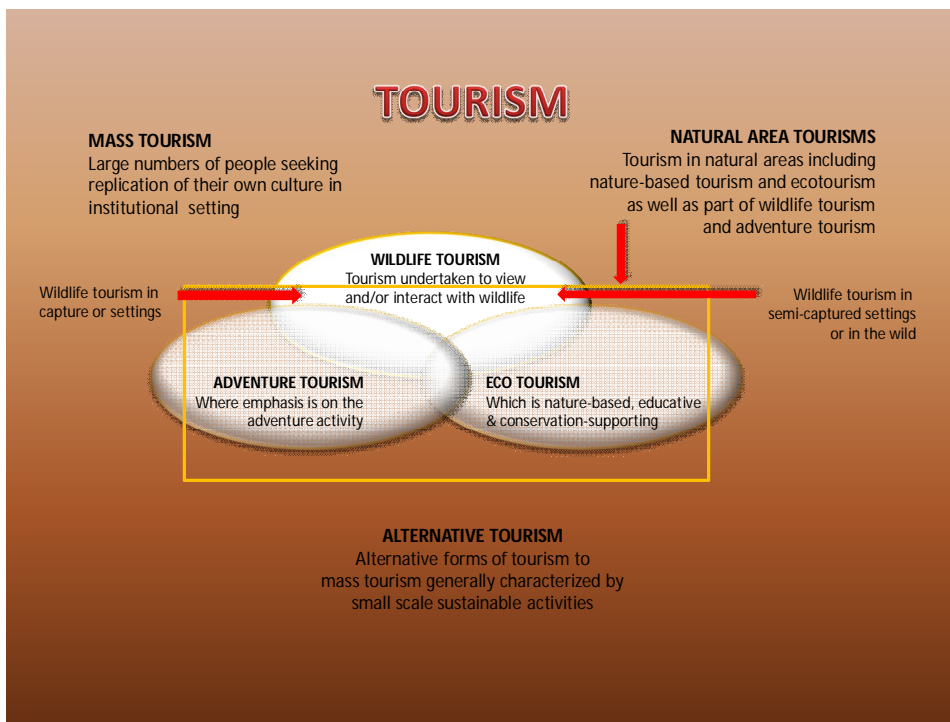
- Tourism in the environment – for example adventure tourism – white water rafting, scuba diving serve as examples;



- Tourism about the environment – for example nature-based tourism – viewing of natural phenomena; and
- Tourism for the environment – for example ecotourism – includes elements of both adventure tourism and nature-based tourism but has a strong educative focus and is conservation-supporting in its practices.

Newsome *et al.* (2005:180) defined wildlife tourism as “tourism undertaken to view and/ or encounter wildlife. It can take place in a range of settings, from captive, semi-captive, to in the wild, and it encompasses a variety of interactions from passive observation to feeding and/ or touching the species viewed”. Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:32) defined wildlife tourism, “as an area of overlap between nature-based tourism, ecotourism, consumptive use of wildlife, rural tourism, and human relations with animals”. Newsome *et al.* (2005:190) developed Figure 1 below to depict the position of wildlife tourism in tourism.

**Figure 1: An overview of wildlife tourism's position within tourism**



Source: Adapted from Newsome, *et al.* (2005:19).

Higginbottom (2004:2) has described wildlife tourism as “tourism based on encounters with non-domesticated (non-human) animals” with these encounters occurring either in an *in-situ* or *ex-situ* environment.

Various attempts have been made to categorise the components of wildlife tourism. Duffus and Dearden, in Newsome *et al.* (2005:16), focused on the wildlife-human interaction in categorising wildlife tourism. They developed the following categories: hunting and fishing (consumptive use); zoos and aquaria (low-consumptive use); and wildlife observation and photography (non-consumptive). Orams, in Newsome *et al.* (2005:16), has categorised wildlife tourism by identifying the interaction opportunities, management strategy options, and the outcome indicators for the tourists as well as the wildlife. Orams' categorisation of wildlife tourism may be seen in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Wildlife-tourism spectrum**

Category	Setting	Example	Human influence
Captive	Aviaries	Birds of Eden, Western Cape, South Africa	Completely human constructed
	Zoos	National Zoological Gardens, Gauteng, South Africa	
	Oceanariums	uShaka Marine World, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa	
	Aquariums	Two Oceans Aquarium, Western Cape, South Africa	
Semi-captive	Wildlife parks	Rhino and Lion Park, Gauteng, South Africa	Partially human constructed
	Rehabilitation centres	Moholoholo, Limpopo, South Africa	
	Sea pens		
Feeding wildlife		Great White Shark Cage diving, Gansbaai, South Africa	Natural Environment
		Predator feeding, Rhino and Lion Park, Gauteng, South Africa	
		Vulture restaurants, National Zoo breeding centre in Lichtenburg, South Africa	
	National Parks	Kruger National Park, South Africa	
	Migratory routes	Hermanus whale route, Western Cape, South Africa	
	Breeding Sites	African penguin, Boulders	

		Beach, South Africa	
	Feeding / drinking sites	Addo Elephant Park, Eastern Cape, South Africa	

Source: Adapted from Orams in Newsome, *et al.* (2005:17).

Higginbottom (2004:3) categorised wildlife tourism or, as she refers to, “product-markets” into the following main forms:

- Wildlife-watching tourism (viewing or otherwise interacting with free-ranging animals);
- Captive-wildlife tourism (viewing animals in a man-made confinement; principally zoos, wildlife parks, animal sanctuaries and aquaria; also includes circuses and shows by mobile wildlife exhibitors);
- Hunting tourism; and
- Fishing tourism.

However Higginbottom (2004:3) does point out that these classifications are transient as tourism products change to follow consumer and market trends as well as with changes in wildlife management practices. Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:33) grouped the wildlife tourism products into the seven categories as reflected in Table 3.

**Table 3: Range of wildlife tourism products**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
Nature-based tourism with a wildlife component	Nature-based tour but showing wildlife as an incidental part of product
Locations with good wildlife opportunities	Some accommodation establishments are located close to wildlife rich areas and may even entice wildlife closer through feeding
Artificial attractions based on wildlife	Man-made attractions where species are kept in captivity
Specialist animal watching	Tours catering for specialists interest groups such as birding tours
Habitat specific tours	Tours to habitats rich in wildlife and are usually accessed by specialised vehicle or vessel
Thrill-offering tours	The basis of the product is the exhibition of a dangerous or large species enticed to engage in spectacular behaviour in the wild by the

	operator
Hunting / fishing tours	The consumptive use of wildlife in the wild, semi-captive or farmed environment involving the killing or releasing of the wildlife

Source: Reynolds & Braithwaite (2001:33-34).

## 4.2 THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ZOO AS A WILDLIFE TOURISM PRODUCT

As can be seen from the above definitions of wildlife tourism and the associated attractions and product offerings zoos and aquaria clearly fall within the scope of wildlife tourism. Their products clearly fall within the Reynolds and Braithwaites (2001:33) category referred to as “artificial attractions based on wildlife” or in Orams’ (in Newsome *et al.*, 2008:17) captive category in the wildlife tourist spectrum. Zoos and aquaria have attempted to mediate their various roles that include the conservation of wildlife, research, education and recreation. This culminated in a symposium held in London in 2004 that attempted to find a new direction for zoos in the 21st century. The symposium was titled, “Catalysts for Conservation” and attracted role players from across the zoo fraternity.

Three broad groupings of attributes have been identified as the outcomes of the symposium that are to guide the activities of zoos in the 21st century; zoos in the 21st century are to transform themselves into conservation centres. Hatchwell, Rübél, Dickie, West and Zimmerman (2007:344) identified the following attributes of the 21st century zoo:

- Effecting behavioural changes among zoo visitors and decision makers in ways that may contribute to *ex situ* or *in situ* conservation;
- Establishing links between *ex situ* zoo-based operations and *in situ* conservation actions; and
- Contributing directly to *in situ* wildlife conservation.

The traditional function of zoos and aquaria as leisure attractions (is paramount) and must remain if zoos are to “live” the defining attributes of being a conservation centre.

According to Dickie and West (2007:5), one in ten of the global population will visit a zoo each year, amounting to almost 600 million people worldwide. Tribe (2004:41) list zoos as amongst the most popular destinations for a day out with Mexico City Zoo receiving 12

million visitors a year, Beijing 11 million, Moscow 3.5 million, San Diego 3.3 million and Tokyo 1.5 million. The popularity of zoos around the world is given Table 4.

**Table 4: Zoo attendances around the world**

<b>Continent</b>	<b>Total (millions)</b>
Africa	15
Asia	308
Australasia	6
Europe	125
Latin America	61
America	106
<b>Estimated World Total</b>	<b>621 Million</b>

Source: Tribe (2004:42).

Thus zoos have the potential to reunite millions of people with nature. Venetoulis *et al.* (in Dickie and West 2007:5), believe that people are becoming more remote from the natural world and are becoming considerable consumers of world resources. It is in this context that zoos can reconnect people with the natural world, “linking people to nature, to ideas that they are not separate from the world around them rather that they are part of the global ecosystem” (Zimmerman, et al., 2007:5). In order to have this profound influence on its visitors, zoos need to have a clear understanding of who these visitors are, what they expect from their visits, and whether zoos are delivering on these expectations.

In future, zoos must learn to detect changes in their guests’ behaviour, use this knowledge to design new exhibits or change old ones (with the appropriate interpretation), and to assess whether or not the added awareness of conservation messages have a meaningful influence on visitors’ behaviour (Zimmerman, et al. 2007:345).

In its 2005 strategy, the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) highlighted that fun and conservation are not mutually exclusive, “there should be no problem in promoting zoos and aquariums as being about fun as well as conservation, education, welfare and research” (Olney, 2005:47). The strategy clearly states that zoos should be about fun and remind people of the natural world.

### 4.3 THE NZG AS A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ZOO AND WILDLIFE TOURISM PRODUCT

In 2004, the NZG was delisted as a South African cultural institution by the Minister of the then Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr Ben Ngubane, and incorporated into South Africa's National Research Foundation as a national research facility. In 2006, the NZG published its strategic plan in response to this proclamation as well in an attempt to align itself with the World Association of Zoos and Aquarium's conservation strategy. In this document the NZG developed the following set of organisational objectives (NZG, 2006:i) in that the NZG will:

- Provide Africa-focused collections of animals and biomaterials to create knowledge and develop high-quality human resources;
- Facilitate and undertake high-quality research, with emphasis on *in situ* conservation that can be addressed in *ex situ* environments;
- Initiate and participate in international breeding programmes, focusing on threatened species in Africa;
- Innovate in the development and application of zoo technology for African wildlife;
- Provide information on, and transfer knowledge for, the conservation of African animals; and
- Expose society to a stimulating and unique education experience, thereby increasing the number of visitors, the public's understanding of conservation and the pool of learners in science.

This document highlighted the need for the NZG to grow the number of visitors (NZG, 2006:21) as a basis to ensure the financial sustainability of the organisation but also to increase the education impact of the zoo. Dr Clifford Nxomani joined the NZG as its Managing Director and set about updating the 2006 NZG strategy. He also aligned this strategy with the National Research Foundation's (NRF's) new corporate strategy entitled Vision 2015, as well as further entrenching the organisation in the World Zoo and Aquaria Conservation Strategy. This resulted in the strategy document entitled Agenda 2015: positioning the NZG as a world class research centre, zoological garden and conservation organisation (NZG, 2009). The current NZG strategy has identified the following as strategic objectives for the organisation (NZG, 2009:8-9):

1. Building a centre of excellence in conservation biology, biodiversity and conservation medicine research focusing on African wildlife, and working at the *ex-situ* / *in-situ* interface;
2. Establishing a world-class zoological garden and conservation organisation;
3. Providing a high quality and prominent impact platform for science advancement and public engagement on conservation, biodiversity and environmental sustainability;
4. Positioning the organisation as a premier metropolitan ecotourism facility that places a premium on environmental sustainability; and
5. Transforming the NZG into a highly capable, diverse, responsive and knowledgeable organisation.

Furthermore, the objective of positioning the NZG as a premier ecotourism attraction has been translated into the following aims (NZG, 2009:12). Subsequent to the preparation of this document the NZG has opted to remove the term ecotourism from this objective and rather refer to being a premier metropolitan tourist attraction, in line with the accepted industry understanding of what ecotourism is:

1. Establishing the NZG as a first choice family attraction that inspires discovery, appreciation, care, knowledge and respect for nature;
2. Entrenching superior customer service as an enduring feature of the visitors' experience to the NZG;
3. Providing high quality public amenities for the benefit of the NZG's visitors, staff and other stakeholders;
4. Establishing and maintaining an integrated environmental management system to manage the NZG's impact on the environment; and
5. Continuously researching and assessing the economic contribution of the NZG on the City of Tshwane and beyond.

As is evident from the above the NZG has clearly articulated its desire to be seen as, and function as a key role player in the City of Tshwane's tourism sector and this has been recognised with the organisation being awarded the Best Service Attraction Award in 2007 (NZG E-News. 2007.), and again in 2010 (NZG E-News. 2010.). The NZG has also changed its vision and mission statements in order to affect this change strategy. The new

NZG vision statement reads, “Nature and Humanity in Balance” and defines its mission as the, “inspired conservation of wildlife through knowledge, understanding and connection” (NZG 2009:6).

## **5 MARKET SEGMENTATION**

### **5.1 BACKGROUND**

Zoological gardens and aquaria are operating in an ever-increasing competitive marketplace. The competition for disposable income in the marketplace grows on an almost daily basis. With new shopping malls, cinema multiplexes, non-essential products, and other tourism and recreational products being developed on a continual basis, the need for zoos to develop a better understanding of their target audiences increases exponentially. Not only must zoos respond to increased competition, but they must react to changes in the environment in order to remain relevant. In order to effectively respond to the changes and increased competition, a clear understanding of the zoos’ audiences is required. Tribe (2004:43) argues that if zoos are to effectively compete in the leisure tourism market they must comprehend their own place in the tourism market and strive to gain a better understanding of the motivations and attitudes of their visitors, this is the aim of the research.

In order to achieve sustainability or to maximise benefits arising from wildlife tourism Higginbottom (2004:7) suggests that ways should be found to achieve the goals of various stakeholders. In order to do this a clear understanding of who the stakeholders of the “product-market” are needs to be established and this may be achieved through market segmentation. However, this study will only focus on the visitors to wildlife attractions as listed in the Stakeholder Table 5 below:



**Table 5: Primary goals of major wildlife tourism stakeholders**

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Expected primary goal</b>
Visitor	Access to affordable, high quality wildlife tourism experiences.
Tourism industry, including private and public sector operators, the travel trade and industry associations	Growth of wildlife tourism. Maximise short-term profits to individual operators and members of travel trade.
Government agencies concerned with tourism planning and promotion	Economically, socially and ecologically sustainable growth of wildlife tourism. High quality operators and experiences.
Host communities	Maximise profits to local area. Minimise negative social consequences of tourism. Minimise disruption of local uses of wildlife.
Environmental managers, particularly government conservation agencies	Ecological sustainability of tourism activities. Satisfy public recreation goals. Use tourism to support conservation goals.
Non-government organisations concerned with animal welfare and conservation	Minimise threats to wildlife conservation and/or welfare. Use tourism to support conservation goals.
Wildlife?	(Generally it is assumed that their interests are reflected among the goals of the latter two stakeholder groups).

Source: Higginbottom (2004:7).

Furthermore, Moscardo and Saltzer (2004:168) state that the need to increase the number of visitors to wildlife attractions necessitates the study of the market in order to ensure a quality experience. Reasons for studying the market include the need for planning of the infrastructure and services, the nature of the visitors market and the factors that contribute towards satisfaction and the visitor's behaviours and how to influence it in order to reduce the negative impact on the environment. An understanding of the visitor's behaviour could also be used to positive effect through the creation of awareness for the need to conserve wildlife and to support wildlife causes.

## 5.2 MARKET SEGMENTATION: WHO AND WHY ARE PEOPLE VISITING WILDLIFE ATTRACTIONS AND IN PARTICULAR ZOOS

Market segmentation is not a new practice in the tourism industry of which zoos are an integral part. Market segmentation may be defined as a way in which companies divide a market into smaller, more clearly defined groups that share similar needs, wants, and characteristics (George, 2007:125). According to Andereck and Caldwell (1994:19-20), market segmentation has the following advantages for zoos:

- Recognition of differences between groups;
- Greater clarity and precision of the market's characteristics and its needs;
- Greater ability to direct and develop programmes that will meet the consumer needs;
- Identification of changing market demands;
- Better usage of resources by directing them to the segment(s) with the most potential;
- Facilitation of market objectives development; and
- Identification of future markets.

Market segmentation is an analytical process that allows an organisation to better understand its current and future users — “the purpose of segmentation is to select a segment (target audience) with the best buying potential, based on a range of criteria. The objective is then to develop the offering ... so it appeals to the segments it is seeking to serve” (George, 2007:125). A better understanding of the target audience allows an organisation to focus its resources and efforts on meeting the needs and expectations of specific segmented groups.

Market segmentation can be done according to certain variables. Segmentation may be based on one or a combination of the following variables: geographic, demographic, behavioural, psycho-graphic, participation patterns and geo-demographic (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994:20; George, 2007:73). Andereck and Caldwell (1994:20) suggest that zoos would benefit from motive-based segmentation. Investigators have gone beyond segmenting the market according to demographics and have attempted to define the groups according to their motives or motivations. These motives may include social or

recreational; educational and self-fulfilling; cultural in small and large ways; evocative of awe and reverence; and restorative motives (Falk, 2006:153-154). Moscardo and Saltzer, (2004:174) indicated that there are very high levels of participation in a range of wildlife tourism products, especially captive settings and environments where wildlife may be seen. The level of zoo visitation is presented in Table 6. A clear understanding of the motives for visiting the zoos and aquaria is required in order to ensure a quality and positive experience.

**Table 6: Numbers of visits in the last 12 months to a zoo, wildlife park or aquarium**

<b>Visit Origin</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>One</b>	<b>Two or more</b>
Australia	43%	23%	34%
UK / Ireland	31%	32%	37%
Other Europe	16%	21%	63%
Asia / Pacific	49%	23%	28%
USA / Canada	49%	24%	27%

Source: Moscardo and Saltzer (2004:174).

Research has indicated that there are several reasons why people may choose to visit a zoo. Falk (2006:153-154) proposes that zoo visitors' motivations are complex sociological and psychological constructs drawing on a variety of sources, and includes their past experience/ s or knowledge of the institution, social and cultural meanings attached to the organisation, personal interests and their sense of identity, with identity being a fluid construct changing over time. He hypothesised that most guests to a zoo would depict a certain identity during their visit that would reflect their motivations for visiting the institution, possibly changing each time depending on their motive for visiting. Five categories of zoo visitors have been identified based on their motivations (Falk, 2006:156-158, Falk, Reinhard, Vernon, Bronnenkant & Heimlich, 2007:7):

- Explorers – visitors driven by their need to learn;
- Facilitators – visitors that are socially driven to enable others to learn or experience;
- Professional / Hobbyist – visitors that feel a connection between the institution and their profession or activity;
- Experience Seekers – visitors that perceive the institution as important mainly in the context of having been there; and

- Spiritual Pilgrims - visitors seeking a contemplative, spiritual or restorative experience.

Subsequent research undertaken by Falk *et al.* (2008:55) has indicated that this segmentation adequately describes 60% to 70% of visitors but leaves a portion unexplained, possibly due to methodological or theoretical explanations.

Research undertaken at zoos in the United States of America has found that visitors are motivated by the following factors (Ryan & Saward, 2004:246):

- Family togetherness;
- Enjoyment;
- Novelty seeking;
- Education; and
- Relaxation.

Andereck *et al.* (in Ryan & Saward. 2004:246) clustered visitors on the following dimensions for visiting:

- Recreation and novelty;
- Visiting for the education of others;
- Going for specific educational reasons; and
- Photographic opportunities.

One-dimensional segmentation does not provide enough significant information on which to base decisions on. Segmentation based only on motivations may not give a complete picture of a market. A combination of segmented groups or shaded segments will allow for a deeper understanding of the market (Luecke, 2006:57). A combination of segments may include the following:

- Demographics;
- Motives; and
- Behaviours.

Kotler in Luecke, (2006:57) suggests that for market segmentation to be effective and useful it should contain certain features. It should be:

- Measurable – The size, key characteristics, and preferences must be known;
- Sustainable – The segment must be large enough to be sustainable;
- Accessible – The groups must be accessible;
- Differentiable – The group must respond differently to different programmes; and
- Actionable – There must be a practical and cost-effective way of attracting and serving the customers/guests.

Tribe (2004:44) has summarised the findings of the various studies including some referred to above as to why people visit zoos in Table 7.

**Table 7: The motivations of zoo visitors**

Country	Reason for visiting	%	Reference
USA	Education for children.	38	Kellert (1979)
	To do something with family / friends.	26	
	Personally fascinated by wild animals.	25	
	Animals are pretty to look at.	11	
USA	Education / Relational.	56	Andereck & Caldwell (1994)
	Education.	21	
	Recreation / Novelty.	11	
	Photography.	11	
UK	To have a fun day out.	64	English Tourst Board (1983)
	To treat the children.	53	
	To watch animals and birds.	22	
	For entertainment.	13	
	For a change.	13	
	To learn about animals and birds.	7	
UK	For fun / entertainment.	39	Rajack & Warren (1996)
	Visit with friends.	36	
	To see rare animals.	5	
	Education.	4	
Australia	Entertainment.	63	Ford (1998)
	Education.	37	

Australia	Spend time with friends and family.	77	Tribe (2003)
	Be in a pleasant outdoor space.	54	
	Learn about animals.	33	
	Escape pressures of daily life.	31	
	Learn about wildlife conservation.	25	

Source: Tribe (2004:44).

## 6 VISITOR EXPECTATIONS AND NEEDS

### 6.1 BACKGROUND TO MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

After identifying the various segmented groups who visit a zoo, a clear understanding of their needs and expectations is required. The positioning of the product or the “staging” of the experiences must be geared towards meeting the expectations of the segmented groups. It may be assumed that a match between the “staged” experience and the guest expectation should result in high guest satisfaction levels.

Favaro, Romberger and Meer (2009:68-69) indicated that in order to increase sales — in the case of zoos to increase feet-through-the-gate (FTG) — a company must identify “needs-offer gaps”. These gaps are the discrepancies between what products or services are being offered and what the guests or customers want. They propose this solution to increasing revenue as opposed to doing more of the same thing. Organisations need to constantly work at identifying the “needs-offer gaps” in order to increase market share (Favaro *et al.*, 2009:68)

Researchers have found that in all of the relatively few studies reported of the benefits guests seek from zoos, the primary benefit that emerges is family interaction. Other benefits cited include entertainment, reduction in stress, and learning experiences (Tomas, Crompton & Scott, 2003:111). It is evident from research that zoos fulfil a social function in that they allow for family-orientated activity. Children appear to be the primary influence for deciding to visit zoos (Turley, 2001:13). It is expected that there is correlation between needs and expectations of guests and their motivation for visiting zoos.

Zoos have the opportunity to attract large numbers of visitors and can benefit from positioning themselves firmly in the realm of the experience economy. This may be achieved through the “staging” or managing of experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:95-100). In order to effectively deliver as a visitor attraction a detailed understanding of the various market segments is required as well as the extent to which the organisation meets the various target audiences’ needs (de Guzman, Leones, Tapia, Wong & de Castro, 2006:863-867). In the diverse South African society it is expected that different demographic groups will have multifarious expectations of a visitor or tourist attraction, and a clear understanding of these needs is required to ensure high satisfaction levels (Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999:228-238). Developing a tourist attraction that meets the needs of various demographic groups is a challenge facing many modern zoos. This requires a visitor activities’ study. Visitor studies aim to develop a better understanding of the attraction’s audience, why they visit, and how they use the physical infrastructure (Bitgood, 2002:461-466).

The concept of experience management refers to the challenges of managing extraordinary experiences in tourist attractions. These challenges can be either external or internal. The external challenge refers to increased competition while internal challenges include divergent themes, resources and exhibitions. These contribute to visitor knowledge, experience, entertainment, and the organisation and communication within the market (Lyngnes, 2008:1). Within the zoo community visitor experience is measured as the meeting of expectations manifested in visitor satisfaction. Satisfaction levels are determined by the visitors’ needs, factors that motivate visits to the attraction and how the attraction positions itself to meet these expectations (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994:19-31).

In order to deliver on meeting the expectations of their visitors, zoos need to actively manage their visitors’ experience and to achieve this a clearer understanding of this experience is required.

## **6.2 EXPERIENCES**

Experiences have been defined in numerous terms. Pine and Gilmore (2011:11-12) defined experiences as new product offerings that are created “whenever a company

intentionally uses services as the stage and goods as props to engage an individual”. They argue that experiences are not just a subclass of service but products in their own right; experiences are events that engage individuals in a personal way. Ruedy (2010), during the International Association for Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)’s Institute for Attractions Managers’ development programme defined an experience as the guest’s emotional response to various stimuli that includes the interaction with the attraction’s staff, the attraction itself as well as interaction with other guests.

The Disney Corporation (Disney) argues that memorable experiences are created when one is able to exceed the expectation of the customer or the guest (The Disney Institute, 2001:28). Disney bases their philosophy on the understanding that through the exceeding of visitor expectations, and by paying attention to detail they are able to create practical magic which is their internal language for creating memorable experiences.

The non-service elements may also be referred to as the tangible aspects and includes the following:

- physical infrastructures;
- staff appearances;
- space usage;
- visitor flow; and
- product engagement.

There appears to be a higher level of engineered or integrated interaction between the tangible and non-tangible aspects of service.

### **6.3 MANAGING THE EXPERIENCE – THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY**

Pine and Gilmore (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:1-24) postulated that the economies of the developed world are in transition from an economy driven by commodity, goods or service offerings to one driven by the creation of experiences. Experiences are in themselves becoming economic offerings. Products and service offerings are now distinguishing themselves from the abundance of competitors by offering exceptional experiences. The “staging” of experiences is no longer the sole activity of theme parks but has been



embraced by a variety of industries. From restaurants (Hard Rock Cafés), to motorcycle manufacturers (Harley-Davidson), to sporting events' organisers (Blue Bulls Rugby) - they have realised the power of offering experiences in order to attract and retain customers.

Experiences are staged whenever companies engage with their clients (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:3). Valuable experiences are created or staged when companies have positive or memorable engagement with clients. The newly identified offering of experiences occurs whenever a company intentionally uses services as the stage and goods as props to engage an individual, "while commodities are fungible, goods tangible, and services intangible, experiences are memorable" (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:12).

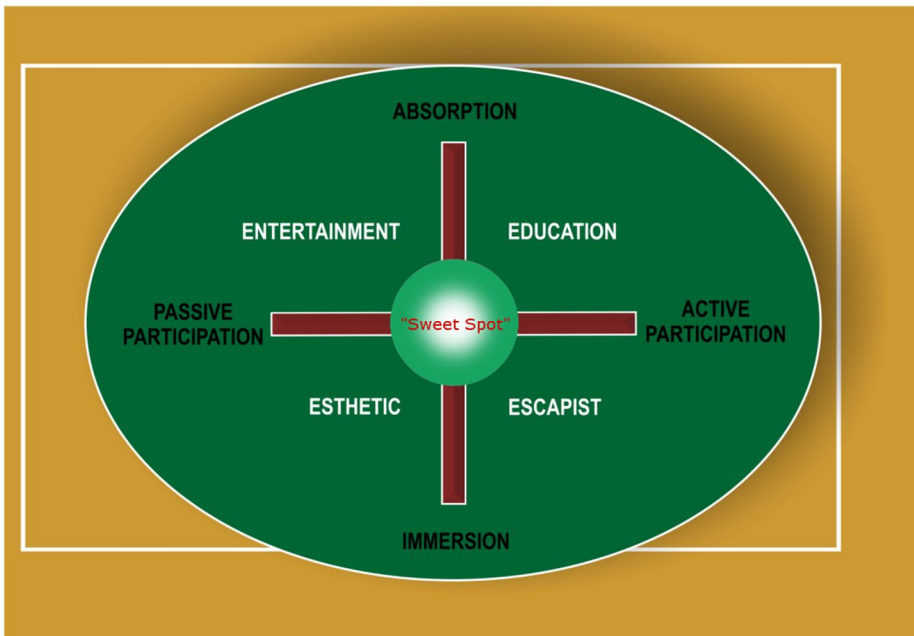
Zoos clearly function within the domain of the experience economy. In order to distinguish themselves from all the other products and service offerings that are vying for the consumer's disposable incomes, zoos must effectively deliver on creating memorable experiences. Their service offerings, staff members and animal collections are all props that aid in staging experiences; engaging and creating connections with guests - not merely entertaining them.

In order to effectively "stage" or manage events a clear understanding of the various components or dimensions of experience/engagement is required. Various dimensions of guest engagement have been identified (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:30-39). The first dimension relates to the level of guest participation in the experience. On the outer extremes of this dimension guests are either fully participative (active participation) in creating the experience or totally passive (passive participation), and have their experiences created for them, with a wide variety of levels of participation in between. The second dimension of experience details the level of connection between the guests and the "staged" experience. On the one end of the scale the guest is fully absorbed into the experience (bringing the experience into mind) and on the other end the guest is immersed into the experience (being a part of the experience). The linking of the four dimensions of experience has led Pine and Gilmore (2011:29-38) to develop the four realms of experience.

The four realms of experience are as follows:

- Educational - High levels of absorption with active participation in creating the experience;
- Escapist – High levels of immersion and active participation in creating the experience;
- Esthetic – High levels of immersion into the “staging” with passive participation in the creating of the experience; and
- Entertainment – High levels of absorption into the “staging” of the event and passive participation in the creating of the experience. Figure 2 illustrates the four dimensions and realms of experience.

**Figure 2: The Experience Realms**



Source: Pine and Gilmore (2011:30).

Some experiences engage guests in only one of the experience realms but the majority of staged experiences include elements of more than one of the realms. In order to enrich the experience of the guests, experiences should be staged that encompass all the dimensions of the experience realms. The point where all the experience realms converge is considered to be the richest experience encompassing aspects of the Escapist, Esthetic, Entertainment and Education realms. Pine and Gilmore refer to this as the “Sweet spot” and is at the centre point of figure 1 - the mid-point between absorption and immersion, and passive and active participation (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:39).

## 6.4 MANAGING THE EXPERIENCE: INTEGRATION IN CREATING EXPERIENCES

The Disney Corporation (Disney) may be considered an enlightened company when it comes to creating customer experiences (Shaw, 2005:75). Tom Peters and Bob Waterman highlighted Disney's approach to creating exceptional customer experiences in their book "In Search of Excellence" in 1984 and since Disney has been cited as an example of excellence in customer service (The Disney Institute, 2001:12). Pine and Gilmore also used Disney as an example of a company that stages notable experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 2011:41-42).

The Disney word for creating exceptional customer experiences is creating "magic" (The Disney Institute, 2001:18.29). Magical moments are created each time the bond between Disney and its guests is strengthened or enhanced. Disney does not leave these magical moments to appear randomly and by chance but actively sets about managing and creating them. They achieve this through their integrated process referred to as the "Quality Service Cycle". Disney defines quality service as "exceeding your guests' expectations and paying attention to detail (The Disney Institute, 2001:25-27). Disney expects it of its entire staff (cast) to routinely exceed the expectations of its guests by paying attention to detail as a driver for creating return visits, "when the experience is consistent, seamless, and of high quality, guests return" (The Disney Institute, 2001:28). In achieving quality service Disney uses its service theme as a galvanising tool; a compass point if you will that allows its cast (personnel) to consistently measure themselves against it. They have defined their service theme as, "to create happiness for people of all ages everywhere" with every action and decision being measure against the achieving of the service theme. Disney has set standards for actions that are required to meet the service theme. These are in order of importance: safety, courtesy, show and efficiency. They have also identified cast (personnel), setting and processes as delivery systems of quality service. It must further be noted that Disney's Quality Service Cycle is supported by a thorough understanding of its guests (Guestology). Disney develops a thorough understanding of its guests by defining their demographics and their psychographics. Demographic information includes describing who their guests are, where they live, what their ages are, how much they spend and in turn understanding who their guests are not.

Psychographic information attempts to understand the mental states of their guests and studies their needs, stereotypes and emotions (The Disney Institute, 2001:24-58).

As mentioned earlier Disney has identified four service standards and these are, in order of importance, safety, courtesy, show and efficiency. Their service quality cycle requires all delivery systems to meet the defined services standards. For example the service delivery system of cast must meet all the defined standards associated with safety, courtesy, show and efficiency. Unfortunately events do not always go as planned. Therefore cast members are trained that when circumstances require that standards are to be compromised the lower ranking standards are to be compromised first. The standard of efficiency may be compromised before that of show and show before courtesy, but safety may never be compromised. Each of these delivery systems as depicted in Figure 3 will be considered in order to develop a better understanding of Disney's Quality Service Cycle.

**Figure 3: Integrated Quality Service Cycle**

		Delivery Systems		
		Cast	Setting	Process
Service Standards	Safety			
	Courtesy			
	Show			
	Efficiency			

Source: Adapted from The Disney Institute (2001:179).

The first quality service delivery system to be considered is the cast (staff) of an organisation (The Disney Institute, 2001:71-100). The cast of an organisation are key in delivering quality service and are listed as a key reason for customers making use of alternative services or suppliers. The American Society for Quality and the Quality and Productivity Centre in Ford, McNair and Perry (2001:6), list staff attitude as the top reason for customers leaving. They have also identified other reasons and these may be found in Table 8.

**Table 8: Why companies lose customers**

<b>Why Companies lose Customers</b>	
Customer dies	1%
Customer moves away	3%
Customer influenced by friends	5%
Customer lured away by competition	9%
Customer dissatisfied with product	14%
Customer turned away by an attitude of indifference on part of service provider	68%

Source: Ford *et al.* (2001:6).

A key philosophy employed at Disney in recruiting staff for its operations is to hire for attitude. Prospective cast members are exposed to the company's values and their expectation of cast members before they are interviewed. Candidates that are successful in being recruited by Disney are subjected to detailed orientation training, or as Disney refers to it, training in Disney's heritage and traditions. During this process, cast members are introduced to the concepts of "on stage" and "off stage" areas; on stage being the space where cast members interact with the guests and off stage areas being areas inaccessible to Disney's guests. Cast members are introduced to Disney's organisational culture and are given Quality Service cues that include performance tips and appearance standards. Disney defines performance tips as "generic behaviours that ensure that employees know how to act courteously and respect the individuality of each guest" (The Disney Institute, 2001:99).

The second quality service delivery system to be considered is that of setting. The delivery system of setting refers mainly to the physical infrastructure of an organisation but is not limited to this. Disney's Quality Service Cycle requires the establishment of standards for settings or for the organisation's infrastructure in order to contribute to a quality experience. They define setting as, "the environment in which service is delivered to customers, all of the objects within that environment, and the procedures used to enhance and maintain the service environment and objects" (The Disney Institute, 2001:107). The components listed in table 9 are all considered to be included in the setting.

**Table 9: Components of setting**

<b>The Components of Setting</b>	<b>Nature of Component</b>
Architectural design	Physical Infrastructure
Landscaping	Physical Infrastructure
Lighting	Physical Infrastructure
Colour	Psychological Aspect
Signage	Physical Infrastructure
Directional design on carpet	Psychological Aspect
Texture of floor surface	Physical Infrastructure
Focal points and directional signs	Physical Infrastructure
Internal / External detail	Physical Infrastructure / Psychological Aspect
Music / Ambient noise	Psychological Aspect
Smell	Psychological Aspect
Touch / Tactile experiences	Psychological Aspect
Taste	Psychological Aspect

Source: Adapted from The Disney Institute (2001:108).

Setting in an attraction would therefore include elements such as rides, furniture and fittings in the amenities, flowers and trees, and restaurant fittings, to name but a few. Included in setting is the need for continuous maintenance and refurbishment or replacement of aging infrastructure. Maintaining the experience is an important consideration. Back of house and service areas should not be visible to the guests. In developing the setting Disney suggests that one considers the following design criteria:

- *Know your audience* – Develop an understanding of who will be using the facility;
- *Wear your guest's shoes* – Never forget the human factor; experience the product from the customer's perspective;
- *Organize the flow of people and ideas* – Tell a congruent story and ensure that the setting supports the story;
- *Create a "wienie"* – Create visual landmarks that attract guests and can be used for orientation purposes;

- *Avoid overload and create turn-ons* – Do not overload guests with information, allow them to select the information that they want. In other words allow them to create their own experiences;
- *Tell one story at a time* – Do not confuse the guest by telling multiple stories; focus on one big story for each area;
- *Avoid contradictions and maintain identity* – Every detail should support the organisational identity and mission;
- *For every ounce of treatment provide a ton of treat* – Create value by building interactive settings that allow the guest to use all their senses; and
- *Keep it up* – Always maintain the setting.

Source: Adapted from The Disney Institute (2001:112-113).

The third quality service delivery system to be considered is that of process (The Disney Institute, 2001:137-171). Processes within an attraction must run continuously and deliver the same outcome every time. Processes must contribute to meet the quality standards of safety, courtesy, show and efficiency. Disney defines processes as “a series of actions, changes, or functions that are strung together to produce a result” and includes “policies, tasks, and procedures that are used to deliver [quality] service” (The Disney Institute, 2001:142). Guest flow is also included in the process delivery system and Disney has implemented the following service process solutions (The Disney Institute, 2001:146-148):

- *Optimizing the operation of product and service* – manipulating assets to reduce the waiting time of guests’ for example opening earlier or allowing access later;
- *Optimizing guest flow* – allowing guests to self-manage their movement through the service experience; and
- *Optimizing the queue experience* – managing the wait time in queues.

Processes must constantly be monitored and adjusted to ensure that they contributed towards the achievement of quality service.

Disney’s Quality Service Cycle requires that all service delivery contributes towards the achievement of the Quality Service Standards. The achieving of quality service can only be done through the integrated implementation of quality standards. Figure 4 below

indicates that for quality service to be delivered all the services delivery systems must contribute to, and measure up to the set service standards.

**Figure 4: The Integration Matrix**

		Delivery Systems		
		Cast	Setting	Process
Service Standards	Safety	✓	✓	✓
	Courtesy	✓	✓	✓
	Show	✓	✓	✓
	Efficiency	✓	✓	✓

Source: Adapted from The Disney Institute (2001:179).

Disney defines integration as the process of bringing all the elements of Quality Service together to create a complete experience and is considered the final critical step of the Quality Service Cycle (The Disney Institute, 2001:176). Quality Service is achieved when all the elements of the Quality Service Cycle are properly integrated. The integration matrix allows an organisation to assess the level at which it is able to deliver quality service. Each block indicates an intersection between the Service Delivery System and the quality Service Standard. Each Service Delivery System should be measured against all the Service Standards. Consequently if an attraction is to meet its objective of delivering quality service the Delivery Systems must meet the set quality Service Standards.

## 6.5 MANAGING THE ZOO EXPERIENCE

Animals have always been a source of interest for people. Newsome, Dowling and Moore (2005:1) defined the relationship between humans and animals as being either; a source of food, clothing or shelter; use for scientific or medical research; as a sport or entertainment; as a form of companionship; and / or a point of connection with the natural world. People's perception of the zoo experience will largely be influenced by their worldview and in particular their views on animals. Newsome, *et al.* (2005:2) identified two predominant worldviews that have an influence on the viewing of animals. These



worldviews being either anthropocentric or ecocentric and deal with the position of humans in relation to the rest of the natural world. In an anthropocentric worldview people are placed at the centre of the natural world whereas the ecocentric worldview positions humans as an integral part of the natural world. Zoo visitors, holding a more anthropocentric worldview, may have a different set of expectations of their visit in comparison to visitors holding an ecocentric worldview. Key worldview principles identified by Newsome, *et al.* (2005:2) that may influence the zoo experience are reflected in table 10 below.

**Table 10: The key principles of an anthropocentric and ecocentric worldview**

<b>Anthropocentric Worldview</b>	<b>Ecocentric Worldview</b>
Humans are the earth's most important species	Nature exists for all earth's species
Humans are apart from the natural world	Humans are not apart from or in charge of the rest of the natural world.
Humans are in charge of the natural world	Recognises the inherent or intrinsic value of all life forms regardless of their potential or actual use to humanity
The earth has an unlimited supply of resources	The stewardship role of humans is unsustainable

Source: Newsome, *et al.* (2005:2)

The traditional function of zoos and aquaria as leisure attractions is paramount and must remain so if zoos are to “live” the defining attributes of being a conservation centre. Animals have always played an important part in the lives of humans but more recently “people’s appreciation of animals has become linked to issues concerning human related impacts on the natural world such as environmental degradation, ecological sustainability and the loss of biological diversity” (Newsome, *et al.* 2005:3). Large portions of society are now living in cities and this has left them isolated from natural ecosystems. This sense of environmental isolation is driving an interest in wildlife. Newsome, *et al.* (2005:3) also identified a strong desire amongst humans to have close contact with animals.

If zoos are to meet the expectation of becoming conservation centres one of their key focus areas must be the creation of experiences and in particular experiences that allow

people to overcome the sense of environmental isolation and to reconnect with the natural environment. By creating positive emotional experiences zoos will be able to achieve the desired change in human behaviour and that will afford people a sense of being reconnected people with the natural world. It must be noted that the majority of people's frame of reference relating to wildlife encounters has largely been influenced by television with zoos and aquaria sometimes being the only "real" animal experiences that people may ever have (Newsome, *et al.* 2005:3). As Ruedy (2010), during the International Association for Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)'s Institute for Attractions Managers' development programme, highlighted that experience management is about controlling the guest's emotional context and how the guests integrate the various stimuli received during the visit to a zoo. The desired outcome of controlling the guest's emotional context should be the creation of a positive guest experience. Zoos should attempt to control all the stimuli associated with its product that contribute towards a positive guest experience. The stimuli that should be managed include the pre-visit perception that the guest has about the zoo, the motivations and expectations of the guest surrounding the visit to the zoo, the interaction between the guest the zoo staff, the interaction between the guest and the zoo products, the interaction between the guest and the animals and the interaction between the various guests.

## **7 QUALITY AND SATISFACTION**

### **7.1 BACKGROUND**

Power, in Pine and Gilmore (2011:78), defines customer satisfaction as measuring the gap between what the guest expects and what the guest perceives to receive. In other words, (Customer satisfaction) = (Customer's expectations) less (Customer's perception of what they receive). However, Pine and Gilmore (2011:78) suggest that the measurement of customer satisfaction should aim at identifying what the customer sacrifices. In other words, (Customer sacrifice) = (Customer's expectations) less (What the Customer settles for). A component of this sacrifice is what Favaro *et al.*, (2009:64) refer to as the "needs-offer gap". A second component of customer sacrifice is the perceived gap between quality delivered and quality expected. Frei, (2008:72) defines service excellence as "what a business chooses not to do well".

Swarbrooke has identified two dimensions of quality in an attraction, namely the product and the processes; product being how the attraction operates and processes how the product is “staged” and delivered (Swarbrooke, 2003:318). The following tangible aspects (product), that are key determinants of quality of service, have been identified (Tomas *et al.*, 2003:108):

- Physical surroundings;
- Equipment; and
- Appearance of personnel.

Tomas *et al.*, (2003:108) also identified the intangible aspects (process) of quality service:

- Responsiveness (willingness of staff to assist guests),
- Reliability (perform the promised service dependably and accurately),
- Assurance (caring, individualised attention by staff),
- Empathy (courteous employees who convey trust and confidence).

The tangible and intangible aspects of quality have been unified into the SERVQUAL model (George, 2007:311). This model measures the following components of quality service delivery:

- Reliability (consistently delivering on service);
- Responsiveness (service delivered promptly with staff responding to the needs of guests);
- Assurance (relating to employees’ knowledge and courtesy);
- Empathy (caring and individual attention); and
- Tangibles (physical environment).

Bitner, in Tomas *et al.* (2003:108) has suggested that the tangible components of quality have a direct, either positive or negative, impact on the expectations of the guest. Guests arrive with a specific goal in mind and the physical environment may either hinder or aid them in achieving their goal. Dimensions of the physical environment in a zoological garden include ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, and signs, symbols and

artefacts. The manner in which the animals are displayed is also a dimension of the tangible aspects of quality (Tomas *et al.*, 2003:109).

Screven, in Tomas *et al.* (2003:110), tracked visitors as they moved through a zoo and observed four general behaviour patterns:

- Group moves quickly through all exhibits not stopping for long at any area;
- Group moves aimlessly through the zoo but stops at exhibits that interest them, spending substantial time at points interesting them;
- Group visits pre-selected exhibits; and
- Small groups consisting of scholars, hobbyists or students, move directly to an area of interest and remain there for prolonged periods.

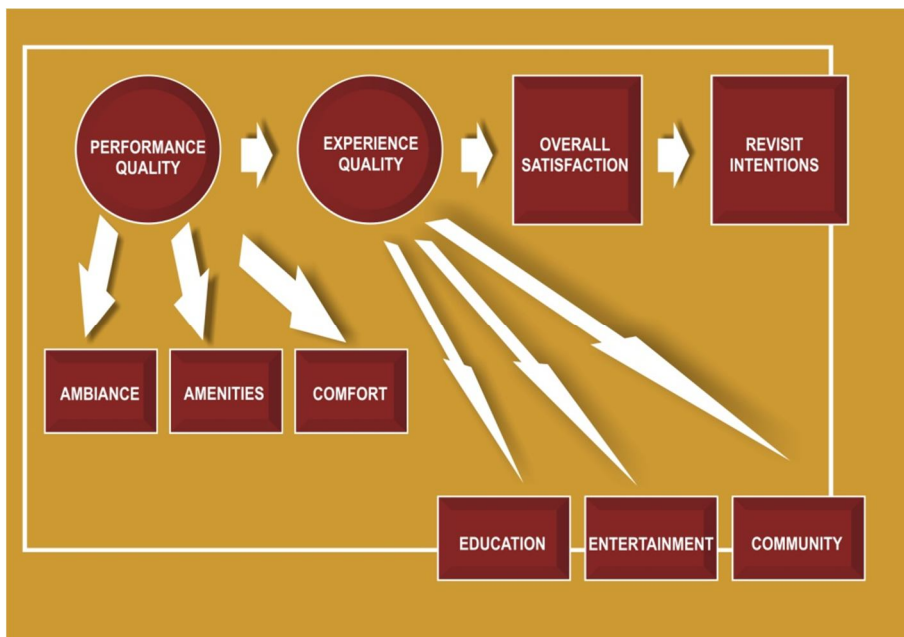
Positive satisfaction results have been obtained when zoos manipulate features. Studying how visitors manoeuvre through the zoo will offer new insights into visitors' likes and dislikes. However, when attempting to "stage" satisfying visitor experiences it is also important to consider what benefits zoo visitors expect from their excursion (Tomas *et al.*, 2003:110-111).

Cole and Scott, (2004:81) suggest that satisfaction should be understood in the context of a cumulative tourism experience. They identified four stages in the tourism experience, namely dimensions of performance quality, dimensions of experience quality, overall satisfaction, and revisit intentions.

Performance quality includes a rating of the tangible aspects of the attraction (product). Experience quality may be defined as the benefits obtained as a result of visiting an attraction (expectations and intangible aspects). Overall satisfaction is the combined feeling achieved as a result of visiting an attraction; a combination of the outcomes of performance quality and experience quality. Revisit intentions are plans made by the guest to revisit the attraction.

The four stages impact on each other sequentially (Cole & Scott, 2004:81). Figure 5 represents the Indirect Model suggested by Cole and Scott.

**Figure 5: The Indirect Model of Tourist Satisfaction**



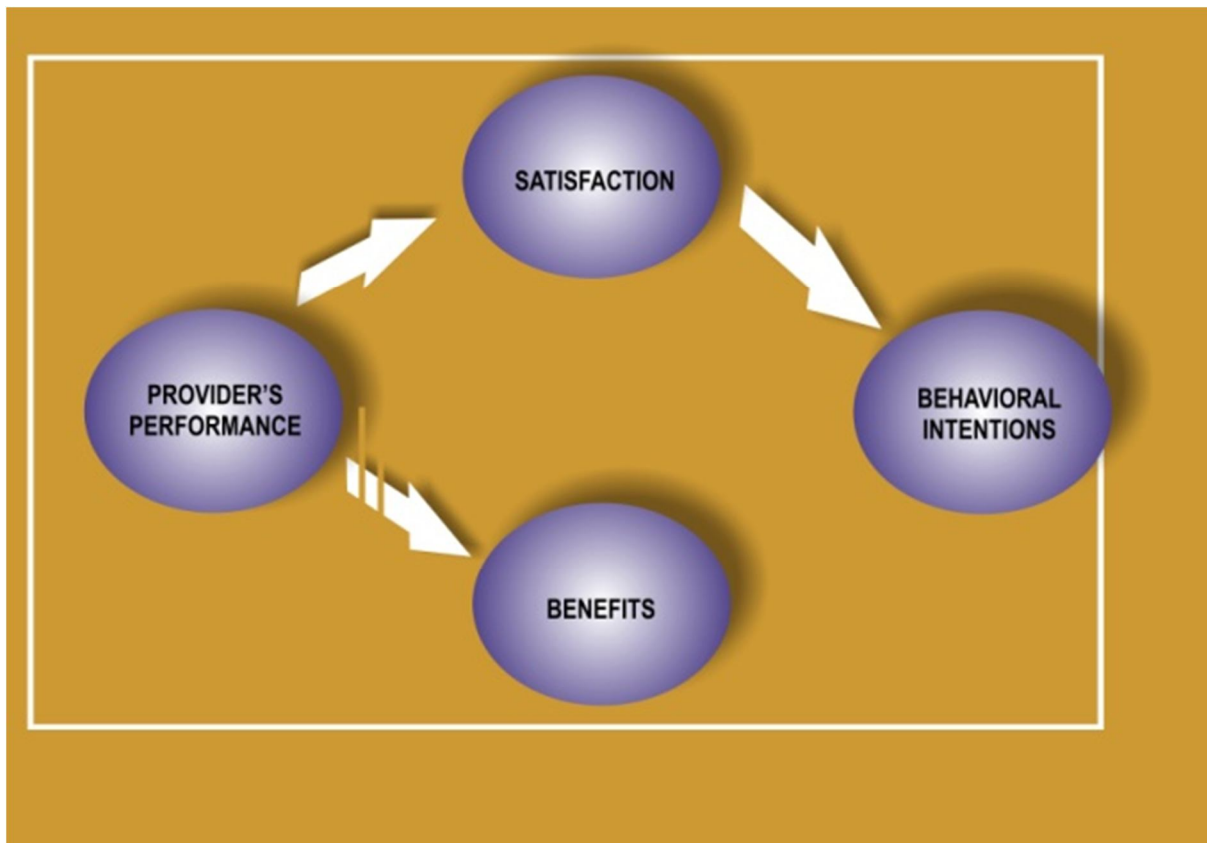
Source: Adapted from Cole and Scott (2004:82).

Nowacki, (2008:306) in attempting to verify a model of the relationship between motivation, quality of product of the attraction, benefits, satisfaction and behavioural intentions of visitors, has found significant correlation between the perception of the quality of a provider's performance and the satisfaction of the visitors. However, it was noted that several other factors may impact on the level of satisfaction not linked to the attractions' own efforts. These independent factors may include the weather, the individuals' mood or the mood of the group, and in the case of zoos their attitude towards animals, and their general attitude towards the functioning of zoos.

Nowacki, (2008:306) also found that the attractions' performance was also influenced by the visitors' perception of other factors including sources of information such as information boards, panels and orientation signs, and exhibits. Exhibits allowing for interesting interaction between people and animals contribute highly to satisfaction. The study revealed that people visiting attractions base their decision to revisit, or to recommend the attraction, on their perception of benefits and the quality of the attraction rather than on their own satisfaction; but this model differed for zoos. The study found that for zoo visitors, satisfaction resulting from impressions or perceptions is more crucial in determining their likelihood to revisit than the benefits. Zoo visitors are mainly motivated by the need for recreation and relaxation. Nowacki's, (2008:307) model of path relationships

between quality of the service providers' performance and revisit intentions clearly indicates that the visitors' satisfaction levels are more likely to influence their intention to revisit than their perceptions of the benefits received during the excursion. The implication of this for zoos is that the quality of their product and services is crucial if they are to influence the intentions of visitors to revisit or recommend them. Figure 6 represents Nowacki's model for zoos.

**Figure 6: Model of path relations between the quality of the provider's performance and behavioural intentions for recreational attractions (the case of zoo)**



Source: Nowacki (2008:307).

## 7.2 ZOO SPECIFIC QUALITY AND SATISFACTION VARIABLES

If zoos are to meet the expectation of becoming conservation centres one of their key focus areas must be the creation of experiences. By creating experiences zoos will be able to achieve the desired change in human behaviour and reconnect people with the natural world.

The development of exhibits that are both innovative and inspirational is of vital importance to zoos as they attempt to help people engage with animals. The formation of immersive exhibits will allow both adults and children to experience, “however briefly how a rainforest or desert feels” (Zimmerman, Hatchwell, Dickie & West, 2007:5). According to Dickie and West, in Zimmerman *et al.*, (2007:5-6), exhibits must work by providing for the optimal welfare of the animals and by generating an experience. Furthermore, “zoos must be pragmatic in ensuring that visitors have a good day out, whilst balancing this against the primacy of the conservation mission”.

The growing concern for the rights of animals must also be considered by zoos as this will have a direct impact on satisfaction levels (Shani & Pizam, 2007:686). There is a growing change in public opinion that animals must be treated in a more considerate and humane manner. Shani and Pizam (2007:687-688) have proposed the following guiding principles in order to address the growing concern for animal welfare as found in Table 11.

**Table 11: Ethical guidelines for operations of animal-based attractions**

Component	Meaning	Guiding principle	Ethical concerns	NZG Examples
Entertainment	Implementing responsible ways for visitor entertainment	<p>Preference for naturalistic presentation of the animals (avoiding, whenever possible and keeping animals in cages)</p> <p>Ensuring good visibility of the animal presented.</p> <p>Using technology to supply the visitors better views while minimizing interference with normal animal behaviour.</p> <p>Keeping the animals occupied during visiting times (for example through the provision of environmental enrichment; providing the visitors with the option of joining a feeding tour).</p>	<p>Should animals be kept in captivity to entertain visitors?</p> <p>To what degree can tourism site “stretch” the animal welfare principle in order to entertain visitors?</p> <p>Can the visitor call for good visibility of the animals be in line with the needs of animals for privacy?</p>	<p>As far as possible, the NZG avoids the use of bars to separate animals and visitors, but rather employs moats and glass barriers. The animals are also exhibited in as natural a setting as possible.</p> <p>The NZG has a full-time Environmental Enrichment Coordinator tasked with the psychological welfare of the animals. Environmental enrichment is also</p>

Component	Meaning	Guiding principle	Ethical concerns	NZG Examples
		<p>Providing the visitors with entertaining ways to learn about the animals (for example knowledge contests with prizes).</p> <p>Committing to maintain the dignity and privacy of the animals presented intact .</p>		<p>incorporated as a tool to educate the visitors about the natural behaviour of the species during feeding times. The NZG has a policy that ensures the dignity of the animals is maintained during all activities.</p>
Education	Providing educational and learning opportunities for the visitors, and establishing conservation programmes	<p>Providing information on the animals presented, including biological and behavioural characteristics. Integrating explanations about the importance of animal welfare into visitor activities. Launching conservation programmes and providing information on these programmes to the visitors.</p>	<p>Are the educational aspects of animal attractions effective in generating environmental awareness among the visitors, or is it part of “green washing”?</p> <p>Do education and conservation programmes, even when sincere, justify the keeping of animals in captivity?</p>	<p>The NZG has a very strong education focus, or as it’s termed in the organisation, science awareness and advancement. The NZG also supports the formal school curriculum through offering various educational school programmes.</p>
Animal Welfare	Ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of the animals presented at the sites	<p>Cooperating with animal and environmental organisations. Enabling the presented animals to express normal behaviour, and providing them with sufficient space and with animal companions.</p> <p>Providing private spaces for the</p>	<p>What kind of mechanism can be established to ensure the welfare of the animals in tourist attractions?</p> <p>To what extent can attractions be trusted to care for the animals’ welfare if it clashes with the tourists’ requirements?</p>	<p>The NZG has an established Ethics Committee as well as an Animal Care Committee tasked with ensuring the welfare of the animals. Furthermore, the NZG voluntarily submits itself to reviews by external parties to ensure its compliance with best practice. The NZG provides night</p>



Component	Meaning	Guiding principle	Ethical concerns	NZG Examples
		animals. Preventing pain and suffering during the training of the animals (including the use of threats, and methods of starvation and dehydration). Establishing a code of behaviour for the visitors and employees.		quarters that the animals have access to during the day should the need arise. The NZG has developed various policies aimed at managing the interface between people and animals.

Source: Adapted from Shani and Pizan (2007:687-688).

According to Sterling, Lee and Wood in Zimmermann *et al.*, (2007:37), zoos are facing the challenge of “effectively acting as vehicles for conservation messages while retaining the entertainment value that attracts people in the first place”. The exhibits in which animals are displayed influence the visitors’ perception of the value of the animal. Sterling *et al.* (2007:38) recognise that as ethically questionable practices of the past and the idea of zoos as primarily entertainment venues become rapidly more unacceptable, zoo professionals are increasingly adopting conservation ideas that have led to major changes in animal exhibits and care methods. Today zoos are expected to offer a variety of opportunities for people to engage with nature and this has led to the development of a variety of experiences. These include animal displays (particularly naturalistic displays), interpretive graphics and text, publications, live animal demonstrations, interactive exhibits or activities, technology-assisted programmes, formal education programmes, opportunities for communicating with staff, and outreach beyond the boundaries of the zoo (Sterling *et al.*, 2007:38).

Creating authentic experiences will not only improve the overall satisfaction levels of visitors to zoos; it will also allow the zoos to influence the behaviour of their visitors. Efforts focusing on involving the zoo visitors as participants in exhibits have proved to be effective in increasing learning (Bielick & Dowering, in Sterling *et al.*, 2007:39). A significant number of zoo visitors have identified the need to learn, or to facilitate learning, as motivation to visit zoos. Increased opportunities to learn should have a direct impact on their post-visit satisfaction levels. High quality interactions have been identified as the key to unlocking competitive value. A proviso to offering these high quality interactions is that they should

allow the customer to co-create their experiences with the company (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004:7). Value must be jointly created between the customer and the company. A better understanding of the needs and wants of the zoo customer will enable zoos to develop interactions that allow customers to co-create their experiences. Frei, (2008:76) suggests that one should strategically plan for the customer to create their own experiences — “customers themselves can be involved in operational processes, sometimes to a very large extent, and input influences their experiences (and often other customers’ too)”. The customer’s involvement in creating his or her own experiences may be considered as value enhancing. The zoo experience is largely affected by the visitor’s worldview as mentioned earlier.

The zoo visitors’ anthropocentric or ecocentric worldviews will have an impact on the experience quality, as certain expectations are associated with these worldviews. The presentation of the zoo experience or products may also be informed by the zoo’s management and staff’s worldviews. A gap that exists between the visitor’s expectation and the product or experience developed will lead to dissatisfaction. Furthermore the experience is also influenced by the visitor’s level of education, interest and experience, cultural differences and according to the species of interest. According to Newsome, *et al.* (2005:3) different species illicit different responses depending on whether they are seen as dangerous, rare, large and powerful; “furry and cuddly”; anthropomorphic in behaviour; or seen as being intelligent. Research confirms the popularity of mammals as they display many characteristics that appeal to humans. Dangerous animals such as predators are also popular. There is a growing interest in reptiles as these animals may be considered to be both dangerous and rare; Komodo dragons and sea turtles serve as examples. The growing popularity of reptiles in the pet trade serves to further illustrate their growing popularity (Newsome, *et al.* 2005:8). Thus the variety of animals as well as the visitor’s specific interest in a particular specie or species will also have an impact on the level of satisfaction. Woods (in Moscardo & Saltzer, 2004:176) has identified the following features related to animals that attract greater preference with visitors to wildlife attractions:

- Larger animals are preferred over smaller ones;
- Animals perceived as intelligent are preferred;
- Colourful, graceful and soft/fluffy animals are attractive to humans;

- Animals which are considered to be dangerous to humans are generally disliked but some predators, particularly big cats and crocodiles, attract attention; and
- Animals perceived as similar in appearance to humans are preferred.

According to Moscardo and Saltzer (2004:79) the following factors had been found to influence satisfaction with wildlife experiences:

- The variety of animals seen;
- Particular features of the animals;
- Being able to get close to the wildlife;
- Seeing large, rare or new species;
- The natural setting itself; and
- Being able to learn about the wildlife or the setting.

Johnson (in Moscardo & Saltzer, 2004:179) has identified naturalistic enclosures, size of the animals, invisible barriers and proximity to the animals as being drivers of satisfaction.

Six quality factors were identified that capture the essence of quality and richness of a wildlife encounter (Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001:35-36). These factors are captured in Table 12.

**Table 12: Six quality factors in Wildlife Tourism**

Factor	Description
Authenticity	The term has widely been used to estimate the “honesty” of the attractions. The degree of natural behaviour exhibited by the fauna and the environment.
Intensity	The excitement generated from the experience.
Uniqueness	The sense of the experience being special and unusual.
Duration	Length of exposure to the experience. After a certain point the visitor will become saturated with the experience.
Species popularity	Factors such as size, physical attractiveness, danger and drama, and publicity that has been created by the media surrounding the species.
Species status	The rarity of the animal is considered. Animals that are listed on endangered lists hold special appeal.

Source: Adapted from Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:35-36).

Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001:36) further indicate that the six quality factors identified for wildlife tourism, of which zoos are considered a component, are mediated by two sets of

variables. Context variables are groupings of influences such as the time of day, time of year and other natural factors, but management have little control over these factors. The second set of variables that mediate quality are service variables and management has control over this set (Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001:36).

Moscardo and Saltzer (2004:180) suggested that further to the six quality factors developed by Reynolds and Braithwaite the mindfulness or the mindlessness of the visitor may also impact on the experience. The construct of mindfulness has been developed in the field of social psychology and according to Chatzisarantis and Hagger (2007:683-665) may be used in conjunction with the theory of planned behaviour to understand intention-behaviour. Mindfulness is the active process where the visitor is engaged in drawing distinctions and creating new social categories. Mindfulness leaves the visitor open to novelty and sensitive to context whereas less-mindful visitors become oblivious to novel aspects of the situation. Less mindful visitors show diminished awareness of what is happening in the present (Chatzisarantis & Hagger. 2007:666) and are more likely to report boredom (Moscardo & Saltzer. 2004:180). According to Moscardo and Saltzer (2004:180) outcomes of mindfulness include a perception of being in control, excitement, learning and satisfaction, “mindful visitors are more likely to be satisfied and to pay greater attention to both the information that is provided to them and to their own behaviour”. Conditions that contribute to or hinder a state of mindfulness are shown in table 13. The converse effect of the factors may also be a contributing or hindering factor to a state of mindfulness.

**Table 13: Factors that contribute to or hinder a state of mindfulness of a visitor with a wildlife experience**

<b>Factors that contribute to a state of mindfulness</b>	<b>Factors that hinder a state of mindfulness</b>
Variety or change in an experience	Fatigue
Personal control or choice	Disorientation
Personal relevance and/or importance	Crowding
Opportunities to interact with objects and people	Sensory overload
Multi-sensory experiences	Safety concerns

Source: Adapted from Moscardo and Saltzer (2004:180).

## 8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

### 8.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM / PHILOSOPHY

The following research philosophy guided the study:

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007:101-102), a research philosophy contains important assumptions about the way in which humans perceive the world. The research strategy and the methods employed will be influenced by the assumptions contained within the research philosophy. The selection of a research philosophy is usually influenced by the researcher's view on the relationship between knowledge and the process by which it is acquired. The research paradigm is influenced by the researcher's views on the following three components.

#### 8.1.1 Epistemology

Epistemology is the study of what is considered acceptable knowledge in a field of study (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:102). An interpretivism epistemology will be employed for the purpose of this study. Interpretivism acknowledges that the world is too complex to be defined by absolute laws as preferred by the Positivistic paradigm. Interpretivism requires of researchers to understand the differences between humans in different contexts. Humans give meanings to their roles in the different contexts based on the meanings that they attach to the various roles or contexts (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:106-107). Interpretivist epistemology calls on the researcher to adopt an empathetic stance and to understand the world from the perspective of the research subject.

#### 8.1.2 Ontology

Ontology is the study of the nature of reality and comprises two schools of thought namely Objectivism and Subjectivism. Objectivism supports the notion of a reality free from a social context whereas Subjectivism supports the idea of a reality created from the perceptions of humans in a social context (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:108). A subjectivistic approach will be employed for the purpose of this study. It is deemed necessary to explore

the subjective meanings that motivate the actions of humans. Each individual will perceive things in a different manner depending on the context thereof. According to Saunders *et al.* (2007:109), as the research subject is interacting with the environment they are attempting to find meaning in the situation by interpreting the events based on previous experiences.

### **8.1.3 Axiology**

Axiology is the field of philosophy that studies judgements about value. It is important for the researcher to note that values are the guiding reason for all human action. As such the researcher should be able to articulate their own values when making a value judgement (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:110).

### **8.1.4 Research Paradigm**

The three identified research philosophies converge into a research paradigm. Saunders *et al.* (2007:112) defined a research paradigm as a way of examining meanings of social phenomena, from a particular understanding, so that explanations may be attempted.

Burrell and Morgan, in Saunders *et al.* (2007:112) identified the purpose of research paradigms as:

- A means for researchers to clarify their assumptions about their view of the nature of science and society;
- A useful way of understanding the way in which other researchers approach their work; and
- An aid to help researchers plot their own route through their research; to understand where it is possible to go and where they are going.

The researcher functioned within an interpretive paradigm. This paradigm holds the position that humans attempt to make sense of the world and as such attempt to understand the fundamental meanings attached to phenomena within a certain context.

## **8.2 DESCRIPTION OF INQUIRY STRATEGY AND BROAD RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **8.2.1 A description of the proposed study's strategy of inquiry**

The NZG is a government funded zoo located in the City of Tshwane. The zoo is situated on 85- hectares of land in the central area of Tshwane. The zoo is the only zoo in South Africa to have national status and is a declared national research facility functioning under the auspices of the National Research Foundation. As such the zoo has to deliver on several mandates that include the provision of state-of-the-art facilities, promote science awareness and advancement, and conduct and coordinate research. Moreover, the NZG is one of the largest paid tourist attractions in the City of Tshwane. As such, the NZG requires an understanding of who their guests are, why they are visiting, their level of satisfaction with the experience received during their excursion, and the likelihood of revisiting the attraction.

In order to address the research objectives of the study an exploratory study of the NZG was conducted. An exploratory study provides a valuable means of developing a new understanding of phenomena (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:133). This study aimed to address a variety of objectives defined in section 1.4 of this document. In order to accomplish this, a mixed-methods strategy of inquiry was employed. The mixed-methods research model integrates both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. It also allows for the analytical procedures employed with both techniques to be used. Two major advantages associated with mixed-methods research are that different methods may have divergent purposes and that it allows for triangulation (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:146). Triangulation occurs when multiple sources of data converge to support a particular hypothesis or theory (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:99) In order to determine the motivation for people to visit the NZG, a qualitative approach was employed using open-ended questions formulated to allow the respondents to freely answer the question. The approach was selected in order to determine whether or not similar responses to the market segmentation developed by previous researchers (Falk, 2006:156-158, Falk, Reinhard, Vernon, Bronnenkant & Heimlich, 2007:7) would be obtained. The same approach was employed to determine the guests' expectation of what they anticipate to experience during their excursion. The responses to the qualitative survey were used to develop a quantitative survey that measured the motivations and expectations of the subjects. A quantitative survey approach was employed to measure the satisfaction levels of visitors after they have

visited the NZG. Satisfaction levels are influenced by two dimensions of quality, namely tangible product and intangible processes (Swarbrooke, 2003:318; Tomas *et al.*, 2003:108). Both the tangible and intangible dimensions were investigated through quantitative measures.

## 8.2.2 Sampling

### 8.2.2.1 Target population, sample size and units of analyses

The NZG annually receives in excess of 600 000 guests of which 250 000 are adults (guests above the age of 18 years). The target population for this study was adult subjects visiting the NZG in the City of Tshwane during the FIFA Soccer World Cup, 11 June 2010 to 11 July 2010. This group was selected because they are either the group most likely to initiate a visit or to respond to requests to visit the NZG. It is assumed that they have the financial means to initiate a visit to the NZG. The NZG received a total of 507 506 full-paying guests during the 2010 / 2011 financial year and the data collection occurred during this period. The visitorship numbers per month and class of visitors are included in Table 14 below. The total population size, being adults visiting the NZG is 251 096 or 49.48% of total visitors.

**Table 14: Visitor to the NZG for the 2010 / 2011 financial year.**

	Adults	Children	Groups	Total
April-2010	14,723	7,764	6,839	29,326
May-2010	14,207	7,477	20,039	41,723
June-2010	18,567	9,148	6,576	34,291
July-2010	17,990	9,812	3,001	30,803
August-2010	21,657	9,994	9,161	40,812
September-2010	31,420	18,356	29,545	79,321
October-2010	21,190	12,041	21,339	54,570
November-2010	16,502	7,837	9,495	33,834
December-2010	48,409	29,197	3,024	80,630
January-2011	19,925	10,006	153	30,084
February-2011	11,964	4,372	1,329	17,665
March-2011	14,542	7,075	12,830	34,447
	251,096	133,079	123,331	507,506

Source: NZG (2011).



The data collection occurred from 11 June to 11 July 2010. During this period the NZG received a total of 38 428 visitors; 24 451 were adults and fell within the target group. The daily visitors for the data collection period are reflected in Table 15.

**Table 15: Visitors to the NZG during the data collection period**

		Adults		Children		Groups		Totals	
		2010	Month to Date	2010	Month to Date	2010	Month to Date	2010	Month to Date
f	11	119	119	68	68	12	12	199	199
s		898	1017	387	455	10	22	1295	1494
s	13	1169	2186	401	856	0	22	1570	3064
m		786	2972	207	1063	1	23	994	4058
t	15	387	3359	202	1265	24	47	613	4671
w		1090	4449	471	1736	1	48	1562	6233
t	17	306	4755	184	1920	0	48	490	6723
f		431	5186	207	2127	24	72	662	7385
s	19	991	6177	476	2603	3	75	1470	8855
s		1142	7319	563	3166	0	75	1705	10560
m	21	560	7879	179	3345	0	75	739	11299
t		648	8527	269	3614	0	75	917	12216
w	23	503	9030	361	3975	8	83	872	13088
t		604	9634	391	4366	8	91	1003	14091
f	25	560	10194	330	4696	7	98	897	14988
s		1693	11887	1027	5723	26	124	2746	17734
s	27	1710	13597	916	6639	15	139	2641	20375
m		358	13955	198	6837	10	149	566	20941
t	29	360	14315	227	7064	0	149	587	21528
w		542	14857	380	7444	8	157	930	22458
t	1	561	15418	390	7834	0	157	951	23409
f		501	15919	362	8196	1	158	864	24273
s	3	1597	17516	1025	9221	0	158	2622	26895
s		1757	19273	1024	10245	0	158	2781	29676
m	5	347	19620	224	10469	0	158	571	30247
t		459	20079	427	10896	0	158	886	31133
w	7	573	20652	504	11400	0	158	1077	32210
t		530	21182	497	11897	0	158	1027	33237
f	9	616	21798	532	12429	0	158	1148	34385
s		1364	23162	692	13121	48	206	2104	36489
s	11	1289	24451	644	13765	6	212	1939	38428
<b>Total</b>		<b>24451</b>		<b>13765</b>		<b>212</b>		<b>38428</b>	

Source: NZG (2011).

During this period the NZG received 7.57% of its annual visitor numbers. The adult visitors, being the target group comprises 9.74% of the population.

### **8.2.3 Techniques for selecting respondents**

Due to the nature of the study a sampling frame is not available. Non-probability sampling will allow for alternative sampling techniques. Saunders *et al.* (2007:226) state that in exploratory studies, non-probability sampling may be the most practical. In non-probability sampling, the probability of each case being selected from the total population is not known. For the purpose of this study convenience sampling was employed. According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008:174), “convenience sampling involves including in the sample whoever happens to be available at the time” of the data collection. Advantages associated with this form of sampling include the relatively low cost and the ease of obtaining data. Visitors to the NZG were requested to take part in the research project. Data was collected from the individuals who responded positively. This technique allowed for the targeting of individuals (adults) that fall within the target population to participate in the research project.

Adult visitors ( $n = 527$ ) to the NZG were requested to complete an entry survey before they gain access to the attraction in order to measure their motivations and expectations. The responses received equates to 2.16% of the total population. Adult visitors exiting the NZG ( $n = 293$ ) were requested to complete an exit survey in order to measure their post-visit satisfaction levels based on their experience at the attraction. The responses received equates to 1.2% of the total population size. The lower response can be attributed to post-visit fatigue as guests are anxious to leave for their final destination.

## **8.3 DATA COLLECTION**

### **8.3.1 Access to data sources**

The researcher is a practitioner at the NZG. This has the advantage of allowing easy access to the organisation as the NZG management perceives the study as valuable. As a practitioner in the organisation the researcher understands the complexities of the

organisation thereby significantly reducing the time allocated for getting to understand the organisation. However, being a practitioner-researcher also has its disadvantages that the researcher must constantly guard against. The researcher must constantly guard against his or her own assumptions and preconceptions. Familiarity with the organisation may prevent the researching of certain issues that may add value to the project (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:166-167). The NZG is a declared research facility and as such has an established research and ethics committee. All research undertaken at the NZG must firstly be approved by the said committee who will consider its ethical implications as well as the scientific foundation of the research.

### **8.3.2 Methods used to collect data**

Primary data have been collected for this study. Primary data has been defined as being data specifically collected for the purpose of the study (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:607). Data were collected that revealed the demographics of the visitors, the motives behind visits to the NZG, the expectations of the guests as they visit the organisation and their levels of satisfaction with the experience received which will inevitably influence their intentions to revisit as defined in paragraph 1.4. The data required for this study were collected by means of questionnaires. This study employed quantitative research techniques.

Adults entering and leaving the NZG were requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire. The selection of the respondents was done by NZG staff working at its Guest Relations Centre and by zoo volunteers. Respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire by selecting predetermined answers. The Likert-style rating scale was used. Questions phrased both positively and negatively were answered by the respondents. The positive and negative phrasing of questions was randomly assigned to ensure the respondents read all the questions. Questions were responded to by selecting on of the following predetermined answers: strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, and strongly disagree. The five-point Likert-style scale was selected due to its ease of completion by the respondents (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:372). The questions were determined based on research undertaken by Tomas *et al.* (2003:115) and specific information required by the NZG management.

### 8.3.3 Pilot-testing

A qualitative questionnaire was developed to allow respondents entering the NZG to formulate their own responses to questions that attempted to determine their motives as well as their expectations that influence them to visit the zoo. The questionnaires were administered by NZG staff members and volunteers. The methodology described above was employed in selecting the participants. It was anticipated that participants would complete the questionnaires on their own and that the interviewers would only offer clarity on the questions should it be necessary.

During the pilot testing of the qualitative questionnaires it was found that the participants were reluctant to complete the questionnaires and that it was left to the interviewers to complete the answers. Furthermore the participants showed high levels of irritation on having to supply detailed answers. The quality of the information obtained from the questionnaires was of such a standard that meaningful deductions would not be achievable.

Furthermore, the researcher was of the opinion that the qualitative questionnaire would negatively impact on the respondent's experience of the attraction due to the visit starting off on a negative experience. The qualitative questionnaire was then converted into a quantitative questionnaire. The questions were developed based on the research of Falk *et al.* (2008) as well as input received from the NZG's management team. This questionnaire was further pilot-tested as described below. The qualitative questionnaire was only utilised during the pilot-testing phase.

Both the entry and exit quantitative questionnaires were pilot-tested under the same conditions as the methods determined for the project data collections. The aim of the pilot-testing was to refine the questionnaire to ensure ease of completion by both interviewers and respondents. The questionnaires were evaluated on the following criteria:

#### Self-administered questionnaire

- Time taken to complete questionnaires by respondents;

- Are any questions unclear or ambiguous?
- Is the layout clear?
- Are there any elements missing from the questionnaire?
- Are there any questions that required lengthy explanations?
- Is the layout of the questionnaire conducive to capturing the data?

The interviewers, NZG employees and volunteers were debriefed after the pilot study in order to ascertain their impressions of the questionnaires. It was found that the quantitative questionnaires did not require any clarity on the questions by the respondents. The questionnaires did not take longer than a few minutes to complete. The data was captured in order to determine the ease of capturing and no irregularities or inconsistencies were found.

#### **8.3.4 Length of study**

The pilot phase of the study commenced during April 2010. Corrections to the questionnaires as well as further piloting occurred during May 2010. The data collection phase commenced on 11 June 2010 and was concluded on 11 July 2010.

### **8.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

Two questionnaires were employed to gather the data required for the study. Data were captured on to the questionnaires by the respondents. The questionnaires solicited fixed responses using a Likert-style rating scale. The responses were captured on SAS version 9.2. This programme was used to perform statistical analysis in order to determine the frequency and percentages of the responses on all the questions.

The racial demographic breakdown of the respondents for both the entry and exit questionnaires was obtained for question V3. Respondents could select from the following commonly South African used categories namely; White, Black, Indian and Coloured. The age demographic of the respondents for both questionnaires was obtained for question V4. Respondents could select from the following categories namely: 18 - 20; 21 – 30; 31 –

40; 41 – 50; 51 – 60; 61 – 65; and 66+. The frequency of the entry time of the respondents was obtained for both questionnaires for question V5. Respondents could select from the following responses; 8:00 – 10:00; 10:00 – 12:00; 12:00 – 14:00; 14:00 – 16:00; and 16:00 – 18:00. The nationality of the respondents was obtained for both questionnaires, question V6. Respondents could select from either South African or Other.

The frequency and percentage of responses to entry questionnaire, questions V7 to V26 were obtained in order to determine the motives and expectations of the respondents.

The frequency and percentage of the responses to the exit questionnaire's questions V7 and V8 were obtained in order to measure the overall satisfaction of the respondents with the attraction. Questions V9 to V34 obtained the frequency and percentages of the responses that measured the level of satisfaction with individual items.

A G-Test for goodness of fit of two or more classes was performed on questions V7 to V26 of the entry questionnaires and V7 to V34 of the exit questionnaires in order to determine whether or not there are differences in responses between the various race demographics. A statistical significance of  $p \geq 0.05$  would indicate a dependence between race and answer.

## **8.5 ASSESSING AND DEMONSTRATING THE QUALITY AND RIGOUR THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **8.5.1 Bias in interviewer-administered questionnaires**

There were two potential biases encountered in using interviewer-administered questionnaires. The first related to the interviewer where the non-standardisation of questions led to concerns about the validity of the data. The interviewers would be requested to strictly adhere to the format of the question. Any problems with the structure of the questions would be corrected after the pilot testing. Interviewers would be requested to accurately document the respondents' replies and not to interpret the responses. The second bias related to the respondent. The respondent may have had a bias towards the interviewer, the organisation or the process. The sampling methodology may have

alleviated this bias as the self-selecting methodology would be employed where the respondents had already indicated that they were prepared to participate in the project.

### **8.5.2 Data quality in the interviewer-administrated questionnaire**

Reliability – The data collection process made use of standardised questions. It is anticipated that other researchers could replicate the findings using the same respondents under the same conditions. However, all the assumptions made in analysing the raw data were recorded.

Knowledge – It must be noted that the researcher is a practitioner at the NZG and that research assistants that were utilised during the study to collect data were also practitioners at the NZG. This indicated that the research team had adequate knowledge of the organisation and the subject matter. All respondents were also informed of the purpose of the study. This information was included on the questionnaires to ensure standardisation between all the research assistants. The data were collected at the entrance to the NZG to ensure that the physical surroundings do not impact on the data supplied by the respondents. Research assistants were clothed in the NZG's official uniform in order to create credibility for the research. However, it should be noted that this could have created a bias in the data in that the respondents may have supplied information that they think the organisation may want to hear.

### **8.5.3 Validity and reliability in quantitative questionnaires**

The questions were formulated based on research conducted by Andereck and Caldwell in Tomas *et al.* (2003:112) where it was found that visitors to zoos appeared to have had four underlying reasons for their visits namely, going for recreation and novelty, visiting for general education of others, going for specific educational purposes, and going for photographic purposes. They surmised that the primary reasons for visiting zoos were educational and recreational. The questions have been structured in order to measure the respondents' perception of the NZG in meeting their expectations. Therefore the questionnaires have content-validity in that it attempts to offer adequate coverage of the research question (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:366).

The questionnaire aimed to measure the respondents' satisfaction level with both the tangible and the intangible components of quality as identified (Swarbrooke, 2003:318; Tomas *et al.*, 2003:108). During the pilot-testing phase of the research project the questionnaires were subjected to *test re-test* procedures. Respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire and immediately on completion they were requested to complete a second questionnaire.

The data from the two questionnaires was analysed to establish correlation of the information. Internal consistency was determined by correlating the responses to similar questions, or inverse questions phrased negatively but measuring similar outputs in the questionnaire. Alternative forms of certain questions were developed. These questions are stated into two different formats but are measuring the same response. The comparison of the different responses allowed for an estimate of reliability (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:367).

## **8.6 RESEARCH ETHICS**

No respondent was subjected to any physical or psychological harm. Respondents above the age of 18 were requested to participate in the research project by completing a self-administered questionnaire. No respondents under the age of 18 were selected to participate in the project, as the aim of the research project was to determine motivation and expectations of adult visitors to the NZG. Participation was voluntary and respondents were permitted at the onset to indicate their unwillingness to participate in the research project. No incentives were offered to the respondents to complete the questionnaires. Respondents were requested to indicate their consent on the self-administered questionnaire before entering the data required. The questionnaire did not require the collection of any personal detail thus the anonymity and privacy of the respondent was assured. Permission was been obtained from the NZG's Managing Director, Dr C Nxomani for the use of its guests as research respondents.. Furthermore, the project was submitted to the NZG's Ethics and Science Committee for their consideration and approval that was obtained.



## 9 RESULTS

### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was:

1. To determine the various demographic groups that visit the zoo;
2. To determine what motivates various demographic groups who visit the zoo;
3. To determine the expectations of visitors to the zoo;
4. To measure the satisfaction levels with experience of visitors to the zoo with various aspects of its operations; and
5. To determine what interventions are required for the zoo to position itself as a flagship tourist attraction.

In order to meet the objectives of the study, adults visiting the NZG were requested to complete these self-administered questionnaires. Respondents were selected prior to entering the NZG to complete an entry questionnaire. The entry survey attempted to measure the motivations of the visitors to the NZG to visit the attraction. Furthermore, the questionnaire attempted to measure the expectations and needs of the visitor prior to them experiencing the actual product. The collection occurred prior to the respondents entering the NZG in order to prevent the actual experience from influencing their responses.

The second questionnaire or exit questionnaire attempted to measure the satisfaction levels with experience of visitors to the NZG immediately after experiencing the attraction. Respondents were requested to complete the self-administered questionnaire at the NZG's exit before the visitors actually left the attraction. Different sets of respondents were selected for each questionnaire, so there is no correlation between the entry and exit respondents. Respondents were randomly selected based on the convenience-sampling method. This chapter presents the results of the data captured through the employment of the two self-administered questionnaires as well as the analysis thereof.

## 9.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Visitors to the NZG were requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire when arriving at the NZG and before paying the admission fee and on exiting the NZG. No incentives were offered to the participants and convenience sampling methodology was employed to select the participants. The first part of the questionnaire merely gathered demographic information on the respondents and the results are captured in Table 16 below.

**Table 16: Demographics of visitors to the NZG**

		Entry Questionnaire			Exit Questionnaire		
		Frequency	%	Cul %	Frequency	%	Cul %
<b>V3.</b> Demographics	White	376	71.89	71.89	173	59.25	59.25
	Black	102	19.5	91.4	92	31.51	90.75
	Colour	22	4.21	95.6	11	3.77	94.52
	Indian	19	3.63	99.24	15	5.14	99.66
	Other	4	0.76	100	1	0.34	100
<b>V4.</b> Age of respondent	18-20	85	16.13	16.13	37	12.63	12.63
	21-30	181	34.35	50.47	101	34.47	47.10
	31-40	141	26.76	77.23	85	29.01	76.11
	41-50	60	11.39	88.61	43	14.68	90.78
	51-60	21	3.98	92.6	12	4.1	94.88
	61-65	8	1.52	94.12	3	1.02	95.9
	66+	2	0.38	94.5	3	1.02	96.93
	Other	29	5.51	100	9	3.06	100
<b>V5.</b> Entry Time	08-10	161	30.55	30.55	82	27.99	27.99
	10-12	260	49.34	79.89	124	42.32	70.31
	12-14	81	15.37	95.26	65	22.18	92.49
	14-16	22	4.17	99.43	22	7.51	100
	16-18	3	0.57	100	0	0	100
<b>V6.</b> Nationality	RSA	427	81.02	81.02	253	86.64	86.64
	Foreign	97	18.41	99.43	38	13.01	99.66
	Other	3	0.57	100	1	0.34	100

The entry questionnaire aimed to measure what the expectations of visitors to the NZG were as well as their motives for visiting the attraction. It also aimed to measure their views on zoos. Respondents were requested to indicate their agreement with the statements made in the questionnaire by selecting one of five given responses ranging

from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A summary of the responses may be found in Table 17 wherein the frequency of selection is recorded.

**Table 17: Entry Frequency Analysis**

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Str Agree</b> <i>n=</i>	<b>Agree</b> <i>n=</i>	<b>Not Sure</b> <i>n=</i>	<b>Disagree</b> <i>n=</i>	<b>Str Disag</b> <i>n=</i>
V7	I am visiting the zoo to see animals	405	108	7	2	5
V8	I am visiting the zoo to do something fun	320	172	23	7	5
V9	I am visiting the zoo to spend time with family	267	153	58	29	20
V10	I am visiting the zoo because it has a new attraction	130	137	154	56	50
V11	I am visiting the zoo because I want to be outdoors	239	206	51	17	14
V12	I am visiting the zoo because I want a family member to learn about the animals	251	154	51	36	35
V13	Zoos are valuable for educating people about animals	323	164	30	3	5
V14	Zoos are a valuable source of information on endangered animals	316	157	42	5	7
V15	Zoos are important in conserving wildlife	320	158	39	5	5
V16	Zoos are an important source of information on wildlife conservation	311	165	41	7	3
V17	Zoos should offer information to its visitors on how to conserve the environment	323	179	17	1	7
V18	Zoos conduct valuable research on conserving the environment	299	184	37	3	4
V19	Zoos offer a relaxing environment	336	162	24	2	3
V20	Zoos are a good place for spending time with family and friends	367	139	15	2	4
V21	Zoos are an important part of our community	329	156	32	6	4
V22	Zoos allow me to reconnect with the natural world	302	181	29	8	7
V23	Effectively maintained amenities such as toilets are essential for me	335	151	31	5	4

	to visit the zoo					
V24	Accurate directional signage in the zoo is very important	348	141	19	12	7
V25	It is vital for the zoo to have a restaurant	293	173	32	19	10
V26	Zoo staff are knowledgeable about animals and the environment	315	139	59	5	8

The mean and standard deviation for the responses for the entry questionnaire are reported in Table 18.

**Table 18: Mean and SD for the entry questionnaires**

	Statement	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
V7	I am visiting the zoo to see animals	527	1.28	0.60
V8	I am visiting the zoo to do something fun	527	1.49	0.73
V9	I am visiting the zoo to spend time with family	527	1.83	1.07
V10	I am visiting the zoo because it has a new attraction	527	2.54	1.24
V11	I am visiting the zoo because I want to be outdoors	527	1.79	0.94
V12	I am visiting the zoo because I want a family member to learn about the animals	527	1.96	1.20
V13	Zoos are valuable for educating people about animals	527	1.48	0.72
V14	Zoos are a valuable source of information on endangered animals	527	1.54	0.79
V15	Zoos are important in conserving wildlife	527	1.51	0.75
V16	Zoos are an important source of information on wildlife conservation	527	1.53	0.74
V17	Zoos should offer information to its visitors on how to conserve the environment	527	1.46	0.70
V18	Zoos conduct valuable research on conserving the environment	527	1.54	0.72
V19	Zoos offer a relaxing environment	527	1.43	0.65

V20	Zoos are a good place for spending time with family and friends	527	1.36	0.63
V21	Zoos are an important part of our community	527	1.48	0.73
V22	Zoos allow me to reconnect with the natural world	527	1.55	0.78
V23	Effectively maintained amenities such as toilets are essential for me to visit the zoo	527	1.46	0.72
V24	Accurate directional signage in the zoo is very important	527	1.46	0.79
V25	It is vital for the zoo to have a restaurant	527	1.63	0.89
V26	Zoo staff are knowledgeable about animals and the environment	527	1.57	0.84

The exit questionnaire aimed to measure what the satisfaction levels of visitors to the NZG were with either the physical environment, product offerings or services offered by the attraction. Respondents were requested to indicate their agreement with the statements made in the questionnaire by selecting one of five given responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A summary of the responses may be found in Table 19 wherein the frequency of selection is recorded.

**Table 19: Exit Frequency Analysis**

		<b>Str Agree n=</b>	<b>Agree n=</b>	<b>Not Sure n=</b>	<b>Disagree n=</b>	<b>Str Disag n=</b>
v9	There was adequate parking	121	107	33	16	16
v10	I could find my way around the zoo easily	113	129	28	13	10
v11	The zoo is not value for money	54	54	33	58	94
v12	The animal collection met my expectation	95	125	38	22	13
v13	The zoom staff were friendly on my arrival	116	135	26	6	10
v14	I could find all the animals I wanted to see	88	101	41	47	16
v15	The zoo map was difficult to understand	39	57	48	77	72
v16	I enjoyed my meal at the restaurant	49	83	115	27	19
v17	The directional signage was sufficient	92	134	39	20	8

v18	The animal collection impressed me	89	131	41	19	13
v19	The ablution facility needed cleaning	47	76	55	65	50
v20	The ablution facility were centrally located	70	132	63	15	13
v21	It was easy to find parking	119	107	46	9	11
v22	The restaurant served value for money meals	61	92	112	16	12
v23	The restaurant's meals were tasteless	24	42	118	50	58
v24	The animals were easy to see	94	131	30	28	10
v25	The animal collection is interesting	113	136	23	10	11
v26	The zoo was tidy	111	120	32	15	15
v27	I got my monies worth at the zoo	118	126	26	15	8
v28	The staff were courtesy and helpful	124	121	36	5	7
v29	The educational signage at the enclosures was adequate	119	126	26	13	9
v30	The educational signage at the enclosures was correct	115	122	38	13	5
v31	I was able to spend quality time with my group	131	126	24	6	6
v32	I / my group was able to learn new things	129	129	19	7	9
v33	I / My group had enough interaction with the animals	106	120	43	15	9
v34	I got lost in the zoo	31	39	18	65	140

The mean and standard deviation for the responses for the exit questionnaire are reported in Table 20.

**Table 20: Mean and SD for exit questionnaires**

	Statement	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
v9	There was adequate parking	293	1,97	1,11
v10	I could find my way around the zoo easily	293	1,90	0,98
v11	The zoo is not value for money	293	3,29	1,53
v12	The animal collection met my expectation	293	2,09	1,07
v13	The zoom staff were friendly on my arrival	293	1,84	0,92
v14	I could find all the animals I wanted to see	293	2,32	1,21
v15	The zoo map was difficult to understand	293	3,29	1,38
v16	I enjoyed my meal at the restaurant	293	2,60	1,07

v17	The directional signage was sufficient	293	2,04	1,07
v18	The animal collection impressed me	293	2,10	1,05
v19	The ablution facility needed cleaning	293	2,98	1,35
v20	The ablution facility were centrally located	293	2,21	1,01
v21	It was easy to find parking	293	1,92	1,02
v22	The restaurant served value for money meals	293	2,41	1,01
v23	The restaurant's meals were tasteless	293	3,25	1,19
v24	The animals were easy to see	293	2,08	1,05
v25	The animal collection is interesting	293	1,87	0,96
v26	The zoo was tidy	293	1,99	1,08
v27	I got my monies worth at the zoo	293	1,87	0,96
v28	The staff were courtesy and helpful	293	1,81	0,89
v29	The educational signage at the enclosures was adequate	293	1,86	0,97
v30	The educational signage at the enclosures was correct	293	1,88	0,92
v31	I was able to spend quality time with my group	293	1,74	0,85
v32	I / my group was able to learn new things	293	1,76	0,91
v33	I / My group had enough interaction with the animals	293	1,98	1,00
v34	I got lost in the zoo	293	3,83	1,42

The exit questionnaire also aimed at measuring the intention of the respondent to revisit the attraction as well as their likelihood of recommending the attraction and the responses are captured in Table 21 below.

**Table 21: Frequency of responses to revisit and recommend intention**

		Yes	No	<i>n</i> =	
v7	Do you intend visiting the zoo again?	277	13	290	(3 missing)
v8	Will you recommend the zoo to your family and/or friends?	279	12	291	(2 missing)

The study also aimed at measuring if there was any dependence between the demographic of the respondent and the option selected. Table 22 below is a summary of the analysis of the responses using the G-Test for goodness of fit of the entry questionnaire. A dependence between demographic and response would indicate a

difference in motivation and expectation between either a single demographic group or a combination of demographic groups. A significant dependence between demographic and response is indicated with an asterisk and a highly significant dependency between demographic and response will be indicated with a double asterisks.

**Table 22: G-test for goodness of fit indicating a dependence between demographic and response selected for motivation and expectation**

	<b>Entrance Questionnaire G- Test for Good Fit</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>	
v7	I am visiting the zoo to see animals	26,700	12	0,008534	**
v8	I am visiting the zoo to do something fun	38,637	12	0,000121	**
v9	I am visiting the zoo to spend time with family	21,909	12	0,039000	*
v10	I am visiting the zoo because it has a new attraction	19,360	12	0,080000	
v11	I am visiting the zoo because I want to be outdoors	13,852	12	0,310000	
v12	I am visiting the zoo because I want a family member to learn about the animals	16,179	12	0,183000	
v13	Zoos are valuable for educating about animals	17,738	12	0,124000	
v14	Zoos are valuable source of information on endangered animals	12,262	12	0,425000	
v15	Zoos are important in conserving wildlife	8,941	12	0,708000	
v16	Zoos are an important source of information on wildlife conservation	12,003	12	0,445000	
v17	Zoos should offer information to its visitors on how to conserve the environment	15,664	12	0,207000	
v18	Zoos conduct valuable research on conserving the environment	14,500	12	0,270000	
v19	Zoos offer a relaxing environment	23,968	12	0,021000	*
v20	Zoos are a good place for spending time with family and friends	30,421	12	0,002412	**
v21	Zoos are important part of our community	12,401	12	0,414000	
v22	Zoos allow me to reconnect with the natural world	5,781	12	0,927000	
v23	Effective maintained amenities such as toilets are essential for me to visit the zoo	26,085	12	0,010000	*
v24	Accurate directional signage is very important	31,746	12	0,001514	**
v25	It is vital for the zoo to have a restaurant	10,383	12	0,582000	
v26	Zoo staff are knowledgeable about animals and the environment	25,485	12	0,013000	*



A similar analysis was performed on the exit data in order to determine whether or not demographics had an influence on the levels of satisfaction with the attraction. The G-Test for goodness of fit was used to measure the dependence between demographic and response and is indicated in Table 23 below. A dependence between demographic and response would indicate a difference in motivation and expectation between either a single demographic group or a combination of demographic groups. A significant dependence between demographic and response is indicated with an asterisk and a highly significant dependency between demographic and response will be indicated with a double asterisks.

**Table 23: G-test for goodness of fit indicating a dependence between demographic and response selected for levels of satisfaction**

<b>Exit Questionnaire G- Test for Good Fit</b>		<b>G</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>	
v7	Do you intend to visit the zoo again	0,238	3	0,971000	
v8	Would you recommend the zoo to your friends or family	0,509	3	0,917000	
v9	There was adequate parking	20,198	12	0,063000	
v10	I could find my way around the zoo easily	6,849	12	0,867000	
v11	The zoo is not value for money	30,626	12	0,002246	**
v12	The animal collection met my expectation	8,638	12	0,733000	
v13	The zoom staff were friendly on my arrival	14,622	12	0,263000	
v14	I could find all the animals I wanted to see	13,403	12	0,340000	
v15	The zoo map was difficult to understand	8,531	12	0,742000	
v16	I enjoyed my meal at the restaurant	15,476	12	0,216000	
v17	The directional signage was sufficient	12,225	12	0,428000	
v18	The animal collection impressed me	16,539	12	0,168000	
v19	The ablution facility needed cleaning	9,693	12	0,643000	
v20	The ablution facility were centrally located	19,711	12	0,073000	
v21	It was easy to find parking	32,079	12	0,001345	**
v22	The restaurant served value for money meals	10,491	12	0,573000	
v23	The restaurant's meals were tasteless	13,386	12	0,342000	
v24	The animals were easy to see	22,459	12	0,033000	
v25	The animal collection is interesting	29,247	12	0,003621	**
v26	The zoo was tidy	6,507	12	0,888000	
v27	I got my monies worth at the zoo	15,844	12	0,198000	
v28	The staff were courtesy and helpful	14,977	12	0,243000	

v29	The educational signage at the enclosures was adequate	7,739	12	0,805000	
v30	The educational signage at the enclosures was correct	7,202	12	0,844000	
v31	I was able to spend quality time with my group	11,176	12	0,514000	
v32	I / my group was able to learn new things	8,140	12	0,774000	
v33	I / My group had enough interaction with the animals	9,226	12	0,684000	
v34	I got lost in the zoo	40,973	12	0,000050	**

## 10 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter reported on the data obtained as well as the analysis thereof. Chapter 10 contains a discussion on the findings as well as recommendations for further research, and conclusions.

The purpose of the later section of the chapter is to develop a clearer understanding of the analysis of the data. It aims to develop an understanding of what motivates people to visit the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa and what their expectations of the attraction are. It will also attempt to indicate where there is a dependency on demographic and response and its possible implication for the NZG. The section will also attempt to identify drivers of satisfaction at the NZG. The dependency between demographics and response in terms of levels of satisfaction will also be investigated as well as its possible implications for the NZG.

In discussing the outcomes of the analysis of both the entry questionnaire as well as the exit questionnaire areas of further research will be identified. Finally, a statement is offered that synthesises the substances and scope of the study.

## 10.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1: TO DETERMINE THE VARIOUS DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS THAT VISIT THE ZOO

An analysis of the demographic data of both questionnaires would indicate that the majority of the respondents were white  $n=376$  (entry questionnaire) and  $n=173$  (exit questionnaire) followed by black visitors  $n=102$  (entry questionnaire) and  $n=92$  (exit questionnaire). In discussion with the Managing Director of the NZG the disparity between the ratio of white respondents to black respondents was discussed as experience shows that the majority of visitors to the NZG would be black. However, as will become evident later in the discussions that black and white visitors appear to be responding similarly in their questionnaires and therefore this does not pose a problem.

The majority of respondents were in the age category of 21 – 30 years of ages followed by 31 – 40 years. This is in line with visitor trends where zoos are viewed as family destinations, mainly frequented by adults with young children.

The majority of respondents entered the zoo between 10:00 am and 12:00 am and left the zoo between the same periods. This would appear to be problematic but could be attributed to visitor fatigue. The visitors leaving the zoo earlier on in the day were more responsive to invitations to complete the questionnaire. Visitors leaving later during the day could be hot and tired. This is also evident in the number of respondents  $n=293$  in comparison to the entry respondents  $n=527$ .

The majority of the respondents in both the entry  $n=427$  and exit questionnaires  $n=253$  were South African representing approximately 81% and 87% of the respondents. This is in line with expectations as local visitors normally frequent zoos.

There appeared to be very limited reluctance from respondents to supply all the demographic information with only 4 responses missing to the race demographics in the entry questionnaire (v3) and one missing in the exit questionnaire (v3). The exit questionnaire had one response missing from the nationality question (v6).

### 10.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2: TO DETERMINE WHAT MOTIVATES VARIOUS DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS WHO VISIT THE ZOO

Question v7 to v13 of the entry questionnaire attempted to measure what motivated people to visit the zoo and is captured in table 24 below.

**Table 24: Motives for visiting the zoo**

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
v7	I am visiting the zoo to see animals	76,85%	20,49%	1,33%	0,38%	0,95%
v8	I am visiting the zoo to do something fun	60,72%	32,64%	4,36%	1,33%	0,95%
v9	I am visiting the zoo to spend time with family	50,66%	29,03%	11,01%	5,50%	3,80%
v12	I am visiting the zoo because I want a family member to learn about the animals	47,63%	29,22%	9,68%	6,83%	6,64%
v11	I am visiting the zoo because I want to be outdoors	45,35%	39,09%	9,68%	3,23%	2,66%
v10	I am visiting the zoo because it has a new attraction	24,67%	26,00%	29,22%	10,63%	9,49%

It would be expected that 97.34% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they are visiting the zoo to see animals as this is the primary product offering of the zoo. Therefore, the primary motive for visiting the zoo is to see animals. Following is the motive for doing something fun in that 93.36% of the respondents agreed with this statement. A total of 84.44% of the respondents are visiting the zoo because it's an outdoor activity. An increase in the conversion of old office blocks in the CBD of Pretoria into accommodation is seeing an increase in the number of people requiring outdoor space that is not linked to their place of residence. This provides the zoo with a unique opportunity of fulfilling this need due to its proximity to the CBD and its residents.

The remaining two motives are the need to learn with 76.85% of the respondents agreeing with this statement and 50.67% of the respondents visiting the zoo to see its new attraction called Stormy Bay. It must be noted that the sampling was undertaken during the school holidays when there are no school groups visiting the zoo. An interview with the NZG's Managing Director, Dr C Nxomani indicated that the reason for the low response in visitors

motivated by the need to see the new attraction may be ascribed to a limited marketing budget and that awareness was created by public relations initiatives.

Due to the limited nature of the research project it is not possible to accurately link the motives identified at the NZG to those identified previously in terms of the work undertaken by Falk *et al.* (2006:156-158; 2007:7) who identified five motive-based segments. However, their work did not identify the motive for a need for open spaces as one of their motive-based segments and this may require further research.

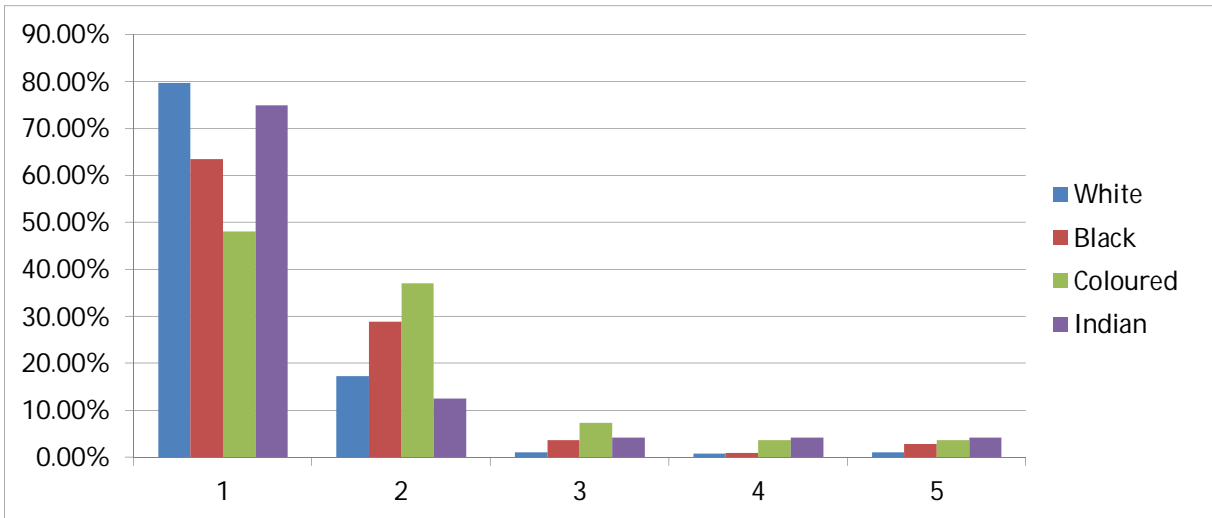
This research project did not require visitors to list their motives in a hierarchical manner from most important to least important. This refinement may be required in order to obtain a better understanding of what motivates people to visit the NZG.

However, it may be concluded that people are visiting the zoo to see animals but want to be entertained in a fun, outdoor environment. The need to be educated appears to be low on the list of motives but if presented in a fun manner this will add to the experience and the levels of satisfaction.

A component of the study was to determine whether or not there was a difference in motivation between different race demographics. A summary of the finds may be seen in table 22.

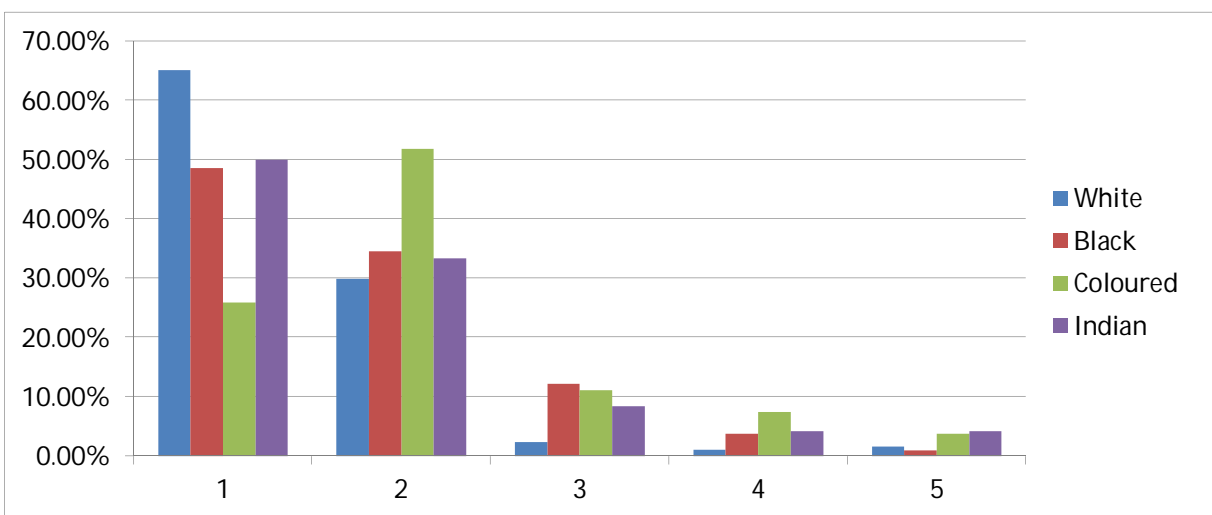
In terms of motivation for visitors coming to the zoo the statement, "I am visiting the zoo to see animals", v7 indicated a very strong dependency between race demographics and response. An analysis of the responses as seen in Figure 7 indicates that in opposition to the three other group, coloured visitors were proportionately less motivated by the desire to see animals than the other groups. The three remaining groups were strongly motivated to visit the zoo by their desire to see animals.

**Figure 7: Visiting the zoo to see animals (v7) indicated a very strong dependency between race demographics and response.**



A strong dependency between race demographic and response is evident for the statement, “ I am visiting the zoo to do something fun”, v8 and is depicted in Figure 8. The dependency is between the coloured demographic and response where they proportionately are less motivated to visit the zoo by their desire to have fun. The remaining three groups show similar trends in their responses.

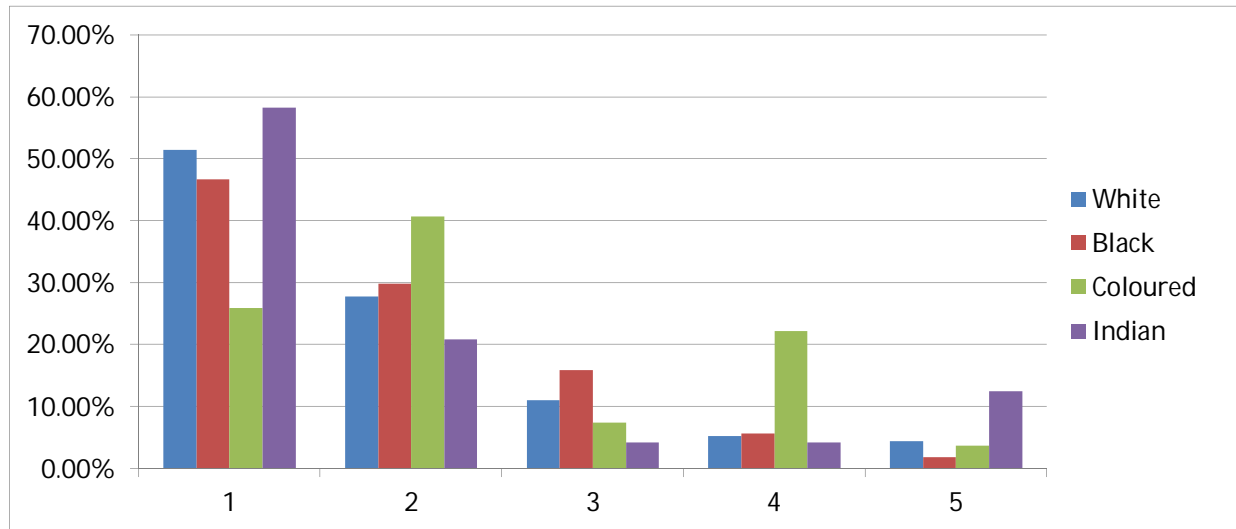
**Figure 8: Visiting the zoo to do something fun (v8) indicated a very strong dependency between race demographics and response**



Spending time with family or friends (v9) showed a dependency between race demographics and response. Figure 9 indicates that Indian visitors have a far stronger motive for visiting the zoo in order to spend time with family or friends. Similarly coloured

visitors also had a proportionally higher negative response to the question than the other groups.

**Figure 9: Visiting the zoo to spend time with family or friends (v9) indicated a dependency between race demographics and response**



### 10.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3: TO DETERMINE THE EXPECTATIONS OF VISITORS TO THE ZOO

Questions v14 to v26 of the entry questionnaire attempted to measure the expectations of visitors to the zoo and this is captured in Table 25 below wherein their order of preference is listed.

**Table 25: Expectations of visitors to the zoo**

Number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
v20	Zoos are a good place for spending time with family and friends	69,64%	26,38%	2,85%	0,38%	0,76%
v24	Accurate directional signage is very important	66,03%	26,76%	3,61%	2,28%	1,33%
v19	Zoos offer a relaxing environment	63,76%	30,74%	4,55%	0,38%	0,57%
v23	Effective maintained amenities such as toilets are essential for me to visit the zoo	63,69%	28,71%	5,89%	0,95%	0,76%

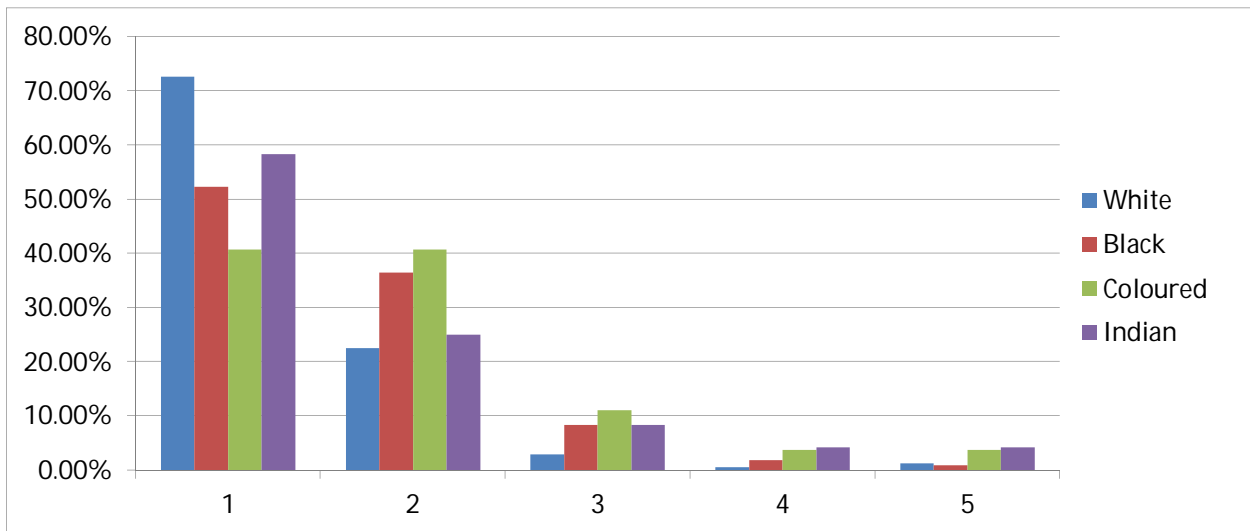
v21	Zoos are important part of our community	62,43%	29,60%	6,07%	1,14%	0,76%
v13	Zoos are valuable for educating about animals	61,52%	31,24%	5,71%	0,57%	0,95%
v17	Zoos should offer information to its visitors on how to conserve the environment	61,29%	33,97%	3,23%	0,19%	1,33%
v15	Zoos are important in conserving wildlife	60,72%	29,98%	7,40%	0,95%	0,95%
v14	Zoos are valuable source of information on endangered animals	59,96%	29,79%	7,97%	0,95%	1,33%
v26	Zoo staff are knowledgeable about animals and the environment	59,89%	26,43%	11,22%	0,95%	1,52%
v16	Zoos are an important source of information on wildlife conservation	59,01%	31,31%	7,78%	1,33%	0,57%
v22	Zoos allow me to reconnect with the natural world	57,31%	34,35%	5,50%	1,52%	1,33%
v18	Zoos conduct valuable research on conserving the environment	56,74%	34,91%	7,02%	0,57%	0,76%
v25	It is vital for the zoo to have a restaurant	55,60%	32,83%	6,07%	3,61%	1,90%

The respondents had very strong views with regards to their expectation of the zoo. A total of 97.34% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that zoos are a good place for spending time with friends and family. This corresponds with the response of 93.36% identified with the motive-based segmentation of visiting the zoo to do something fun and the 79.69% who visit the zoo to spend time with family and friends. A total of 94.5% of the respondents expect the zoo to offer a relaxing environment. Zoos being a good place to spend time with family and friends showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response as is depicted in Figure 10. Coloured visitors had a lower expectation of zoos being good places to spend time with family and friends. This also links to the motive-based segmentation as depicted in Figure 9 wherein coloured



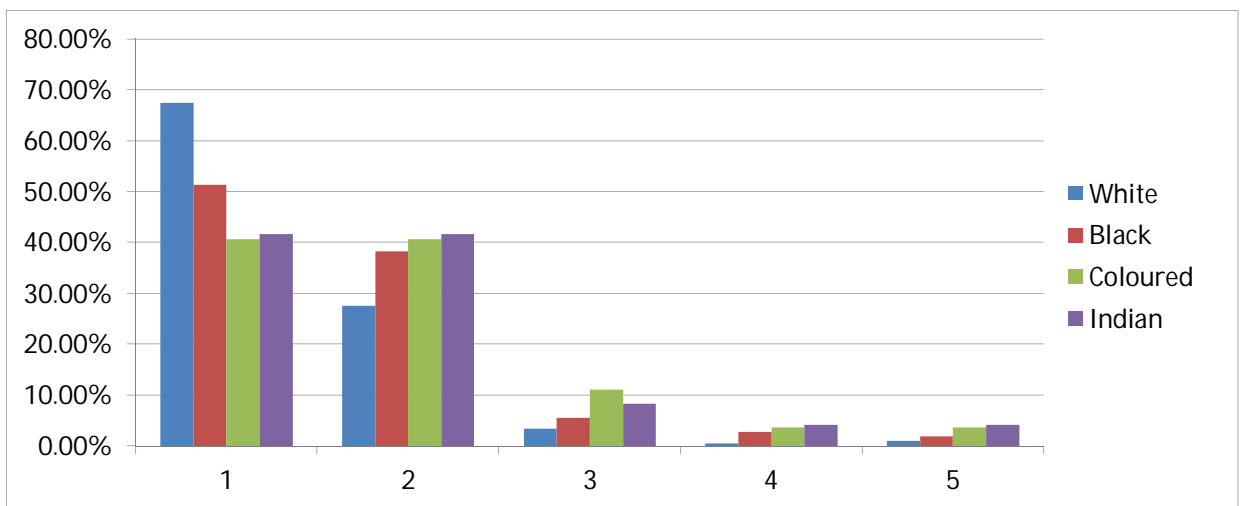
visitors were less likely to visit the zoo primarily to spend time with family or friends. Although the measurement scales differ there appears to be a favourable comparison with the motives listed by Tribe (2004:44).

**Figure 10: Zoos are a good place for spending time with family or friends (v20) showed a strong dependency between race demographic and response**



Zoos offer a relaxing environment indicated a dependency between race demographics and responses as indicated in Figure 11.

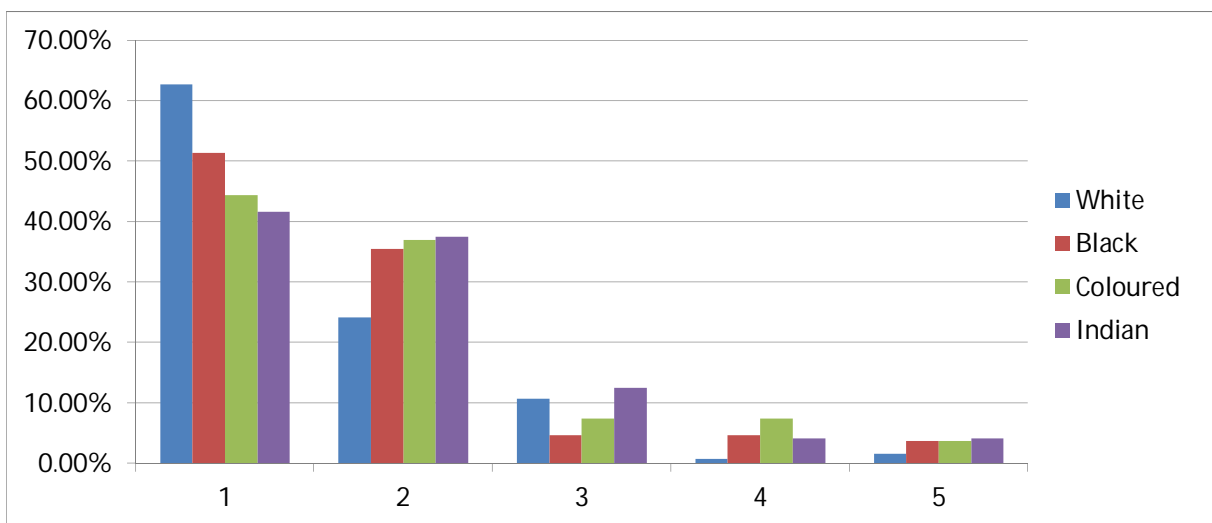
**Figure 11: Zoos offer a relaxing environment (v19) indicated a dependency between race demographic and response**



Access to, and the availability of, information is an important expectation of visitors to the zoo. Of the total respondents 95.26% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that zoos should offer information to its visitors on how to conserve the environment. A further 92.76% of visitors responded that zoos were valuable in educating people about animals.

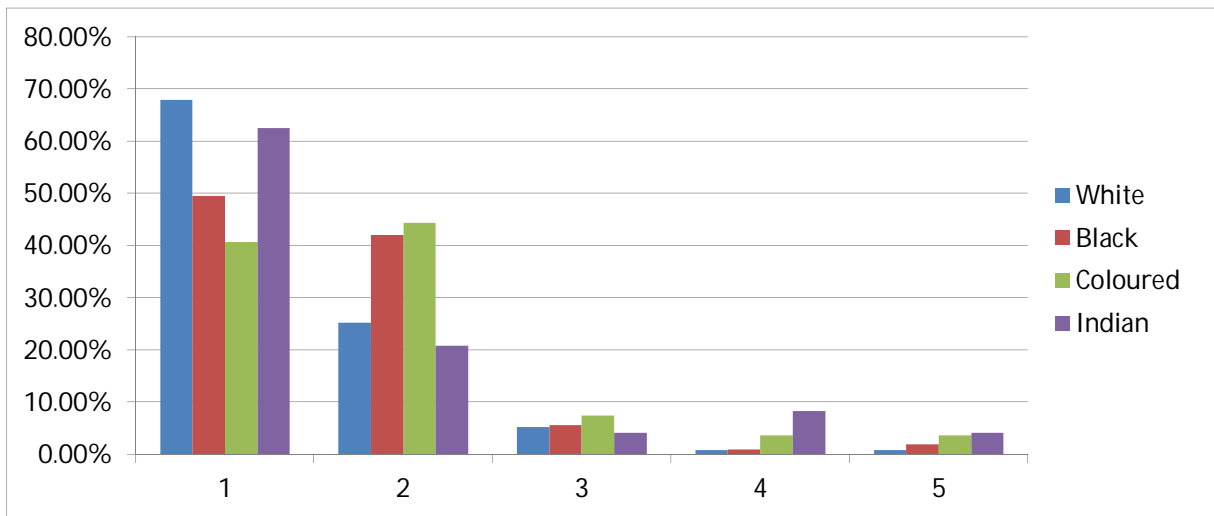
Access to information about the conservation of wildlife is expected by 90.32% and a further 89.75% of respondents viewed zoos as a valuable source of information on endangered animals. However, of concern is that only 86.32% of respondents viewed zoo staff as being knowledgeable about animals and the environment. This rating is still high but scored the lowest overall score on the questionnaire. This statement indicated a dependency between race demographics and response but the dependency is marginal as represented in Figure 12 below.

**Figure 12: Zoo staff are knowledgeable about animals (v26) indicated a dependency between race demographics and response**



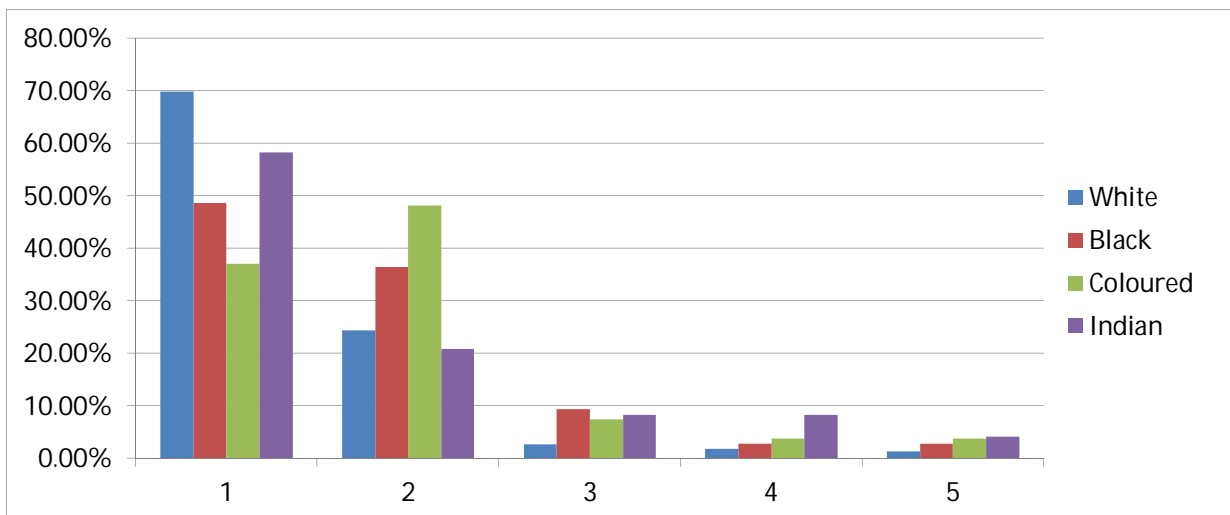
In terms of its amenities respondents viewed it very important to have accurate directional signage with 92.79% of agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Effectively maintained amenities ranked high with a response rate of 92.40%. This response indicated a dependency between race demographics and response and is indicated in Figure 13. Coloured visitors had proportionately lower expectations in terms of the amenities than the remaining three groups. However, certain Indian groups held proportionality higher negative views of this expectation.

**Figure 13: Effective maintained amenities (v23) indicated a dependency between race demographics and response**



The availability of a good restaurant received lower ratings with 88.43% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that it's vital for the zoo to have a good restaurant, the second lowest ranking in terms of overall expectations. The need to have accurate directional signage showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response in that coloured visitors did not share the same strongly agreeing view as the remaining groups and is depicted in Figure 14 below.

**Figure 14: Accurate directional signage (v24) is very important showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response**



In terms of the traditional mandates of zoos the NZG's visitors' expectations are as follows based on the percentage of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with statements in the questionnaires:

- Research: v18 – Zoos conduct valuable research on conserving the environment – 91.65%
- Conservation: v15 – Zoos are important in conserving wildlife – 90.70%
- Education: v13 – Zoos are valuable for educating about animals – 92.76%
- Recreation: v22 & v21–Zoos allow me to reconnect with the natural world – 91.66% and Zoos are an important part of our community – 92.03%

It is clear from the data that respondents have very strong views on their expectation of zoos and its deliverables or products. Most of the respondents have selected the “strongly agree” option. There are very low negative responses as may be seen in Table 25.

#### **10.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 4: TO MEASURE THE SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH EXPERIENCE OF VISITORS TO THE ZOO WITH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF ITS OPERATIONS**

According to Pine & Gilmore (2011:12 & 78), valuable experiences are created or staged when companies have positive or memorable engagements with clients and have defined satisfaction as the gap between what the guest would expect and what the guest perceives to receive. Customer satisfaction is therefore the cumulative effect of the entire visit measured by the visitor and juxtaposed with their expectation, the larger the gap the lower the levels of satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is largely driven by perceptions and is influenced by the guest’s interaction with the physical product offering, engagement with the environment, staff service and other interactions and the perceived efficiency of processes. According to Pine & Gilmore’s (2011:39) model positive experiences are staged when the attraction is able to manage the four realms that influence experience along with the levels of engagement and being able to reach the convergence point or the “sweet spot”

The exit questionnaire has attempted to measure the guests’ or visitors’ perception of the zoos meeting of their expectations. For a better understanding of the results similar questions have been grouped together. Questions have been rephrased in order to ensure the reliability of data collected. Certain questions have also been phrased in the negative to ensure the respondents read all the questions and do not merely select one standard

response and select it for all questions. In comparison to the results of the entry questionnaire that aimed at measuring the motivation and expectations of visitors to the zoo that showed very strong alignment with the statements the results obtained from the exit questionnaire appears to be more moderate with respondents selecting both strongly agree and agree with the statement.

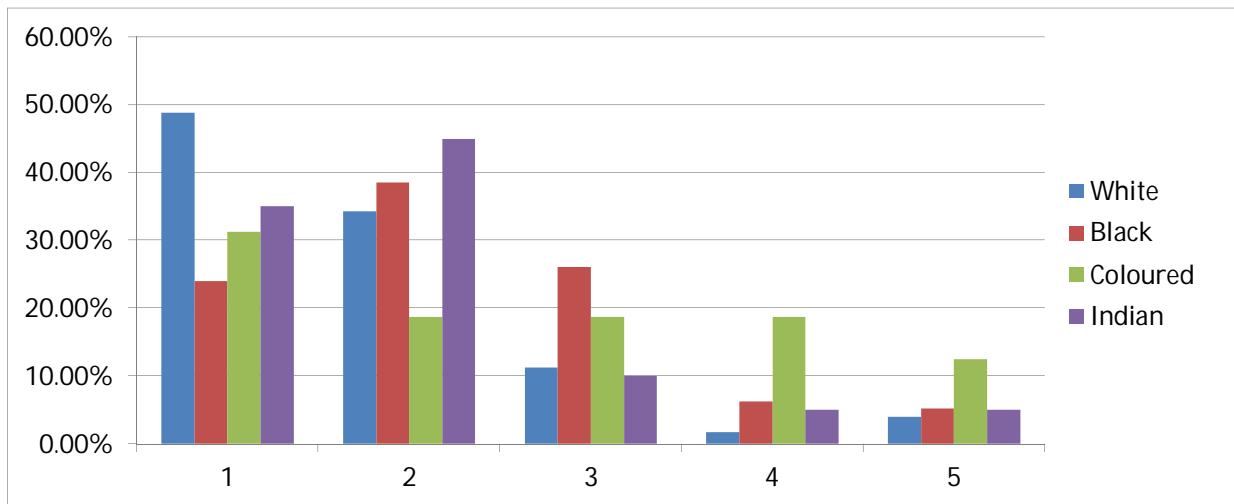
The first set of questions explores the levels of satisfaction of the zoos physical environment and amenities. Access to and the availability of parking is normally the first impressions that visitors get of the zoo. Respondents were generally in agreement that there was adequate parking (v9) with 77.82% agreement rate with the parking being easy to find (v21) with an agreement rate of 77.39% as shown in Table 26. However the second question (v21) showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response and is shown in Figure 15.

**Table 26: Satisfaction levels with parking**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
v9	There was adequate parking	41,30%	36,52%	11,26%	5,46%	5,46%
v21	It was easy to find parking	40,75%	36,64%	15,75%	3,08%	3,77%

White visitors to the zoo show far higher levels of satisfaction with the ease of finding parking at the zoo in comparison to the other groups. Experience at the zoo has shown that traditionally larger proportions of white visitors arrive earlier in the morning when parking is abundant and easy to find in comparison to the other groups. The figure also indicates that the coloured visitors were proportionality more dissatisfied with the ease of finding parking. According to the Disney Institute (2001:108) parking would form part of the physical infrastructure component of setting and has an impact on satisfaction.

**Figure 15: Satisfaction levels with parking indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response**



The second group of questions deal with the visitor's ability to find their way around the zoo. This grouping of questions had two negatively-phrased questions to ensure accuracy of responses. The questions were aimed at measuring the satisfaction with the zoo's way-finding system and generally showed high levels of satisfaction. However, the negatively-phrased questions received a lower than anticipated response which indicates that some of the respondents may not have given the questionnaires their full attention. None of the negatively-phrased questions contradicted the results obtained from the positively phrased questions as reflected in Table 27. A total of 77.13% of respondents perceived the directional signage as sufficient (v17) and 82.60% could find their way around the zoo (v10). According to Tomas *et al.* (2003:108) these questions refer to the tangible components of service.

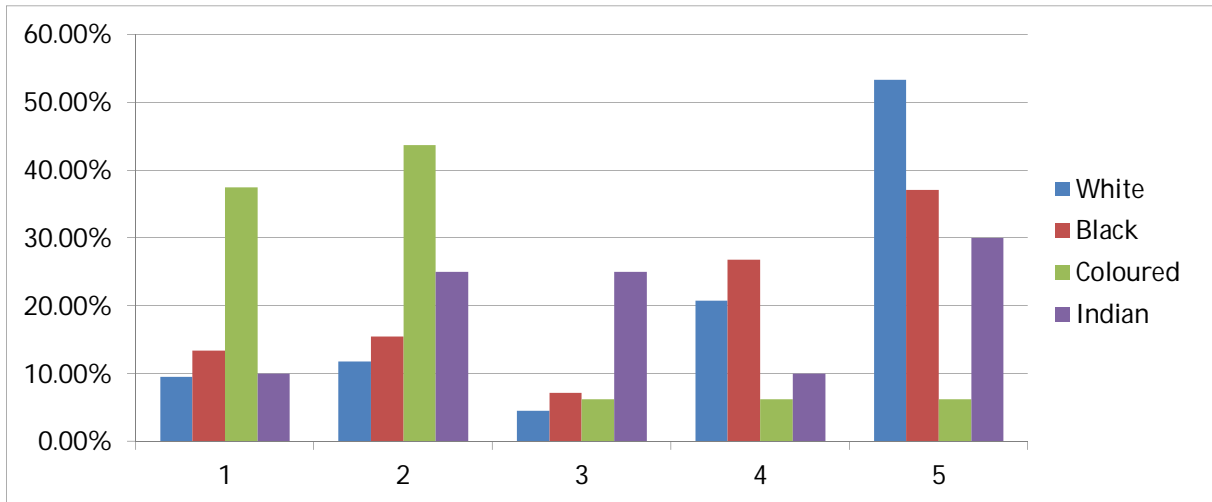
**Table 27: Satisfaction levels with the way-finding system**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
v15	The zoo map was difficult to understand	13,31%	19,45%	16,38%	26,28%	24,57%
v17	The directional signage was sufficient	31,40%	45,73%	13,31%	6,83%	2,73%
v10	I could find my way around the zoo easily	38,57%	44,03%	9,56%	4,44%	3,41%
v34	I got lost in the zoo	10,58%	13,31%	6,14%	22,18%	47,78%

However, the statement "I got lost in the zoo" (v34) showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response as indicated in Figure 16.

Coloured visitors have responded in agreement with the statement that they got lost in the zoo. This would either indicate that the way-finding system did not meet their expectations or they did not read the question correctly as this was a negatively-phrased question.

**Figure 16: Getting lost in the zoo showed a strong dependency between race demographics and response**



The cleanliness of the physical environment of the zoo was perceived as being tidy in that it achieved 78.84% agreement rate. However; the location and cleanliness of the ablution facilities did not receive high levels of satisfaction. The cleanliness of ablution facilities was stated in a negative manner and this may have led to a low score but this may also correctly reflect the perceptions of visitors. A disagreement rate of 19.34% with the negative statement was received as indicated in Table 28. There also appears to be lower levels of satisfaction with the positioning or availability of ablution facilities as this achieved a satisfaction rating of 68.94%

**Table 28: Satisfaction levels with the tidiness of the zoo and the ablution facilities**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
v26	The zoo was tidy	37,88%	40,96%	10,92%	5,12%	5,12%
v19	The ablution facility needed cleaning	16,04%	25,94%	18,77%	22,18%	17,06%
v20	The ablution facility were centrally located	23,89%	45,05%	21,50%	5,12%	4,44%

The availability of a restaurant was viewed a relatively less important by entry respondent as is indicated in Table 25. The interpretation of Table 29 is problematic, as the research

instrument did not include a Not Applicable option that would have excluded the response from the overall analysis. Currently the majority of the respondents have selected the option of “not sure” that would indicate that they have not used this component of the operations. However, if one takes into consideration that most of the respondents did not use the restaurant the offering did receive fairly satisfactory ratings with 52.22% of the respondents perceiving the restaurant as offering value for money but there does appear to be room for improvement in terms of the “enjoyment” factor of the offering as only 45.05% of respondents enjoyed their meal.

**Table 29: Satisfaction levels with the restaurant**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
v22	The restaurant served value for money meals	20,82%	31,40%	38,23%	5,46%	4,10%
v23	The restaurant's meals were tasteless	8,22%	14,38%	40,41%	17,12%	19,86%
v16	I enjoyed my meal at the restaurant	16,72%	28,33%	39,25%	9,22%	6,48%

Interaction with staff is a key driver of satisfaction and this component of the questionnaire achieved high levels of satisfaction with 85.67% (v13) and 83.27% (v28) being achieved, as indicated in Table 30. According to the Disney Institute (2001:179) staff, or to use their words “cast” is a delivery system of service. The facilities’ staff member interaction with the visitor will have an impact on their experience.

**Table 30: Satisfaction levels with staff interactions**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
v13	The zoom staff were friendly on my arrival	39,59%	46,08%	8,87%	2,05%	3,41%
v28	The staff were courtesy and helpful	42,32%	41,30%	12,29%	1,71%	2,39%

The zoo’s main product offering is its animal collection. Table 31 indicates the levels of satisfaction with the products offered and the level of engagement of visitor with the animal collection. The animals were easy to see with 76.79% (v24) respondents agreeing with this



statement. It appears as if there may be an area of improvement in the visitor's seeing the animals they anticipated seeing (v14) as this achieved a relatively low rating of 64.50%. The animal collection met the expectation of the visitors with rating of 75.08% (v12) and 75.09% (v18). It would appear as if the animals that are expected at the zoo are available but that for some reason the respondents did not get to see them either due to the animals not being on display, not visible or perhaps because of time constraints.

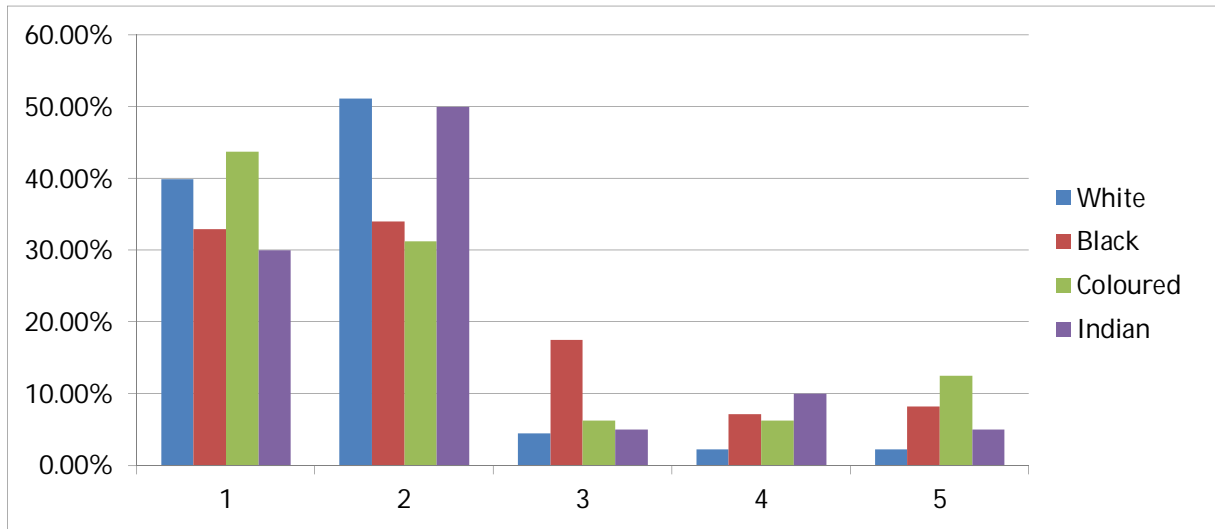
Generally respondents were positive about their interactions with the animal collection (v33) in that it achieved a rating of 77.14%. Generally, the respondents found the animal collection interesting (v25) in that it achieved a rating of 84.99%, but this question indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response.

**Table 31: Satisfaction levels with the animal collection**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
v24	The animals were easy to see	32,08%	44,71%	10,24%	9,56%	3,41%
v25	The animal collection is interesting	38,57%	46,42%	7,85%	3,41%	3,75%
v14	I could find all the animals I wanted to see	30,03%	34,47%	13,99%	16,04%	5,46%
v12	The animal collection met my expectation	32,42%	42,66%	12,97%	7,51%	4,44%
v18	The animal collection impressed me	30,38%	44,71%	13,99%	6,48%	4,44%
v33	I / My group had enough interaction with the animals	36,18%	40,96%	14,68%	5,12%	3,07%

There appears to be proportionally lower levels of satisfaction with the composition of the animal collection (v25) amongst black and coloured visitors in proportion to white and Indian visitors and this is reflected in Figure 17.

**Figure 17: Satisfaction with the composition of the animal collection indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response**



Educating visitors on animals and environmental concerns is a key mandate of the zoo. This component of the questionnaire has indicated high levels of satisfaction as depicted in Table 32. Respondents perceived there being adequate signage at the enclosures (v29) 83.61% and that the signage was correct (v30) 80.89%. They also had their expectation of learning (v32) met, achieving a rating of 88.06%.

**Table 32: Satisfaction with the zoo's education offering**

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
v29	The educational signage at the enclosures was adequate	40,61%	43,00%	8,87%	4,44%	3,07%
v30	The educational signage at the enclosures was correct	39,25%	41,64%	12,97%	4,44%	1,71%
v32	I / my group was able to learn new things	44,03%	44,03%	6,48%	2,39%	3,07%

It also appears that the social components of the visitors' expectation were also met as captured in Table 33. Spending quality time (v31) 87.71%, while being able to learn (v32) 88.06% and interacting with animals (v33) 77.14% were expectations of visitors that were met by the zoo.

**Table 33: Satisfaction levels with the social component of the zoo visit**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
v31	I was able to spend quality time with my group	44,71%	43,00%	8,19%	2,05%	2,05%
v32	I / my group was able to learn new things	44,03%	44,03%	6,48%	2,39%	3,07%
v33	I / My group had enough interaction with the animals	36,18%	40,96%	14,68%	5,12%	3,07%

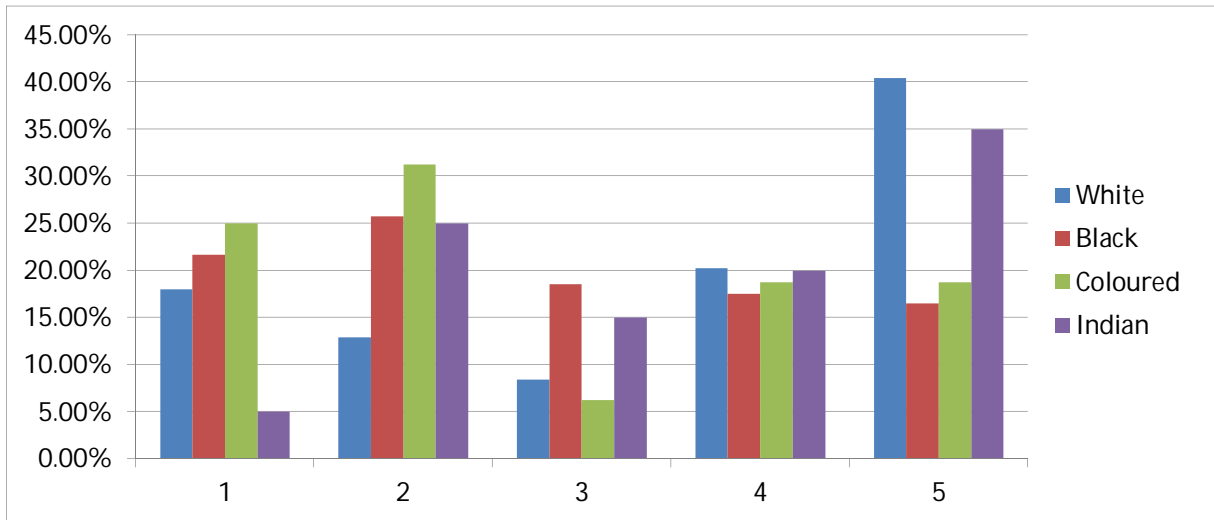
The perception of the zoo being value for money would be a key indicator of satisfaction. The statements measuring this factor included both a positively and negatively stated question. The positive statement (v27) achieved an agreement of 83.27% as indicated in Table 34.

**Table 34: Perception on the zoo being value for money**

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
v27	I got my monies worth at the zoo	40,27%	43,00%	8,87%	5,12%	2,73%
v11	The zoo is not value for money	18,43%	18,43%	11,26%	19,80%	32,08%

However, the inverse statement managed to achieve an overall negative response indicating that respondents were not in agreement with the statement that the zoo is not value for money (v11) and thereby implying that it is value for money. A total of 51.88% of respondents disagreed with this statement indicating that a large portion respondents did not read the statement correctly. Furthermore, this statement also indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response as seen in Figure 18. It appears as if both black and coloured visitors are proportionally more likely to agree with the negative statement that the zoo is not value for money than white and Indian visitors.

**Figure 18: The zoo not being value for money indicated a strong dependency between race demographics and response**



Nowacki (208:307), has indicated that the visitor’s willingness to revisit an attraction as well as their willingness to recommend the attraction is a good indicator of their satisfaction levels. The higher their levels of satisfaction the more likely they are to revisit and recommend the attraction. Table 35 indicates that 95.52% of the respondents indicated their intentions to visit the zoo again and 95.88% of respondents indicated their willingness to recommend the zoo. This would indicate very high levels of satisfaction with the zoo’s product offering.

**Table 35: Revisit and recommend intention**

	Statement	Yes	No
v7	Do you intend to the visit the zoo again	95,52%	4,48%
v8	Would you recommend the zoo to your friends and/or family	95,88%	4,12%

## **10.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 5: TO DETERMINE WHAT INTERVENTIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR THE ZOO TO POSITION ITSELF AS A FLAGSHIP TOURIST ATTRACTION.**

Recommendation 1. Visitors to the zoo have identified their key motive for visiting the zoo is to see animals, have fun and be in an outdoor space. From the satisfaction questionnaire the availability of animals or the ability of the visitors to see them appears to be a challenge. In order to meet or exceed the expectations of the visitors the zoo should

package fun offerings while ensuring the availability of an interesting animal collection. The reason for the visitors not seeing the animals they expected to needs to be researched further. Furthermore, there appears to be different expectations of what should be included in the animal collection among the various race demographic groups and this should be researched further.

Recommendation 2. Shortcomings have been identified in terms of the amenities at the zoo. Certain visitors have identified the availability of parking as an issue. Along with the cleanliness and availability of ablution facilities needs to be investigated.

Recommendation 3. There appears, based on the number of respondents, to be a low utilisation of the zoo's restaurant, coupled to fairly low satisfaction levels with the product offering, presents the zoo with opportunities for increasing secondary spend but this requires an understanding as to the reason for the low utilisation and satisfaction levels.

## **10.7 CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

Largely visitors to the zoo, with a few exceptions, appear to be a fairly homogeneous group in terms of their motives for visiting the zoo. Along with this they share similar expectations of the zoo. Indian and white visitors share very similar views on most aspects of the research. Black visitors are more moderate in terms of their views in comparison to Indian and white visitors. Black and white visitors form by far the largest component of the zoo's visitors.

The implication of the research findings is that the zoo does not have to specifically stage different experiences for different racial demographic groups but should rather focus their efforts on staging events that involve animals, be outdoors and allow learning to happen in a fun environment. Although there were dependencies between race demographics and responses in terms of the entry questionnaire and that they were largely linked to coloured visitors, this may prove to be an anomaly based on the limited number of respondents and on further investigation may be confirmed or falsified.

The zoo has achieved very high revisit and recommend intentions that indicate high satisfaction levels. A closer investigation indicates that there are areas that require enhancement. The level of dependency between race-demographic and response is very limited. The implication of this finding is that visitors to the zoo, irrespective of their race-demographics share similar views on having their expectations met and that corrective measures are not required for certain race-demographics. However, where dependency between race-demographics and response exists further research may be required to understand the nature of the dependency.

A more comprehensive research methodology, that tracks visitors from the start of their visit to the zoo to post-visit, may yield a more in-depth understanding of the zoo experience, wherein the same visitor completes an entry questionnaire and exit questionnaire and the gap between the two is analysed.

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## Entry Survey

Dear Respondent,

Respondent number				
For office use only V1	1	2	3	4

Your input and feedback are valuable to improve the services offered by the National Zoological Gardens. This is an anonymous and confidential survey. You cannot be identified and the answers you provide will be used for research purposes only.

**Time required:** Approximately 10 minutes.

Please answer all the questions. There is no right or wrong answer.

I voluntarily participate in this survey (Please tick ✓)  v2\_\_

### Demographics

(Please mark with X next to the corresponding option)

White	1	Black	2	Coloured	3	Indian	4	v3__
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### Ages in years

(Please mark with X next to your corresponding age)

18-20	1	21-30	2	31-40	3	41-50	4	51-60	5	61-65	6	66+	7	v4__
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### Entry time

(Please mark with an X next to the corresponding option)

08:00- 10:00	1	10:00- 12:00	2	12:00- 14:00	3	14:00- 16:00	4	16:00- 18:00	5	v5__
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### Nationality

(Please mark with an X next to the corresponding option)

SA Citizen	1	Other	2	v6__
------------	---	-------	---	------

Which animals do you expect to see at the zoo? (Please list five)

---



---



---

How did you hear about the National Zoo?

---

Please answer the following questions by inserting an X in the appropriate box:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	For office use only
1	I am visiting the zoo to see animals	1	2	3	4	5	V7
2	I am visiting the zoo to do something fun	1	2	3	4	5	V8
3	I am visiting the zoo to spend time with family	1	2	3	4	5	V9
4	I am visiting the zoo because it has a new attraction	1	2	3	4	5	V10
5	I am visiting the zoo because I want to be outdoors	1	2	3	4	5	V11
6	I am visiting the zoo because I want a family member to learn about the animals	1	2	3	4	5	V12
7	Zoos are valuable for educating people about animals	1	2	3	4	5	V13
8	Zoos are a valuable source of information on endangered animals	1	2	3	4	5	V14
9	Zoos are important in conserving wildlife	1	2	3	4	5	V15
10	Zoos are an important source of information on wildlife conservation	1	2	3	4	5	V16
11	Zoos should offer information to its visitors on how to conserve the environment	1	2	3	4	5	V17
12	Zoos conduct valuable research on conserving the environment	1	2	3	4	5	V18
13	Zoos offer a relaxing environment	1	2	3	4	5	V19
14	Zoos are a good place for spending time with family and friends	1	2	3	4	5	V20
15	Zoos are an important part of our community	1	2	3	4	5	V21
16	Zoos allow me to reconnect with the natural world	1	2	3	4	5	V22
17	Effectively maintained amenities such as toilets are essential for me to visit the zoo	1	2	3	4	5	V23
18	Accurate directional signage in the zoo is very important	1	2	3	4	5	V24
19	It is vital for the zoo to have a restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	V25
20	Zoo staff are knowledgeable about animals and the environment	1	2	3	4	5	V26

The End - Thank you for your willingness to complete this survey

## Exit Survey

Respondent number				
For office use only V1	1	2	3	4

Dear Respondent,

Your input and feedback are valuable to improve the services offered by the National Zoological Gardens. This is an anonymous and confidential survey. You cannot be identified and the answers you provide will be used for research purposes only.

**Time required:** Approximately 10 minutes.

**Please answer all the questions.** There is no right or wrong answer.

I voluntarily participate in this survey (Please tick ✓)  v2\_\_

### Demographics

(Please mark with X next to the corresponding option)

White	1	Black	2	Coloured	3	Indian	4	v3__
-------	---	-------	---	----------	---	--------	---	------

### Ages in years

(Please mark with X next to your corresponding age)

18-20	1	21-30	2	31-40	3	41-50	4	51-60	5	61-65	6	66+	7	v4__
-------	---	-------	---	-------	---	-------	---	-------	---	-------	---	-----	---	------

### Entry time

(Please mark with X next to the corresponding option)

08:00- 10:00	1	10:00- 12:00	2	12:00- 14:00	3	14:00- 16:00	4	16:00- 18:00	5	v5__
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### Nationality

Please mark with X next to the corresponding option

SA citizen	1	Other	2	v6__
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Which animals did you most like seeing at the zoo?

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What do you think is lacking at the zoo?

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Do you intend to visit the zoo again?

Yes	1	No	2	v7__
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Would you recommend the zoo to your friends and/or family?

Yes	1	No	2	v8__
-----	---	----	---	------

Please answer the following questions by inserting an X in the appropriate box:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	For office use only
1	There was adequate parking	1	2	3	4	5	V9
2	I could find my way around the zoo easily	1	2	3	4	5	V10
3	The zoo is not value for money	1	2	3	4	5	V11
4	The animal collection met my expectations	1	2	3	4	5	V12
5	The zoo staff were friendly on my arrival	1	2	3	4	5	V13
6	I could find all the animals I wanted to see	1	2	3	4	5	V14
7	The zoo map was difficult to understand	1	2	3	4	5	V15
8	I enjoyed my meal at the restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	V16
9	The directional signage was sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	V17
10	The animal collection impressed me	1	2	3	4	5	V18
11	The ablution facilities needed cleaning	1	2	3	4	5	V19
12	The ablution facilities were centrally located	1	2	3	4	5	V20
13	It was easy to find parking	1	2	3	4	5	V21
14	The restaurant served value-for-money meals	1	2	3	4	5	V22
15	The restaurant's meals were tasteless	1	2	3	4	5	V23
16	The animals were easy to see	1	2	3	4	5	V24
17	The animal collection is interesting	1	2	3	4	5	V25
18	The zoo was tidy	1	2	3	4	5	V26
19	I got my money's worth at the zoo	1	2	3	4	5	V27
20	The staff were courteous and helpful	1	2	3	4	5	V28
21	The educational signage at the enclosures was adequate	1	2	3	4	5	V29
22	The educational signage at the enclosures was correct	1	2	3	4	5	V30
23	I was able to spend quality time with my group	1	2	3	4	5	V31
24	I / My group was able to learn new things	1	2	3	4	5	V32
25	I / My group had enough interactions with the animals	1	2	3	4	5	V33
26	I got lost in the zoo	1	2	3	4	5	V34

Additional comments

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The End - Thank you for your willingness to complete this survey