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Motivators to visit the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa

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Abstract

Visitors have various motives for visiting a zoo. Information on these motives can be applied by zoo management to make informed decisions when developing a marketing strategy to ensure the success and future relevance of the zoo. This study has aimed to determine whether visitors are motivated to visit the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa for recreational or educational purposes, and whether their motives are geared towards their own benefit (intrinsic motives) or to the benefit of others (altruistic motives). The research was conducted by means of a quantitative survey. The results indicate that the respondents view recreational motives as more important than educational motives. In addition, more people visit the zoo to promote the welfare of others (altruistic orientation) than to have a self-directed zoo experience (intrinsic orientation). The findings suggest that the management of the zoological parks should ensure that the parks offer activities and experiences of recreational value for visitors. These activities should be communicated to the relevant target markets, in order to attract them to the zoo, which could contribute to the long-term survival and success of the zoo.

Key Words: education, recreation, motives, zoo, South Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Zoological parks are dependent on the financial support received from visitors for their long-term survival. It is, therefore, imperative for the management of such parks to know and understand what motivates and inspires the public to visit a zoo. It is also important to acknowledge that people have different reasons for visiting a zoo; and if their expectations are not met, the public interest and support would decrease over time. Therefore, in order to attract and satisfy visitors, marketers must attempt to understand and internalise visitors' needs (Ben-Dalia, Collins-Kreiner & Churchman, 2012).

Some visitors consider a visit to the zoo as a day for themselves: a day in which they can unwind in nature or broaden their knowledge of the different animal species (intrinsic motives). Other people visit the zoo for the sake of someone else, such as their children, family or friends, with whom they wish to spend time (altruistic motives). The main objective of most zoos, aquariums and museums is to educate visitors. Parents today are aware of the huge influence that knowledge plays in their children's lives, with many parents

feeling the need to explore new experiences with their children. A zoo is one such place, where children can extend their knowledge of animal species; but, it is also a place where families can spend quality time together, while relaxing and having fun (Turley, 2001).

The National Zoological Gardens of South Africa (NZG) were founded in 1899; and they are currently operating four sites in three provinces. The main site and headquarters are located in South Africa's capital city, Pretoria, in the form of an 85 hectare zoo (Kotze & Nxomani, 2011). Being the largest of Africa's zoological gardens, it is home to an extensive array of Southern African and exotic animals. Collectively, these sites house one of the largest animal collections in Africa, comprising 3117 specimens of 209 species of mammals, 1358 specimens of 202 species of birds, 3871 specimens of 190 species of fish, 388 specimens of four species of invertebrates, 309 specimens of 93 species of reptiles, as well as 44 specimens of seven species of amphibians (Showme, 2013). A reptile park and the largest inland marine aquarium further complement the collection (Joyce, 2006).
Determining the motives for visiting the zoo – whether recreational or educational, and whether for their own enjoyment or for family enjoyment – would enable zoos to develop persuasive communication campaigns, and to structure their entertainment accordingly. The next section deals with the problem identification and research objectives; this is followed by a review of the existing literature. The research methodology is described thereafter, followed by the research results. Finally, the managerial implications of the findings are presented.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

A zoological park is normally associated with learning about animals. This leads to the assumption that people visit zoos because they care about conservation, and wish to expand their knowledge. However, people may frequent the zoo to escape from their daily routine and to relax in nature. The findings from previous studies suggest that conservation and education may not be the visitors' main motives. A study investigating the motivation and social orientation of visitors to a zoo, conducted in Kansas, Texas, USA, indicated that people visit the zoo because for both recreational and educational reasons, and that people have altruistic, as well as intrinsic social motivations (Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999).

Little research is available on the motivational factors of South African visitors when visiting zoological parks. Therefore, this study aims to investigate people's recreational and educational motives, together with their intrinsic and altruistic social orientation, when visiting the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa. It is anticipated that by identifying the main drivers for visiting zoos, zoological parks could increase their patronage and improve their chances of long-term success. The objectives of this study are, thus, to determine:

- Whether recreation or education is the most important motive for visiting zoos; and
- Whether visitors go to the zoo for their own benefit (intrinsic motives), or for the benefit of others (altruistic motives).

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

During the buying decision-making process, a consumer goes through a number of phases, namely: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase, and post-purchase evaluation (Pride & Ferrell, 2010). A possible psychological influence on the decision-making process is motives (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). In the

literature, the motives and motivations are often associated synonymously with values. Needs as motives, indicate a 'subject' who is feeling a specific need, including a force driving the subject towards fulfilling the need. If motives can be qualified within these parameters, they become motivations. In order for an organisation to be successful, the product or service offerings should be based on an understanding of customer needs and motivations, as these would ultimately affect the satisfaction levels of consumers (Jewell & Crotts, 2001). Needs, values or attitudes are widely recognised as the predecessors of motives. Motivation refers to a process that leads people to behave in a certain way (Nicolaut, 2012).

In the literature, the relationships between these variables are summarized by depicting motivation as a process with needs, preferences, motives, desires and expectations. These all influence consumer behaviour (Gnoth, 1997). In the consumer behaviour literature, motivations represent individual internal forces that lead to action (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). Babin and Harris (2013) describe motivations as inner reasons or driving forces behind human actions; and these drive consumers to address real needs. Motivations do much to provide the intended reason for a consumer's actions. Within this context, the motivations of visitors to visit a zoo will be discussed.

Although most people associate the word 'zoo' with the concept of conservation, there are many other meanings associated with zoos (Anderson, Kelling, Pressley-Keough, Bloomsmith & Maple, 2003). For many, zoos are about learning about animals and reptiles or spending time in a natural environment (Ryan & Saward, 2004; Tribe, 2004). Many studies suggest the following three key motives of visitors to zoological parks: recreation, education and conservation (Fernandez, Tamborski, Pickens & Timberlake, 2009; Tomas, Crompton & Scott, 2003; Winter & Linke, 2008). Furthermore, people visit a zoo for their own benefit, or for the benefit of others (Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999). Morgan and Hodgkinson (1999) classified visitors, according to their primary motivation and social orientation.

Using this approach, visitors can be segmented into four quadrants, as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Classification of motives for zoo visits.

		PRIMARY MOTIVATION	
		Education	**Recreation**
SOCIAL ORIENTATION	**Intrinsic**		
	Altruistic		

Source: Morgan & Hodgkinson (1999).

Primary Motivation of Zoo Visitors

Many believe that the focus of zoos, museums and aquariums has always been on educating visitors about animals, which in turn encourages positive conservation attitudes (Anderson *et al.*, 2003; Fernandez *et al.*, 2009; Hancocks, 2001). Today, in contrast, zoos face the challenge of providing activities that educate visitors in an entertaining manner, also offering the benefits of family togetherness, as well as providing a 'wildlife experience' (Tomas *et al*., 2003). Interestingly, a number of studies found that children accounted for a very large proportion of zoo visitors (Catibog-Sinha, 2008; Ryan & Saward, 2004). Visitors' primary motives in terms of recreation and/or education will be discussed below.

Education versus Recreation as a Motive for Visiting the Zoo

Recreation is defined as "the activities people participate in for enjoyment when they are not working" (Hornby, 2009). Zoological parks are considered ideal locations for recreational enjoyment. Some people visit the zoo to relax and experience the tranquillity of the surroundings. Some studies support the statement that people primarily visit a zoo for enjoyment (Sickler & Fraser, 2009; Turley, 2001). In fact, many researchers report that relaxation is even more important to most zoo visitors (Hunter-Jones & Hayward, 1998; Ryan & Saward, 2004; Saayman & Slabbert, 2004; Sickler &Fraser, 2009; Smith, Broad & Weiler, 2008; Turley, 2001). Other studies have also categorised the zoo mainly as a place of relaxation, where one can break free from everyday life and spend time in a calm environment (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994; Tomas *et al.*, 2003).

Some research findings indicate that people have a more pleasant experience at zoos that incorporate the characteristics of a restorative environment (Pals, Steg, Siero & Van der Zee, 2009). This is an environment in which people feel relaxed, and where they can recharge, free from the stress of outside influences (Hartig, Evans, Jamner, Davis & Garling, 2003). It may thus be more beneficial for zoos to provide visitors with recreational activities where they could learn something, while having a good time, rather than providing purely educational activities (Tomas *et al*., 2003).

Hornby (2009) defines education as "a process of learning, training and teaching to improve knowledge and skills". One of the main purposes of zoological parks is to educate, more specifically to teach visitors, about the facility and its animals' behaviours and/or habitats (Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999). Prior research indicates that traditional zoo experiences focus on the sharing of knowledge; and in many cases, this is viewed as more important than recreation (Smith *et al*., 2008; Winter & Linke, 2008). Perhaps, the most important part of a zoo's educational provision is the opportunity for children and adults to observe real animals (Mason, 1999).

Thus, for many zoo visitors, education may not be the primary motive for visiting. Zoo visitors' intellectual motives (education) for visiting the zoo may not always be considered important, as it could be argued that with repeated visits to the zoo, the need for information is reduced. Once the information is obtained, repeat visitors would return either to relax, to take photos, or to enjoy time with their friends and family (Anderson *et al*., 2003; Ryan & Saward, 2004; Tomas *et al*., 2003). Some people prefer to learn informally by reviewing exhibit content, noticing detail, making comparisons, following instructions and reading explanatory text. More specifically, people may visit the zoo to see the animals, but they do not necessarily view the experience as being educational (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994). Many zoo visitors may thus experience education within the context of recreation; but they

may not consider the educational aspect as the primary catalyst for their visit (Ryan & Saward, 2004).

Even though education is deemed to be an important motivational factor for visiting a zoo, research shows more support for recreation as a motivational factor when visiting a zoo. It is, therefore, hypothesised that:

H_1: Zoo visitors regard recreational motives as more important than educational motives.

The Social Orientation of Zoo Visitors

Visitors to the zoo are often more concerned about the opportunity for social interaction; and they, therefore, consider zoos as places where groups can meet (Sickler & Fraser, 2009). It is worth noting that this type of visitor would probably be influenced by the social motive; for example, in the case of families. Having children might motivate parents to visit the zoo as a group, while other visitors usually frequent the zoo alone, to relax or to learn. The social behaviour of visitors to the zoo can be divided into intrinsic social orientation (for oneself), or altruistic social orientation (for others). These aspects will be discussed below.

Intrinsic social orientation: Intrinsic social orientation is a form of social behaviour that refers to people behaving in a certain way – for their own benefit and fulfilment – as opposed to that of others. In most cases, this is self-applied; and there is a 'direct relationship between the individual and the situation' (Hornby, 2009).

Some people use this opportunity to get away and find peace in a natural environment (Pals *et al*., 2009), where they can connect and identify with animals (Sickler & Fraser, 2009). They behave in this way because they have intrinsic motives – wanting to satisfy their own needs for recreation and relaxation (Sickler & Fraser, 2009).

Zoo environments can also stimulate a desire to travel, since visitors get the opportunity to encounter various species in their own authentic environment (Benbow, 1995). This could be an opportunity (and intrinsic motivation) to educate oneself and learn more about animals and nature. Some research findings indicate that visitors' attitudes and behaviours are not necessarily correlated (Winter & Linke, 2008). For example, certain visitors claim that they visit the zoo for recreational purposes; but visitors' main role is conservation and the support thereof. This implies that zoo visits provide them with moral justification, and make them feel less guilty about their way of living. This is also considered intrinsic social behaviour, as it satisfies one's own needs, and not merely those of others. Visitors thus experience fulfilment by supporting the zoo, and thereby indirectly supporting the conservation of rare and endangered animals (Smith *et al.*, 2008).

Altruistic social orientation: Hornby (2009) describes altruistic social orientation as caring more about the needs and happiness of other people than one's own. Research by Holzer, Scott and Bixler (1998) showed that visitors' motivations for being at the zoo were, in order of importance: family togetherness, enjoyment, novelty seeking, education and relaxation. Parents thus see the zoo as an ideal environment in which to broaden their children's knowledge of wildlife; while sharing exciting experiences with them (Milan & Wourms, 1992). The social experience is thus important, whether it is just the family as a group, or others in a group. Parents take pleasure in seeing their children enjoy themselves (recreation) and observe how they increase their knowledge (education) first-hand (Sickler & Fraser, 2009).

Various research studies support the findings that altruistic recreation, for example giving the family an opportunity to spend quality time together while relaxing and having fun, should be viewed as an important motive for visiting a zoo (Andereck & Caldwell, 1994; Turley, 2001). In addition, education is just as important, because parents also visit the zoo for the educational advantages that their children could thereby gain (Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999).

From this discussion, it is clear that many people (especially parents as the target market) tend to consider the happiness of others (such as children) before considering their own needs. It is, therefore, posited that:

H_2: Zoo visitors attach more importance to altruistic recreation as a motive than to intrinsic recreation as a motive.
H_3: Zoo visitors attach more importance to altruistic education as a motive than to intrinsic education as a motive.
H_4: Zoo visitors attach more importance to altruistic education as a motive than to intrinsic recreation as a motive.
H_5: Zoo visitors attach more importance to altruistic recreation as a motive than to intrinsic education as a motive.
H_6: Zoo visitors attach more importance to altruistic education as a motive than to altruistic recreation as a motive.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Data Collection

The study was conducted at the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa situated in Pretoria. It is the largest zoo in South Africa; and the only one with national status. The Pretoria zoo also accommodates a reptile park and the largest inland marine aquarium (Showme, 2013).

The population for the proposed study included all adult visitors (18 years and older) to the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa, during a one-month period. Only one member from each visiting group was selected to answer the questions. Quota sampling was used to select the participants from all phases of the visitor's life stage, including people with no children, couples with children, single parents with children, and grandparents with their grandchildren. Visitors were intercepted at the zoo entrance by the researchers, where they were asked to participate in the study by answering a 10-minute questionnaire. A sample of 200 completed questionnaires was thereby obtained.

Pre-testing was conducted among 10 respondents at the zoo. The pre-test results did not indicate any problems with the questions in the questionnaire; and no changes were made to the measurement instrument. The data were collected by means of a quantitative survey on seven different occasions from 9:00 to 12:00, and 12:00 to 17:00, in order to fill the quotas. The researchers observed that during weekdays, most visitors included school groups or individual visitors, with weekends mostly involving family groups. No incentives were offered to encourage the respondents to participate.

Measurement

A 5-point Likert scale with 26 scale items was replicated from a study by Morgan and Hodgkinson (1999), in order to measure the main constructs. The scale consisted of four sub-dimensions, measuring the following constructs: intrinsic education, altruistic education, intrinsic recreation and altruistic recreation. All the items were measured on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). No scale items were reverse-scored.

Composite scale scores were used to calculate the average of the four sub-dimensions. The higher a respondent's

composite score on a sub-dimension, the more s/he identified with a certain motive (a high composite score is 3 and above, while a low composite score is below 3). The reliabilities of the sub-scales were tested using Cronbach's alpha. A lower limit of 0.70 was set for the Cronbach's alpha, as suggested by Nunnally (1978).

THE FINDINGS

Descriptive Statistics

The respondent profile included visitors in the following lifestyle categories: couples with children (42%), visitors with no children (32.5%), single parents with children (15.5%), and grandparents with children (10%). Most groups included five or more people (40%); and the majority of the respondents comprised females (64.5%).

The objectives of the study related to the respondents' motives for visiting the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa. The mean (M) scores of the 26 scale items (and four sub-scales) are presented in Table 1. Higher mean scores indicate a higher importance that visitors attach to the specific motive. The respective Cronbach's alphas are also presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Scale items and summary statistics at the Pretoria Zoo (N = 200)

SCALE ITEMS AND SUB-DIMENSIONS	M
Composite Education Score	**3.00**
Intrinsic Education (Cronbach's alpha: 0.88)	**2.52**
To benefit myself, educationally speaking.	2.70
To learn about animals in general by myself.	2.64
To learn about endangered species.	2.49
To learn about a specific animal(s).	2.25
Altruistic Education (Cronbach's alpha: 0.91)	**3.47**
To allow others to learn about animals in general.	3.73
To benefit others, educationally speaking.	3.64
To allow others to learn about endangered species.	3.28
To allow others to learn about a specific animal(s).	3.24
Composite Recreation Score	**3.76**
Intrinsic Recreation (Cronbach's alpha: 0.71)	**3.51**
To have fun.	4.35
To relax and unwind.	4.35
To be outdoors in nature.	4.15
To do something different in my free time.	4.05
To get away from my regular routine.	3.49
To walk around because it would be good for me.	3.32
To photograph nature.	3.28
To get out and explore a new area by myself.	2.71
To spend some quality time by myself.	1.85

Altruistic Recreation (Cronbach's alpha: 0.84)	**4.01**
To spend some quality time with others in my group.	4.57
To allow others in my group to have fun.	4.49
To allow others in my group to relax and unwind.	4.48
To allow others in my group to be outdoors in nature.	4.28
To help others break away from their regular routine.	4.10
To show others something different to do in their free time.	4.03
To get others out and help them explore a new area.	3.94
To show others that walking around would be good for them.	3.31
To allow others in my group to photograph nature.	2.89

From Table 1, it may be observed that the sub-scales can be regarded as reliable, as they all had a Cronbach's alpha value of more than 0.7. These values are also in line with those reported by Morgan and Hodgkinson (1999).

Of all the motivational items, the most important motivational item (highest mean score) was "to spend some quality time with others in my group" (M = 4.57). The least important motivation was "to spend some quality time by myself" (M = 1.85). On average, altruistic recreation (M = 4.01) was regarded as the most important overall motivational factor, followed by intrinsic recreation (M = 3.51). The least important overall motivational factor was intrinsic education (M = 2.52). The descriptive statistics of this study are in line with those of other similar studies conducted in different contexts and countries.

Hypothesis Testing

All the hypotheses are one-tailed (directional) hypotheses, and were tested at a 5 per cent level of significance (i.e., α = 0.05). The appropriate parametric significance test for Hypothesis 1 is the paired-sample t-test. If a significant result was found for Hypothesis 1, then the remainder of the hypotheses would be tested to determine where the differences lie with regard to intrinsic and altruistic motivation. For this, the Friedman test was used to detect any differences between the paired groups.

The result of the paired sample t-test for Hypothesis 1 shows a significant difference ($p < 0.000$), and thus support for Hypothesis 1. This means that the respondents consider recreational motives to be more important than educational motives when deciding to visit a zoo. This highlights the fact that visitors to the zoo are there mainly to relax, unwind and have fun, and not necessarily to become educated on the life, habitat and history of the animals. This finding supports various other studies, which also reported that recreation seems to be a stronger motivator than education (Ryan & Saward, 2004; Sickler & Fraser, 2009; Tomas *et al*., 2003).

The results of Hypotheses 2 to 6 are presented in Table 2; and they show an overall significance at $p < 0.000$ (except for H_4), which indicates that significant differences exist.

Table 2. Friedman test results

Classification of zoo visits	Mean value	Standard deviation	Friedman test statistic	p-value
Intrinsic Education	2.5225[a]	1.1897		
Altruistic Education	3.4725[b]	1.2633		
Intrinsic Recreation	3.5061[b]	0.6773		
Altruistic Recreation	4.0106[c]	0.7711		
			6.30	0.0000

[a] and/or [b]: The results of the *post hoc* Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests are indicated with [a] and/or [b]. All mean values containing the same letters (for example, [a]) indicate that the groups do not differ significantly from one another. All mean values containing different letters (for example, an [a] or [b]) indicate that these groups differ significantly from one another.

The *post hoc* tests (reported in Table 2) reveal where the differences between the educational and recreational motives lie. The result for Hypothesis 2 indicates that the respondents attach more importance to altruistic recreation than to intrinsic recreation, thus supporting Hypothesis 2. Altruistic recreation measured the highest of the four main motivational factors (in terms of the mean value), with the item "to spend quality time with others in my group" scoring the highest of all motivational items in the study (M = 4.57). The second highest scoring item was "to allow others in my group to have fun". It is interesting to note that hardly any of the respondents considered spending quality time on their own as being important, hence the stronger association with altruistic recreational motives.

The result of Hypothesis 3 shows that the respondents attach more importance to altruistic education as a motive for visiting the zoo than to intrinsic education. The most important altruistic educational item was "to allow others to learn about animals in general"; this was followed by "to benefit others, educationally speaking". The hypothesis test suggests that respondents do not visit a zoo for their own benefit, but rather because they want others to learn something, have fun, or simply spend quality time together. It is common for parents, for example, to educate their children, while they are present to join in the fun.

The result of Hypothesis 4 shows that there is no significant difference between altruistic education and intrinsic recreation as a motive for visiting the zoo. This implies that zoo visitors are motivated equally by educational reasons as for social reasons. The result of Hypothesis 5 shows that respondents attach more importance to altruistic recreation as a motive for visiting the zoo than to intrinsic education. Altruistic recreation scored an average mean of 4.01, compared to 2.52 for intrinsic education. The huge difference in these mean scores clearly indicates that zoo visitors are motivated by spending quality time with others and not just for personal gain, such as learning about animals.

The result of Hypothesis 6 shows that respondents consider altruistic recreation as a more important motive for visiting the zoo, compared to altruistic education.

These results suggest that while zoo visitors enjoy being in the company of a group, they are motivated to relax and have fun with their group members, rather than merely being there to learn as a group. The motivation ranges from breaking away from regular routine – in order to have quality time with members of their group.

It is worth noting that for some visitors to the zoo, this could affect his/her social orientation (altruistic and intrinsic). Nearly 68% of the respondents in this study visited the zoo with children. This may explain the stronger preference for an altruistic orientation, as these adults care more about the needs and happiness of the children than their own, irrespective of whether they are there for the education of the children, the recreational outing, or both.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Zoological parks cannot survive over the long term, unless they satisfy the needs of their visitors. When developing marketing strategies (specifically positioning, target market selection and integrated marketing communication strategy) for zoological parks, management should take cognisance of the results of the study. When marketing the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa, it might, for example, be more effective to focus communication on the recreational value of the zoo visit, rather than on the educational benefits. It is normal for a zoo to want visitors to learn about the zoo and its animals; but care should be taken to not assume that all visitors necessarily want to be educated. The findings do not suggest that learning about animals in general is unimportant; but it is clear that visitors would prefer to learn in a more recreational and informal way. Thus, educational facts should be communicated in a way that adds to the enjoyment of a day in the zoo.

The message from this study's findings is that, with or without education, the recreational aspect of the visit is more important to visitors. If the aim is to educate the public, zoo management should use educational methods that are presented in an entertaining way. Activities with a strong educational emphasis may not be appealing to visitors, since the findings clearly indicate that zoo visitors are not highly motivated to learn. However, careful consideration must be given to designing and promoting such activities. Examples combining recreation with education could include exhibits, where people can touch objects, artefacts or animals (the latter often referred to as 'petting zoos'), interactive guided tours, or demonstrations with live animals. The zoo should thus aim to make learning as interesting and entertaining as possible – for children and adults alike.

The findings also indicate that the main social orientation for a zoo visit is altruistic, thus visiting to serve the needs and happiness of other people. Whether this is to allow others to have fun (recreational) or learn more (educational), the social orientation is to ensure that others benefit from their visit to the zoo. Management should thus focus their marketing communication strategies by highlighting the opportunity the zoo offers to have fun, relax, unwind and spend quality time with other people. The focus should be placed on family or group activities that can be organised in the zoo. For example, the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa offers visitors a zoo choo-choo tractor train that can take family members with smaller children on a ride through parts of the zoo. It also offers cable-car rides that provide a panoramic view of the zoo and the surrounding city. Other recreational activities the zoo can consider are a zoo club, holiday programmes, opportunities for children's parties, camping tours, night tours and friends of the zoo fun run/walk.

All these activities should result in attracting more visitors to the zoo; and they would ultimately lead to learning more about the animals and conservation, and having fun while doing so, thereby addressing the altruistic social orientation for ensuring the happiness of the group. More importantly, these activities should be highlighted in the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa's communication to the public. By utilising an integrated marketing communication approach, the zoo would ensure that the public is aware of the recreational activities offered there.

An understanding of the reasons people visit zoological parks could guide marketing activities to attract visitors, and to satisfy their needs. Developing more recreational group park activities should attract more visitors to the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa. Such an understanding could, perhaps, provide the silver lining for such parks in the global economic and political set-up, and ensure the long-term survival and success of the National Zoological Gardens of South Africa.

CONCLUSIONS

The main motivator to visit the zoo was identified as altruistic recreation. This indicates that most visitors want to relax and have fun with other people. Addressing this need should become part and parcel of the zoo's marketing strategy. These results were very similar to those of other studies in a similar environment. Further research is suggested to determine the zoo visitor profiles and individuals' identity-related motivations for visiting. Conservation, and its role as a motivator, could also be investigated in future research.

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