

VISITOR'S PREFERENCES AND PERCEPTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF VADODARA ZOO

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Abstract: The aim of the study is to find out preferences and perception of zoo visitors. The study was conducted in Sayaji baug zoo, Vadodara during the period on 2 June to 9 June 2019. Data was collected using a Close ended questionnaire. 100 respondents randomly selected from zoo. Data has been analysed by descriptive statistics (percentage). The result indicated that visitors visit the purpose of watching animals and pleasure. Visitors indicate that 45% of them were extremely satisfied with provision of code of conduct and guideline. The recommendation is made that the zoo authority makes more sanitation block, canteen and cafeteria. And space for vehicle garden should be given.

Keyword: Tourism, preference, perception, visitors, zoo.

Introduction:

The tourism industry as the fastest growing industry gained importance and entails transfer of money through the movement of tourists. Tourism sector has the potential to generate one of the highest returns on investments and providing large employment opportunities. Because of all this benefit of tourism shows that there is a greater need for improvement in the tourism. The world tourism organization defines tourism, in term which go “beyond the common perception of tourism as being limited to holiday activity only “as people “travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes”, this definition make clear the concept that tourism is to stay in different environment and to stay for the purpose of business, leisure and for refreshment.

Today zoos are important segment of the tourism industry being one of the most frequented tourist attraction as they. Zoos are an important and popular tourist's attraction. Zoos main purpose is conservation, education, recreation and entertainment. Zoo is not only as tourists or visitor attractions but also as leisure facilities (Turley, 1999). The zoo is by no means a recent aspect of human activity. Man has been arranging animals in captivity and on display- either as object of worship or as a mark of social status- 4500 years, since the time of ancient Egypt (Bodstock, 1993).

Review of Literature:

Visitor's socio- economic characteristics could also play an important role in their perception (Fiby, 2007). Wildlife visitors in the state have definite animal preferences which were influenced significantly by age, occupation and sex (Adefalu, L.L, Omotesho, K.F. and Alao, O.S, 2015). Zoos have also educational goals and provide opportunities for environmental education and through their visual landscape features as one of the most part of learning occur by seeing (Serap Yilmaz, Sema Mumcu and Ali Ozbilen 2010). Gender has also been confirmed to significantly influence animal preference among zoo visitors (Kellert and Berry, 1987).

Objective of the study:

- To find out preferences and perceptions of the zoo visitors.

Study Area:

The present study was conducted at the Sayaji Baug zoo, Vadodara. The inspiration of a zoo in Vadodara came from H. H. Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad 3 - a great visionary ruler of Vadodara. It was way back in 1875 when a tract of land on the bank of river Vishwamitri, on the outskirts of the city was chosen by the Maharaja to develop vast garden and a zoo. The Maharaja donated his own private collection of Indian and Exotic Animals to the zoo and on 8th January 1879, the park was declared open to the public. Since then Sayaji baug zoo has a rich history of wildlife heritage, and has evolved as an institution for research and education. The zoo has a variety of animals and serves as a place of entertainment for children by having toy train in addition to a play park.

Research Methodology:

I used closed-ended questionnaire for this study. Questionnaire was handed over to the visitor's in zoo. Questionnaire survey was done on weekend. The questionnaires were prepared in both English and Gujarati to overcome the language bias. For data collection, survey was conducted in zoo during 2 June to 9 June 2019. 100 respondents randomly selected to zoo. For data analysis, descriptive statistics were used.

Result and Discussion:**Table no.1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents:**

	Variable	Number of visitors	Frequency
Gender	Male	57	57%
	Female	43	43%
		100	
Age	Under 18	16	16%
	19 to 29	52	52%
	30 to 39	19	19%
	40 to 49	9	9%
	50 to 59	4	4%
	60 and above	0	0%
		100	100%
Language	English	7	7%
	Hindi	9	9%
	Gujarati	30	30%
	All above	54	54%
		100	100%
Education	Level of high school	33	33%
	Graduate	30	30%
	Post graduate	20	20%
	Other	17	17%
		100	100%

Occupation	Study	40	40%
	Service	19	19%
	Business	26	26%
	House Keeping	14	14%
	Retired	1	1%
		100	100%
Income (monthly)	Below Rs. 5000	22	22%
	Rs.5000 to 10000	26	26%
	Rs. 10000 to 15000	26	26%
	Above Rs. 15000	26	26%
		100	100%

(Source: field work, 2019)

Table no. 1 shows that the extent of male visitors is more in the zoo in comparison to the female visitors. 52% respondents in the age group of 19 to 29 years and 16% respondents in the age group of under 18 in the zoo. 54% visitors has been know Hindi, Gujarati, and English language, while 30% visitors know Gujarati language. 40% respondents were student while the remaining Business man. 26% visitors possess Rs. 5000 to 10000 monthly income, 26% visitors possess Rs. 10000 to 15000 monthly income and 26% visitors possess above Rs. 15000 monthly income.

Table no. 2: Visitors Opined Regarding Preferences:

Preference	Variable	No. of visitors	Frequency
Purpose of study	Excursion tour	20	20%
	Seeing animals	32	32%
	Know about nature	13	13%
	Pleasure trip	35	35%
	Total	100	100%
With whom do you visit a zoo normally	Alone	7	7%
	With a member of family	47	47%
	With an organized group	6	6%
	With tourist party	1	1%
	Friend	34	34%
	Guests	5	5%
	Total	100	100%
How often do you visit zoo	First time	26	26%
	Second time	19	19%
	Third time	12	12%
	More than three time	43	43%
	Total	100	100%
Would you like to visit zoo frequently	Yes	90	90%
	No	10	10%
	Total	100	100%

When do you visit zoo	Visit some place as a tourists	41	41%
	With some guest at home	27	27%
	During any particular festival	11	11%
	Special event at zoo	21	21%
	Total	100	100%

(Source: field work, 2019)

Table no. 2 shows that 35% visitors prefer to visit zoo the purpose of pleasure/ leisure and 32% visitors visit the visit zoo for watching animals. Visitors who visit the zoo with their family member are 47% and 44% visitors visit the zoo with their friend. 43% visitors visit the zoo more than three times and 26% respondents visit the zoo first time. 90% visitors said that they like to visit zoo frequently. 41% visitors visit the zoo when visit some place as a tourists.

Table no. 3: Respondents Opined Regarding Perception:

Perception	Variable	No. of visitors	Frequency
Enough space for vehicle parking	Strongly agree	10	10%
	Agree	12	12%
	Neutral	37	37%
	Strongly disagree	22	22%
	Disagree	19	19%
	Total	100	100%
Proper sanitation facilities in the zoo area	Strongly agree	30	30%
	Agree	12	12%
	Neutral	17	17%
	Strongly disagree	33	33%
	Disagree	8	8%
	Total	100	100%
Provision of local tourism services are satisfactory(canteen, cafeteria)	Strongly agree	20	53%
	Agree	14	34%
	Neutral	34	8%
	Strongly disagree	22	2%
	Disagree	10	3%
	Total	100	100%
Provision of visitors' code of conduct and guidelines	Strongly agree	53	53%
	Agree	28	28%
	Neutral	9	9%
	Strongly disagree	6	6%
	Disagree	4	4%
	Total	100	100%

(Source: field work, 2019)

Table no. 3 shows that 37% visitors are neutral for space vehicle parking and 22% visitors believe that there is no enough space for parking. 30 zoo visitors agree about proper sanitation facilities in zoo area and 33 % visitors believe that there are no proper sanitation facilities in zoo. 34% visitors are neutral and 22% visitors believe that provision of local tourism services are not satisfactory (canteen). 53% visitors are strongly agreed with provision of visitors' code of conduct and guidelines.

Conclusion:

A visitor attraction is a vital component of any country's tourism industry, as they stimulate travel up destinations. (Alarape, A.A, Yager, G.O and Salman, K.K, 2015). The Sayaji Baug zoo is a good destination for picnic and recreation. Most of visitors age between 19 to 29 years in the zoo. Students are the chief patrons of the zoo often preferred group tours because for education. Majority of visitors visit the zoo preferred with a family member, special with children for seeing animals and pleasure. Visitors indicate that 45% of them were extremely satisfied with entry fee and provision of code of conduct and guideline. Large parts of visitors are concern about sanitation block and cafeteria and lack of animals and bird create lack of interest to repeat their visit. Majority of visitors believe that there is no enough space for vehicle parking. This study recommended that the zoo authority should provide canteen and cafeteria facility, pure and safe drinking water inside zoo. Facility of zoo guide who give information about the animals and birds should provide.

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