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**ASIA-PACIFIC ZOOS IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLES
AND FUNCTIONS OF ZOOS**

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

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ABSTRACT

The advent of the anthropocene accentuates the transformation of ecosystems on a global scale. This study responds to these concerns by assessing the role and function of 21st century zoos in general and the Asia-Pacific zoos in particular. The lack of information on key zoo stakeholders (visitors, staff members, corporate sponsors and zoo associates) is significant in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly in Asia, where there are complexities that may stem from cultural and societal differences. Furthermore, current literature is predominantly based upon Western research and case studies, which rarely take into account the complexities and differences of Asia. This research considers the diversity of the Asia-Pacific region by examining the perceptions and attitudes of the four groups of key stakeholders.

Zoos in six countries across the Asia-Pacific were visited over a period of six months to March 2013 in order to assess the diversity of the study region. A literature survey and meta-analysis of 138 zoo-based publications was employed to create a matrix table of themes, stakeholders, and research outcomes. These results were used to design survey instruments directed at stakeholder groups as well as provide a framework against which the results of this study can be compared and contrasted. Quantitative analysis such as Principal Component Analysis, Spearman's Rho and Kruskal-Wallis H test were used to analyse the results. The face-to-face and computer-based instruments were augmented with the use of a reflective diary and personal work experience to triangulate and validate the research results.

The results show that individual zoos across the world are facing similar challenges. Differences in educational backgrounds and socio-cultural norms within the Asia-Pacific region are reflected in stakeholders' experiences, perceptions, and evaluations of zoos. The results show that there are many differences amongst Asia-Pacific zoo practices, visitor satisfaction, and stakeholder participation and these differences would make it extremely difficult to coordinate activities at a regional level to give them a single voice with a single agenda.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. BACKGROUND	1
1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT	2
1.2.1 AIM.....	2
1.3. OBJECTIVES	2
1.4. CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH.....	3
1.5. SCOPE AND SCALE	3
1.6. RESEARCH DESIGN AND PARTICIPANTS.....	4
1.7. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS.....	5
1.8. FIELDWORK PREPARATION.....	6
1.8.1 ATTIRE	7
1.8.2 LANGUAGE	7
1.8.3 LOGISTICS	7
1.8.4 ACCOMMODATION	8
1.9. LIMITATIONS	8
1.9.1 GENDER DISPARITY	8
1.9.2 LANGUAGE BARRIERS	9
1.9.3 TRANSLATION LIMITATIONS	11
1.9.4 OPERATIONAL CONCERNS	11
1.9.5 NATURAL DISASTERS	11
1.9.6 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE	11
1.9.7 CORPORATE SPONSORS AND ZOO ASSOCIATES	12
1.10. THESIS OUTLINE	12
CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND	15
2.1. INTRODUCTION.....	15
2.2. ASIA-PACIFIC	15
2.2.1 DIFFERENT VALUES	18
2.3. HONG KONG, SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION REGION (PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA)	19
2.3.1 STUDY ZOO ONE: OCEAN PARK.....	20

2.4. INDONESIA	21
2.4.1 STUDY ZOO TWO: TAMAN SAFARI	22
2.5. MALAYSIA	22
2.5.1 STUDY ZOO THREE: ZOO NEGARA	23
2.6. NEW ZEALAND	24
2.6.1 STUDY ZOO FOUR: AUCKLAND ZOO	25
2.7. THE PHILIPPINES	25
2.7.1 STUDY ZOO FIVE: ZOOBIC SAFARI	27
2.8. THAILAND	27
2.8.1 STUDY ZOO SIX: KHAO KHEOW OPEN ZOO	28
2.9. CONCLUSION	28
CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE SURVEY	31
3.1. INTRODUCTION	31
3.2. EVOLUTION OF ZOOS	32
3.3. THE MODERN ZOO	34
3.4. STAKEHOLDERS	36
3.4.1 VISITORS	37
3.4.2 STAFF MEMBERS	38
3.4.3 CORPORATE SPONSORS	40
3.4.4 ZOO ASSOCIATES	41
3.5. CONCLUSION	42
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS	45
4.1. INTRODUCTION	45
4.2. RESEARCH DESIGN	45
4.3. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN	46
4.3.1 META-ANALYSIS – MATRIX TABLE	48
4.4. SELECTION OF STUDY SITES	49
4.5. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR RESPONDENTS	50
4.6. PILOT STUDY	51
4.7. QUESTIONNAIRES	52
4.7.1 VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE	52

4.7.2	STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE	52
4.7.3	CORPORATE SPONSOR QUESTIONNAIRE	53
4.7.4	ZOO ASSOCIATE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	53
4.8.	TRANSLATION PROCESS.....	54
4.9.	QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION PROCEDURES.....	55
4.9.1	VISITOR QUESTIONNAIRE	56
4.9.2	STAFF MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE	58
4.9.3	CORPORATE SPONSOR QUESTIONNAIRE	59
4.9.4	ZOO ASSOCIATE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	59
4.10.	DATA MANAGEMENT	59
4.11.	STATISTICAL SOFTWARE	60
4.12.	DESCRIPTIVE DATA ANALYSIS	60
4.13.	QUANTITATIVE ANALYSES.....	60
4.14.	QUALITATIVE ANALYSES	62
4.14.1	REFLECTIVE DIARY	63
4.15.	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PROCESS.....	65
4.16.	CONCLUSION	66
CHAPTER FIVE:	RESULTS	67
5.1.	INTRODUCTION.....	67
5.2.	VISITOR STAKEHOLDERS.....	67
5.2.1	RESPONSE RATES.....	68
5.2.2	VISITOR DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	70
5.2.3	CONCEPTUAL THEMES.....	73
5.2.4	STATISTICAL THEMES: VISITORS.....	77
5.2.5	FURTHER ANALYSIS: VISITORS	88
5.2.6	OVERALL SATISFACTION.....	90
5.2.7	VISITORS: SUMMARY	90
5.2.8	QUESTION EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS	91
5.3.	STAFF MEMBER STAKEHOLDERS	92
5.3.1	RESPONSE RATES.....	93
5.3.2	STAFF DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE.....	95
5.3.3	CONCEPTUAL THEMES.....	98
5.3.4	STATISTICAL THEMES: STAFF MEMBERS.....	104
5.3.5	FURTHER ANALYSIS	113

5.3.6	STAFF MEMBERS: SUMMARY	115
5.3.7	QUESTION EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS	115
5.4.	CORPORATE SPONSOR STAKEHOLDERS	116
5.4.1	CONCEPTUAL THEMES	118
5.4.2	THEMATIC ANALYSIS	121
5.4.3	CORPORATE SPONSORS: SUMMARY	122
5.4.4	QUESTION EXCLUSION FROM ANALYSIS	122
5.5.	ZOO ASSOCIATE STAKEHOLDERS	122
5.5.1	CONCEPTUAL THEMES	123
5.5.2	THEMATIC ANALYSIS	126
5.5.3	ZOO ASSOCIATES: SUMMARY	127
5.6.	CONCLUSION	127
 CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION		 129
6.1.	INTRODUCTION	129
6.2.	VISITOR ENGAGEMENT	130
6.2.1	IDENTIFY VISITORS	133
6.2.2	RESPOND TO VISITORS' EXPECTATIONS	134
6.2.3	ADOPT COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY	137
6.3.	CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION OF SPECIES AND HABITAT	138
6.3.1	SHOW-CASING CONSERVATION-FRIENDLY BEHAVIOURS	142
6.3.2	DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN PARTNERSHIPS	144
6.4.	STAFF ENGAGEMENT	145
6.4.1	HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT	147
6.4.2	SUPPORTIVE AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP	150
6.4.3	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	152
6.5.	ANIMAL MANAGEMENT STANDARDS	154
6.5.1	ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES	154
6.6.	INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ANIMALS	157
6.6.1	NATURALISTIC ANIMAL EXHIBITS	157
6.7.	RESEARCH PROGRAMMES	160
6.7.1	SUPPORT RESEARCH	161
6.7.2	PROMOTE GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS FOR RESEARCHERS	165
6.8.	COMMERCIAL VIABILITY	166
6.8.1	FINANCIAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	167

6.8.2	MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS	168
6.9.	CONCLUSION	170
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		171
7.1.1	BROAD GLOBAL ISSUES	177
7.1.2	REGIONAL AND LOCAL ISSUES	178
7.2.	RECOMMENDATIONS	181
7.3.	FUTURE RESEARCH	183
7.4.	CONCLUSION	184
CHAPTER EIGHT: REFERENCES		185
APPENDIX A: MATRIX FRAMEWORK FOR THE META-ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE THAT INFORMED THE SURVEY INSTRUMENTS FOR THIS RESEARCH.....		205
APPENDIX B: VISITORS RESPONSE RATES		295
DAILY VISITORS RESPONSE RATES FOR ALL STUDY SITES		296
APPENDIX C: SURVEY INSTRUMENTS (ENGLISH)		297
VISITOR SURVEY		297
STAFF MEMBER SURVEY		301
CORPORATE SPONSOR SURVEY		305
ZOO ASSOCIATE SURVEY		309
APPENDIX D: ETHICS APPROVAL		313
MASSEY UNIVERSITY HUMAN ETHICS (LOW RISK NOTIFICATION)		313
APPENDIX E: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSE IN PERCENTAGES		315
DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM NEW ZEALAND.		316
DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM INDONESIA .		318
DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM MALAYSIA..		320

DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM THE PHILIPPINES	322
DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM THAILAND...	324
DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM HONG KONG, SAR	326
DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM NEW ZEALAND	328
DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM INDONESIA	330
DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM MALAYSIA	332
DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM THE PHILIPPINES	334
DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM THAILAND	336
DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF MEMBERS RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES FROM HONG KONG, SAR	338

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1. Summary of the Chinese language variations used and encountered in Hong Kong.....	9
Table 2.1. Area size of protected and total land in case study countries in the Asia-Pacific region.....	17
Table 2.2 Key characteristics of each case study zoo in this research and their country of origin.	29
Table 4.1. Conceptual themes extrapolated from the body of literature for each stakeholder group. The full matrix from which these themes derived is provided in Appendix A.....	49
Table 5.1. The analytical methods adopted to examine the role and functions of zoo as perceived by visitors in the Asian-pacific region.....	68
Table 5.2. The response rates in percentages of visitor questionnaires, categorised by country.....	69
Table 5.3. The demographic variables of visitors' responses in percentages, categorised by the study zoos in their respective countries (HK: Hong Kong, IN: Indonesia, MY: Malaysia, NZ: New Zealand, PH: Philippines, TH: Thailand, ALL: All countries).....	70
Table 5.4. Percentage of visitors' self-identified religion at each study zoo in their respective countries.	72
Table 5.5. Percentage distribution of visitors' with 'strongly agree' responses regarding statements surrounding their motivation, perceptions, behaviours, and expectations at each study zoo in their respective countries. (Qs ¹ : Question number, NZ: New Zealand, IN: Indonesia, MY: Malaysia, PH: The Philippines, TH: Thailand, HK: Hong Kong, ALL: All case study zoos). ..	74
Table 5.6. Percentage of variance for each of the seven components extrapolated using Principal Component Analysis. Each component groups the statements that explain the variance of visitor responses in the data.	78
Table 5.7. The list of visitor questionnaire statements, grouped by the components calculated using Principal Components Analysis. (T: Refers to the corresponding conceptual themes from Table 5.5, and Q: Question number from the visitor questionnaire). Shaded columns represent the corresponding component number that each statement belongs in.....	80
Table 5.8. Spearman's rho correlation coefficient values reflecting the strength of the relationship between demographic variables of visitors and each component ¹ for all six study zoos.	84
Table 5.9. Thematic grouping of visitors' reasons for visiting the zoo (Question 51). ..	89

Table 5.10. Percentage distribution for questions 49, 52, and 52 from visitor questionnaire per study zoo’s country (Y: Yes. N: No, M: Missing data)...	90
Table 5.11. The analytical methods adopted to examine the role and functions of zoo as perceived by staff members in the Asian-pacific region.....	93
Table 5.12. Total staff questionnaires from each study zoo in their respective countries. (Employment numbers include regular volunteers, casual staff, and permanent staff members).....	94
Table 5.13. Percentage distribution of staff members by demographic characteristics from each study zoo and all zoos combined (HK: Hong Kong, SAR, IN: Indonesia, MY: Malaysia. NZ: New Zealand, PH: Philippines, TH: Thailand, ALL: All study zoos).	96
Table 5.14. Percentage distribution of staff members’ with ‘strongly agree’ responses regarding statements surrounding their motivation, perceptions, behaviours, and expectations per case study sites in their respective countries (Qs: Question number, NZ: New Zealand, IN: Indonesia, MY: Malaysia, PH: The Philippines, TH: Thailand, HK: Hong Kong, ALL: All case study zoos).	100
Table 5.15. Percentage of variance for each of the eight components extrapolated using Principal Component Analysis. Each component groups the statements that explain the variance of staff member responses in the data.	104
Table 5.16. Statistical themes: Statements from staff member’s questionnaire grouped into the eight components as extracted using Principal Component Analysis. (T: Conceptual themes extrapolation from Table 5.15; No: Question number from questionnaire).	106
Table 5.17. Spearman’s rho correlation coefficient values reflecting the strength of the relationship between demographic variables of staff members and each component for all six study zoos.....	110
Table 5.18. The top ten most rewarding aspects of staff members’ job, categorised under each study zoo in their respective countries. These aspects were coded as follows: (1) working with or being close to wildlife; (2) interaction with the public/visitors; (3) interaction with fellow colleagues; (4) contributing to conservation efforts; (5) physical environment of the zoo; (6) financial incentives; (7) intrinsic factors; (8) development; (9) miscellaneous; and (10) no comment.	114
Table 5.19. The extent to which corporate sponsors agree with the statements regarding their perception, attitudes, opinions, and evaluation – percentage of responses for each statement in corporate sponsors’ questionnaires with the distribution of response (Qs: Question number, <i>n</i> = 15; SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neither disagree nor agree, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, DK: Don’t Know, M: Missing data).....	120
Table 5.20. The extent to which zoo associates agree with the statements regarding their perception, attitudes, opinions, and evaluation – percentage of responses for each statement in zoo associates questionnaires with the distribution of response (Qs: Question number, <i>n</i> = 20; SD: Strongly Disagree, D:	

Disagree, N: Neither disagree nor agree, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, DK: Don't Know, M: Missing data).	125
Table 6.1. Key characteristics and attributes of the modern zoo as perceived by major stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region.	130
Table 6.2. Summary of literature and research findings: Visitor engagement.....	132
Table 6.3. Summary of literature and research findings: Contribution to national and international conservation of species and habitat.....	140
Table 6.4. Summary of literature and research findings: Staff engagement.	147
Table 6.5. Summary of literature and research findings: Animal management standards.	154
Table 6.6. Summary of literature and research findings: Infrastructure for animals. ...	157
Table 6.7. Summary of literature and research findings: Research programmes.	161
Table 6.8. Summary of literature and research findings: Commercial viability.	167
Table 7.7.1. Key research findings and recommendations for the Asia-Pacific zoos...	172

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1. Selected case study countries in the Asia-Pacific region for this research...	16
Figure 2.2. Regional map of Hong Kong, SAR with the location of the case study zoo identified.	20
Figure 2.3. Regional map of Indonesia with the location of the case study zoo identified.	21
Figure 2.4. Regional map of Malaysia the location of the case study zoo identified.	23
Figure 2.5. Regional map of New Zealand with the location of case study zoo identified.	24
Figure 2.6. Regional map of the Philippines with the location of the case study zoo identified.	26
Figure 2.7. Regional map of Thailand with the location of the case study site identified.	27
Figure 3.1. Evolution of captive wildlife facilities through the centuries - Adapted from Chicago Zoological Society, 1994 (Rabb and Saunders, 2005).....	33
Figure 4.1. Translation process used for this research (Brislin, 1970).	55
Figure 5.1. The distribution of local versus foreign visitors at each case study site ($n = 2279$, HK: 397, IN: 346, MY: 449, NZ: 375, PH: 354, TH: 358). <i>Missing data</i> refers to the percentage of respondents that did not answer this question.	69
Figure 5.2. Distribution of staff questionnaires across all countries ($n = 756$).....	94
Figure 6.1. Left to right: Non-traditional interactive animal displays at the Hamadryas baboons' exhibit (Auckland, New Zealand) and conventional displays at the deer enclosure (Zoo Negara, Malaysia).	136
Figure 6.2. Displays near the Orangutan exhibit informing visitors about the palm-oil free campaign at Auckland Zoo, New Zealand.....	143
Figure 6.3. Non-animal zoo staff members volunteering in local conservation efforts (Left) and keeping the local community clean by picking up litter during office hours (Right).	145
Figure 6.4. An excerpt from my personal diary regarding my opinions and experiences about working alongside my colleagues in a zoo.....	150
Figure 6.5. An experience I encountered regarding ethical and sustainable practices of animal management when travelling in Southeast Asia.	155

Figure 6.6 Photo-taking opportunities with endangered species such as leopards and Asian elephants found on roadsides in popular tourist areas in Thailand (O'Connor and Reyes, 2011).	156
Figure 6.7. Permanent housing conditions for surplus and non-display animals that are hidden from the view of the public.	158
Figure 6.8. Asian small-clawed otter exhibits at two zoos. Both may be considered natural but only the exhibit on the left is suitable for the animal. Exhibition on the left allows the otters to express natural behaviours such as diving as it contains a deep body of water, whereas the exhibit on the right does not.	159
Figure 6.9. Viewing platform in the Singapore Zoo's Treetops Trail, where visitors look for siamangs in the canopies of trees (A siamang is an arboreal species of ape).	160
Figure 6.10. Current range of research disciplines in zoos (World Association of Zoo and Aquariums, 2005).	163
Figure 6.11. An example of applied adaptive management framework with recommended steps for creating and evaluating a five year Zoo Biodiversity Action Plan (Hambly and Marshall, 2014, p. 3).	165

