

Date of Study: May 2014

Questionnaire distributed to people age above 18 and below 72

Study site

This study was conducted at Padmaja Naidu Zoological park in Darjeeling, which is one of the best zoo in West Bengal. The zoo is also recognized by the names Darjeeling zoo and Himalayan zoological park. The zoo is located at an altitude of 7000ft (2150 mts) in Jawahar Parbat aka Birch hill. This zoo was established on 14th august 1958. The Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi had dedicated this zoo in the memory of late smt. Padmaja Naidu, ex governor general of West Bengal. This is the only specialized zoo in India , recognized for its conservation breeding programme of Snow leopard, Red panda and other endangered species of the Eastern Himalayas.

The P.N.H.Z.P is located 1km from the main town of Darjeeling. Besides the animal enclosures, the zoo is surrounded by a forest which has a variety of flora and fauna of Darjeeling.

Questionnaire Survey (Out of 100 sheets 88 were taken as to be valid or usable)

A social survey was conducted over a month and the questionnaire was distributed to the visitors that came to the P.N.H.Z.P from different places. the questionnaire was distributed at different times and to different people in the month of may (we chose may because Darjeeling has the highest no of tourists in may).

About a hundred questionnaire were distributed in the zoo and at the end of the month 88 responses were taken to be as useful and usable.

The questionnaire mainly consisted questions that could be answered with either 'yes' or 'no' or short phrases and the visitors were to mark their answers.

The first section mainly asked about purpose of their (visitors) visit to the zoo whereas the second section consisted of questions related to their opinion for the zoo. The third section was set to receive feedback from the visitors and the fourth section consisted questions related to their knowledge on conservation and awareness on several topics and work of the zoo.

Result

In terms of reasons for coming to the zoo, out of the 100 responses 88 were taken to be useful and valid. So from the total of 88 usable responses, the majority of the visitors

(45%) had visited the zoo simply to see wild animals and high altitude forest while 19% of them had visited the zoo as it is a tourist attraction and for relaxation too., 18% had visited to see the Red panda aka Fire cat and the remaining 17% of them had visited for all the three reasons in Table 1.

Table 1

Topics	Frequency	Percentage
To see wild animals/birds and forest	40/88	45%
Reasons like tourist attraction and for relaxation	17/88	19%
To see red panda	16/88	18%
All of the above reasons	15/88	17%

Regarding the visitors opinion on the zoo:

The majority of them found the zoo to be good, where as 45% found the zoo to be very good and remaining 2% found it to be average. Refer to Table 2

Table 2

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Good	46/88	52%
Very good	40/88	45%
Average	02/88	02%

Regarding the animals that were liked the most: (see Table 3)

A question was setup to ask the visitors about the animals that were like the most with reasons included. So the result for this was 28% of the visitors liked the red panda as they considered it to be rare and uncommon in their locality while 25% liked royal Bengal tiger for its enormous size and color pattern and 15% of the visitors liked the snow leopard as it is endangered and rare, 13% of them liked the Himalayan wolves (sub species of grey wolves), 18% liked the black bear and lastly 13% of them liked the Black panther because of its spots which is barely visible due to excess production of melanin.

Table 3

Animals liked	Frequency	Percentage
Red panda	25/88	28%.
Bengal tiger	22/88	25%.
Snow leopard	14/88	15%.
Black bear	16/88	18%.
Himalayan wolves	12/88	13%.
Black panther	12/88	13%.

Animals Required:

There was also a question, other Himalayan animals that the visitors would like to see in the zoo and the responses were 9% for Grizzly bear, 18% for Himalayan snakes which was followed by gorilla with the same percentage i.e. 18% and 10% of them wanted snow fox and last of all 4% wanted to see more variety of fishes in the aquarium.

Table 4

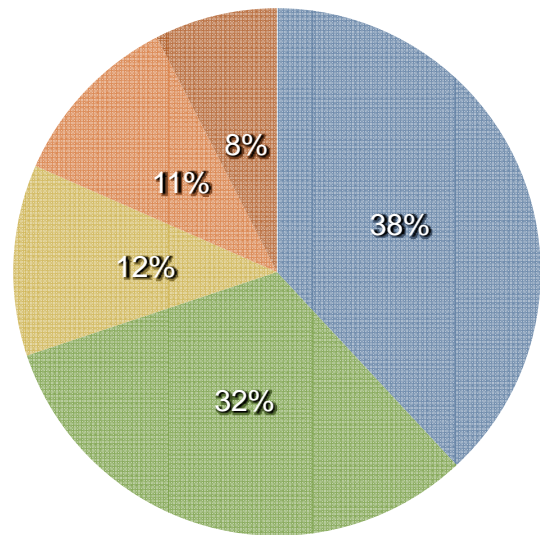
Animals wanted	Frequency	Percentage
Himalayan snakes	16/88	18%.
Gorilla	16/88	18%.
Snow fox	09/88	10%.
Grizzly bear	08/88	9%.
More fish species	04/88	4%.

* The table above help us conclude that maximum of the visitors had good knowledge on animals and their habitat as the animals mentioned in the table above all belongs to cold or high altitude region.

* Beside the questions mentioned already there was also a question which asked the visitors about the things that they liked other than animals in the zoo.

- Trees being
- cleanliness
- over all climate and ambience

- Information on the Sinages
- orchids



Now coming to the last section that is about the visitors suggestion:

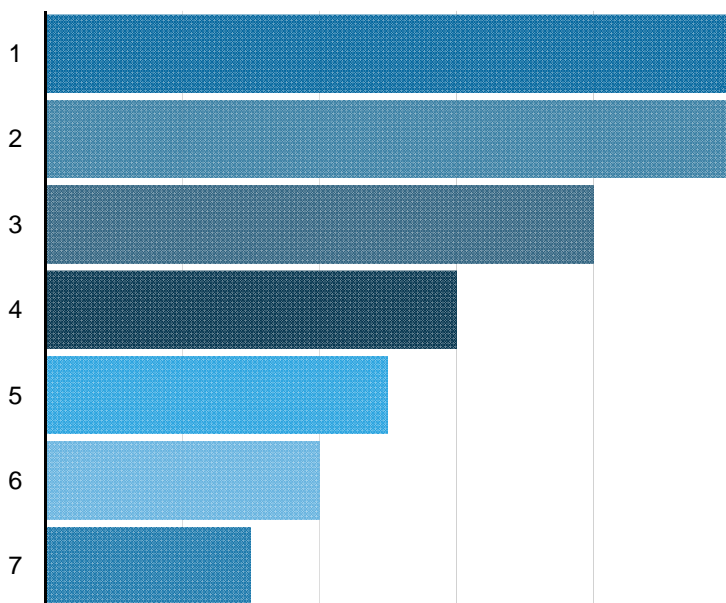
Table 5

Suggestion	Frequency	percentage
1. more maps required	10/88	11%.
2. aquarium should be improved	10/88	11%.
3. bigger space for langurs and the two wolves of last enclosure beside the jackal enclosure	08/88	09%.

4. Lesser vehicle should be allowed inside the zoo as it disturbs the animals	06/88	07%.
5. More information on conservation should be included in the sinage	05/88	05%.
6. bigger water pools for the star tortoise	04/88	04%.
7. more ticket counters	03/88	3%.

We can conclude that the majority of visitors 11.3% wanted hand maps or more detailed maps in the zoo, while serial no 2 in table 5 helps us to figure out that visitors have knowledge on animals and their habitat and biodiversity. The suggestions given in table 4 also concludes that visitors are aware of some topics related to conservation and education. this also indicates that visitors are aware of natural habitat and that ex-situ programmes maybe difficult to implement. coming to the 5th suggestion on table 5 indicates that there are visitors who are seeking for knowledge and education on conservation related topics.

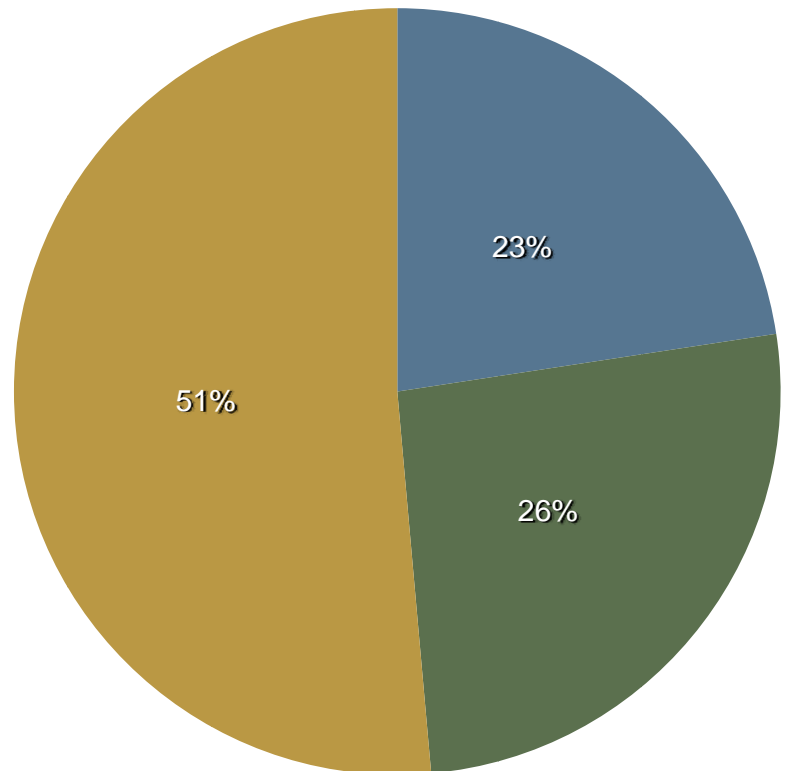
However the success of Padmaja Naidu Himalayan zoological park in conserving and re-introducing of animals like red panda and barking deer through captive breeding should be further publicized.



* Bars beside are drawn according to the numbers given to the recommendation in table 5.

The overall report help us conclude that P.N.H.Z.P is doing the following task actively.

■ Education ■ Recreational place ■ conservation and reintroduction of animals



Acknowledgement

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Reference

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