

## **A STUDY ON TOURIST SATISFACTION OF ZOOLOGICAL PARKS IN SRI LANKA: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PINNAWALA OPEN ZOO**

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In an increasingly competitive tourism market, it is essential to assess tourists' levels of satisfaction. As a first open zoo in Sri Lanka, Pinnawala Open Zoo is located in Rambukkana, Kegalle district. Considering about tourist Satisfaction in this zoo which the conformity between tourists' satisfactions and destinations' characteristics are in unpleasant level among the domestic and international tourists when visiting this destination. This situation creates a bad image about particular zoo among the tourists. Therefore, this case study at Pinnawala Open Zoo was attempted to examine the factors that affect to the tourists' level of satisfaction at the zoo. 50 tourists selected as the sample through the simple random sampling technique. A self-administered questionnaire was designed to collect data from sample of tourists (local and foreign). According to results, 54% tourists stated that the main reason for their visit was, for entertainment, and followed by 34% of tourists that out from the sample visited the zoo with the purpose of for go out somewhere with their family, relatives, friends. In relation to the facilities that available at zoo, 70% of tourists considered that they are not in good level. However, majority of tourists at zoo stated that their overall satisfaction at zoo is not in good level. It can be concluded as, the service quality that provided to tourists at zoo, friendliness of zoo management, security at zoo, etc. are affect to the level of tourist satisfaction at Pinnawala Open Zoo and a substantial number of tourists were not recommend the zoo for their relatives, friends. However, it can be recommended that buggy vehicle service, animal feeding events at zoo, souvenir shops, etc. for increase the level of tourist satisfaction at Pinnawala Open Zoo. The recommendations of the study can facilitate future researchers, government, policy makers relevant to zoo tourism.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Tourist satisfaction, Destination characteristics, Zoological park, Pinnawala Open Zoo

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