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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
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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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