Evaluating consumer behaviour theory and the influences of ethical issues on consumer motivation and choice relating to Bristol Zoo and Longleat zoological attractions; a comparator case study.

Leannza Purbrick
Declaration

Signed Statement

“The work included within the dissertation is my own work except where appropriately referenced”

Signed

______________________________

Corbruck

Declaration

“I declare that this Dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated”

Signed

______________________________

Corbruck
Abstract
This research project aims to analyse and investigate the impacts that a number of influential values play in the consumer buying process, in particularly the impact of an ethical value on a consumer’s decision making in relation to wildlife attractions. As well as providing a comparative case study on the attractions Bristol Zoo and Longleat. Through the completion of a literature review of literature related to the topic of consumer behaviour as well as wildlife attractions specifically, the researcher was able to create a conceptual framework outlining five influential values.

For this project, the researcher undertook both quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative research was conducted through an online questionnaire that was completed by 154 participants. Following this qualitative data was gathered through undertaking two focus groups one which was compiled of participants who had previously visited either Bristol Zoo or Longleat and a second which was formed of participants who hadn’t previously visited. The researcher was able to compile and organise the data gathered in the results, discussion, and analysis chapter.

The results allowed for an understanding of the influential values that impact on consumers buying decision in relation to captive wildlife attractions, they confirmed the role an ethical value. From these results changes to the conceptual framework was made and the researcher was able to put forward a final model which can be applied to the industry.

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Thank you to my family who have always been on hand to help me with anything, as well as ensuring I kept my sanity during this process. As well as this much love and thanks to the girls of 119 who over the last two years have always been there for chats and tea breaks, this experience wouldn’t be half as fun without you. Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has been around to make these years at University the most amazing experience that is has been.
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UNTWO – United Nations World Tourism Organisation
CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Understanding the consumer buying process is vital, as it allows organisations to gain a greater knowledge and understanding on the influences that directly impact on consumer’s decision making. This process can subsequently result in these consumers deciding to purchase their product or choosing an alternative. (Kotler et al. 2009).

There is a broad range of factors and values which can directly impact upon a consumer’s decision making process and although these should always be taken into account they aren’t always relevant and when looking at different industries it’s important to understand that different factors will have varying levels of influence.

The researcher will be looking to investigate the wildlife attraction industry specifically and the values and factors that directly play a role in the consumer’s decision making. As well as allowing for a closer insight into the direct role of ethical problems on this decision making process.

1.2 The research problem

From a young age, humans are fascinated by the large variety of species out there, and this fascination and desire to learn is something which drives consumers to interact with this industry. (Dowling and Newsome. 2005). The aim of wildlife attractions is to provide their visitors with the chance to observe and learn about animals that it would be near impossible for them to see in their day to day lives. Along with this, they work strongly to promote the research and conservation of these species and other animals in the wild, as well as providing their customers with other enjoyable experiences that will appeal to them.

However, similar to all industries it isn’t without its problems, the act of keeping these wild animals in enclosures is something which has long been frowned upon, as it’s destructive to their natural lives as well as their natural habitats. (Frost, 2011) There can be a number of problems associated with the size of enclosures and level of care being presented to these typically wild animals.
The problem arises for the industry as these ethical issues could be seen to restricting the level of interaction that some consumers have with the industry. Although these attractions are able to appeal to consumers in every other way, it could it be that they are being restricted solely on the basis of these potential ethical problems.

1.3 Hypothesis
The primary aim of this project is to undertake an investigation that will be formed of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, this will allow for insight into the influences on consumer decision making. In particularly the research will allow for an investigation into the level of influence that ethical issues within the wildlife attraction industry play within the consumer decision making process.

1.4 Research proposal
This research will be focussed on the captive and semi-captive aspects of the wildlife industry specifically, as well as this the study will be developed further through a comparator case study looking at Bristol Zoo and Longleat.

Both of these attractions provide consumers with slightly different experiences; Longleat providing consumers with a semi-captive experience whereas Bristol Zoo is a solely captive attraction. The researcher will aim to see if these varying levels of captivity will play a direct role in a consumer’s decision to interact with these attractions. The research will also look at a variety of other factors that also play a role in the consumer buying process. The primary data used will be collected in the form of an online questionnaire and focus groups. The focus groups will be conducted on one group of participants who have visited these attractions in the past, as well as one group made up of participants who haven’t previously visited.

The primary data will aim to improve knowledge and understanding of participants’ opinions of the wildlife attractions industry and the ethical problems that it continues to face, as well an insight into the consumer buying process and the influential factors that play a role in their decision making process. As well as this, throughout the data collection process, there will be information gathered which will work to form the comparator case study allowing for a comparison between attractions of varying levels of captivity.
1.5 The idea

An understanding of what influences consumers is important in any industry. It allows organisations and attractions to gain knowledge of the way their consumers think and feel, and subsequently, they are able to use this to appeal to them in an effective way. The wildlife attraction industry although extremely successful and continually growing, has long been criticised for the way that it operates. With such problems constantly being faced, it is interesting to see what it is that is playing a role in the continued growth of the industry. This, as well as a lifelong interest in the industry, is what has driven the researcher to focus on this as a topic for the study.

1.6 Introduction to the organisations

The study focusses on both the attractions Bristol Zoo and Longleat, as mentioned there is a number of difference in the way that these attractions are structured and presented however they are both successful wildlife attractions within their own rights.

Bristol Zoo, the fifth oldest zoo in the world, has long become a recognised attraction offering visitors the chance to explore their gardens and observe their collection of animals. The attraction is run by Bristol Zoological Society a known conservation and educational charity who are also in charge of the Wild Place Project. At the heart of their business is the protection and conservation of their animals both within their attraction as well as in the wild. (Bristol Zoo, 2017)

Longleat House was built in 1580 and although it was a number of years till the introduction of their famous safari park it is evident that this has allowed for them to become so popular. (Longleat, 2017) The park itself featuring on the popular BBC program Animal Park from the years 2000 till 2009, this gave visitors an interesting insight into the running and organisation that goes behind such an attraction (BBC, 2017).

Although both wildlife attractions at heart, there are a number of differences between them, as well as the level of captivity that they offer to their visitors. Longleat is an all-round attraction offering their visitors a chance to explore around their extravagant manor house, as well as ensuring there is always countless of activities on ranging from the yearly fireworks display and light shows. Where as in comparison although smaller attractions such as Bristol Zoo still works to provide their visitors with a range of activities as well as chances to learn about the species within their care. Offering education talks
and visits to local schools allow Bristol Zoo to get across the important information on conservation that is at the heart of their organisation. (Bristol Zoo, 2017)

1.7 The dissertation structure

Firstly the researcher will undertake secondary research, this will be completed through a literature review on relevant topics to the study. The research gathered for this will be compiled using academic books and journals and will provide a base for understanding consumer buying behaviour as well as the wildlife attraction industry and the ethical issues faced.

Following this, there will be a chapter on the research approach to be used during the study, which will work to explain and justify the research methods used. This will also look at the structure of the research being completed as well as looking at the potential ethical issues that could arise during the study. Once the research has been outlined there will be a results, discussion, and analysis chapter in which the researcher will bring together the results gathered and identify the key themes and ideas which have become apparent through the study.

These results will allow for an understanding of the values which influence consumers and will result in the production of a model, based upon the values that directly impact on consumers buying decision. Finally, there will be the conclusion which will provide a summary of the findings, and a look at how these can be used in the industry to directly influence a consumer’s decision making process, a look at the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research that could be undertaken on the topic.

The aim and objectives of the study will now be stated:

1.6 Research aims and objectives

1.6.1 Aims
Evaluating consumer behaviour theory and the influence of ethical issues on consumer motivation and choice relating to Bristol Zoo and Longleat zoological wildlife attractions; a comparator case study.

1.6.2 Objectives.
1. Conduct a comprehensive critical review of relevant literature related to the topic of consumer behaviour and wildlife tourism with a closer look at the ethics related to this.
2. Create a conceptual framework looking at influential values on the consumer decision making.

3. Create a suitable research approach to test the conceptual framework.

4. Conduct primary research through the form of focus groups and questionnaires to allow for the collection of data.

5. Critically analyse and evaluate the ethical motivations of past and potential visitors comparing views and opinions with consumer behaviour theory. Gain insights into the impacts of ethical issues on the wildlife attraction industry specifically captive and semi captive aspects within this.

6. Evaluate data collected through the primary research to allow for a comparison between attractions as well as providing recommendations on how these effects can be utilised by these attractions.

7. Conclude the study by assessing its various contributions, record the limitation of this study to help suggest recommendations for extending this research.
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Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Tourism has become one of the largest industries worldwide (Higginbottom, 2004) and continues to be a prevalent industry in the UK. This is highlighted by the United Nations Tourism World Organisation (UNTWO) who found when ranked by visitor numbers globally the UK was the eighth largest international tourism destination (UNTWO, 2016). With tourism contributing £121.1bn to UK GDP in 2014 and continuing to grow it is important to understand what makes the industry successful. Within the UK in 2015, £53.9bn revenue was generated by day visitors (Tourism Alliance, 2016). The researcher will be focussing on what motivates tourists in their choice of attraction.

This research project is cornered with the influences on consumer motivation in relation to the decision-making process of visiting two different wildlife attractions; Bristol Zoo and Longleat. Throughout this literature review there will be a development of a number of themes to support the research process, subsequently this will result in the creation of a conceptual framework on the subject of consumer motivation.

Firstly, it is important to have an understanding of consumer behaviour and the impacts that this has, not only within the tourism industry but across all industries. Harnessing this knowledge allows organisations to operate effectively, as it allows them to better their consumers better. It is important not only gain an understanding of the processes behind consumer buying behaviour but also other external and internal influences that can have an impact on consumers within the market.

Following an analysis of these issues, there will be a closer insight into the consumer behaviour of tourists, as it’s such a vast and complex industry it is important to understand what draws consumers to interact with it. Finally, this study will closely consider the motivations and perceptions of tourists who are specifically drawn to wildlife attractions similar to those being investigated within the study.

2.2 Consumer Behaviour

A deep understanding of consumer buying behaviour is vital for effective marketing and promotion of products and services within any industry. Kotler and Armstrong (2010)
defined consumer buying behaviour as ‘The buying behaviour of final consumers-individuals and households that buy goods and services for personal consumption’ (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010 p: 238)

The consumer market is made of individuals who each have unique desires and needs, therefore they will be searching the market to find something that will best satisfy their situations; whether this is looking for a new toothbrush or a weekend away. Rani (2014) looked at the number of factors that will influence the buying behaviour of consumers ranging from personal factors such as age and lifestyle to social factors such as the friendship groups individuals are involved in. Consumers are under significant influence from social groups at all times, whether they are aware of this or not, therefore gaining an understanding of the role this plays in their decision process is important.

### 2.2.1 Factors influencing consumer behaviour

Kotler and Armstrong (2010) constructed a model that outlined the factors that will have a significant influence on consumers during their decision making process. This can be seen in Fig 1.1. Although this is an important model at outlining a generalised list it does little to focus on specific industries. The researcher will aim to apply some of these factors through the research along with Sheth et al. (1991) framework to get a greater understanding of the factors that play a role within the wildlife tourism industry.

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**Fig 1.1**
Kotler and Armstrong (2010 p:162)
Factors influencing consumer behaviour.
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of an organisation has a growing influence on consumers and their buying behaviour. There are several definitions that have been proposed and one of these put forward by Kotler and Lee (2005:3) defines CSR as a “Commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources.” In a climate where there is a continually increasing interest in what organisations do to improve their social responsibility, it is vital that this is communicated to consumers. Mohr et al. (2001) investigated into the expectations that consumers had for companies promoting their ethical social responsibility within their industry. They found that although not all participants valued CSR as the most important factor when making a purchasing decision it still had a marginal impact and these individuals would be willing to boycott organisations which failed to take these factors into consideration. (Kotler and Lee, 2005) The researcher aims to test the level of influence that these factors play in consumer’s decision to interact with the wildlife tourism industry.

2.2.2 Consumer Buying Process

There are a number of models in relation to the process of consumer purchasing. One of these was put forward by Kotler et al. (2009) which is shown by Fig 1.2 When looking at the framework it is important to remember that although there are five stages, an individual doesn’t necessarily need to complete each stage. For example, when purchasing every day products they quite often will skip a few steps.

![Five-stage model of the consumer buying process](image)

**Fig 1.2**  
*Kotler et al. (2009:247)*  
Five-stage model of the consumer buying process

This study has a heavy focus on the decision-making process in relation to the evaluation of alternatives stage, particularly the impacts that the information gathered has on a consumers purchase decision and subsequently their post purchase thoughts and behaviour. As Longleat is a safari park it offers consumers a less confined wildlife
experience. Compared to Bristol Zoo which offers an experience of animals in a more restricted confinement. This, therefore, shows there are some large significant differences between both Longleat and Bristol Zoo as attractions. Subsequently, consumers would have to go through a complex ethical buying decision in choosing between which attraction they would want to visit. (Assael, 1998)

The framework in Fig 1.2 put forward was further extended by the introduction of additional factors that can have an impact on the purchasing decision during the evaluation of alternatives stage. These are shown in Fig 1.3.

![Fig 1.3](image)

**Kotler et al. (2009:252)**
Advanced model of consumer buying process

Although the addition of these two stages add another dimension to Kotler’s model by acknowledging the impacts that intervening factors can have on an individual’s buying behaviour. There is little mention of factors that play a role in influencing consumers during this process, Sheth et al. (1991) put forward a consumer influence model which took into the account five values that have a direct impact. The creation of a conceptual framework will allow for an investigation into how a combination of these factors influences a consumer’ buying behaviour.

**2.2.3 Sheth et al. (1991)**
To fully understand consumer behaviour, it is important to take into consideration
factors that have an influence on the decisions that consumers make. Kotler et al. (2009) gives a level of understanding to the process of buying behaviour and this is now compared to Sheth et al. (1991) who provides a framework for considering why consumers purchase what they purchase.

During the evaluation of alternative, consumers will collect information, Sheth et al. (1991) suggested that consumers decide upon the alternatives that are best suited to the values they possess and are looking for. Fig 1.4 shows the five consumption values that Sheth et al. (1991) found through their research. These are functional values which consist of the function that the product or service will satisfy. This is often seen as the primary driving force for product selection.

Secondly, there is a social value which is the perceived positive gain that a consumer will receive within their relevant social groups such as friends and family. Emotional value is relevant when a consumer is more drawn to purchasing something they perceive as bringing them happiness. The epistemic value which is also commonly called the curiosity value, relates to whether a consumer is looking for a new experience or to gain education from it. Lastly, there is conditional value certain purchases are made in specific conditions, such as purchasing Christmas cards at Christmas or visiting an attraction if they have special offers on.

![Diagram of Five Consumption Values](image)

**Fig 1.4**

*Sheth et al (1991:160)*

Five Consumption Values

One main criticism of the Five Consumption Values framework is how it based on individual’s perceptions of the values mentioned, where one consumer could be greatly influenced by the social value, while another could view this with little importance.
Kalafantis et al. (2010) further added suggestions of ways to improve upon the framework, this was done through the introduction of the idea of the values working as a hierarchy instead of completely independent areas. Although this research was found to led to no substantial differences. It was suggested that a sixth value should be added which was image value, however, this was also found to offer little improvement to the research.

Combining both models by Kotler (2009) and Sheth (1991) allows for a more comprehensive understanding of both of the processes behind decision-making and also the factors that influence these throughout. As the frameworks look at the matter of consumer behaviour from a broad perspective there will need to be a closer look at how these can be applied in the specific area of zoological attractions through the development of a conceptual framework.

2.3 Consumer behaviour in the tourism industry

Tourists are motivated by a variety of internal and external influences, whether they are looking for a destination for a holiday or, as in the case of this research a day trip to a wildlife attraction. Dann and Dann (1997) identified two important factors in relation to tourism decision-making, these are push factors which influence individuals’ decisions to travel and pull factors which help them decide which attraction to interact with. When evaluating these factors the researcher will be paying close attention to the impacts of pull factors and what draws different tourists to visit. As well as factors which have a negative influence on their opinions.

Cohen et al. (2013) looked into a collection of research studies undertaken in this area of the industry during 2000-2013 and discovered nine key concepts. One of these included the aspect of decision-making. When looking at the application of consumer behaviour models to the tourism industry Cohen et al. (2013:880) said

‘These models continue to be criticised by several researchers, who challenge their assumptions. One of the main arguments against such models is that they are unable to capture the complexity of decision-making in tourism’

The complexity of the industry is also emphasised by Horner and Swarbrooke (2007), as they note the intangibility of the products and services within the tourist industry.
This means that the decision-making process is often complex first time visitors rely a lot on the opinions of reference groups, who have a significant influence.

This is supported by Mayo and Jarvis (1981) who considered the effects social and internal influences have on the decision maker. This is illustrated by Fig 1.5. Although Mayo and Jarvis (1981) present a credible theory on the internal influences, they place little importance on external factors other than social factors which are hard to ignore.

![Fig 1.5](image)

**Mayo and Jarvis (1981)**
Major influences on individual travel behaviour

### 2.3.1 Travel Buying Behaviour

Mathieson and Wall (1982) considered the process of tourism buying behaviour and created a framework which was adapted by Swarbrooke and Horner (2007). This consists of a five stage process that tourists go through (Fig 1.6).
There are a number of similarities between this and the model previously put forward by Kotler et al. (2009) however it offers a more specific insight into the industry. When looking specifically at the processes around the decision to visit wildlife attractions this is an important model to consider, although it does little to take into the internal decisions that consumers go through during their process of deciding upon which alternative.

2.4 Wildlife Tourism

Wildlife tourism is tourism undertaken to view and/or encounter wildlife. It can take place in a range of settings, from captive, semi-captive to in the wild and it encompasses a variety of interactions from a passive observation to feeding and/or touching the species viewed. (Dowling and Newsome, 2005 18-19).

Although the wildlife tourism industry is vast the researcher will be focusing specifically on the captive and semi-captive aspects within it, as due to the different levels of confinement this could be seen as by consumers as a potential ethical problem and therefore impact their desire to interact. Fig 1.7 classifies the different type of tourist attractions.
Packer and Ballantyne (2012) studied tourist experiences when visiting these types of attractions. They did this through analyzing tourist opinions both pre and post-visit. The findings showed that although both groups of visitors arrived with similar levels of knowledge of environmental issues, visitors to captive sites placed more importance on social and entertainment aspects of an attraction in comparison to non-captive visitors who placed greater importance on learning during their visit. In addition, they found that post visit tourists at non-captive sites felt they had experienced a more intense and emotional connection with the animals they interacted with, this is an important aspect in bringing back repeat visitors.

The contrast between captive and non-captive has been an issue that has long divided the industry, as there is a number of ethical stigmas related to zoos. The impact of these ethical issues on a consumers’ decisions to interact with attractions is the focus of their study. As seen through the previous consumer buying models there is limited, if any, mention of the influence of ethical problems within these processes. Therefore the research aims to uncover the level of influence this plays.

### 2.5 Zoological Attractions

To understand the decision-making processes that a tourist go through visiting these attractions it is important to understand the type of tourists that visit them. Plog (1974) identified two classifications of tourists, this is shown by Fig 1.7. These typologies are allocentric and psychocentrics. In the case of tourists visiting these attractions, they

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic/Wild</th>
<th>Semi-Captive</th>
<th>Captive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animals as subjects, with their own needs and life forms</td>
<td>Subject/object</td>
<td>Objects for human enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come in the form of</td>
<td>Come in the form of</td>
<td>Come in the form of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• National parks</td>
<td>• Wildlife parks</td>
<td>• Aquariums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Breeding sites</td>
<td>• Safari parks</td>
<td>• Zoos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical barriers between humans and animals minimal or absent.</td>
<td>Close proximity but physical barriers.</td>
<td>Emphasis on spectacle with little other interaction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 1.7
Bulbeck (2005 p:10)
Classification of Animal Enclosure Sites
would be classed as a psychocentric as they are familiar attractions and require little involvement and adventure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allocentric</th>
<th>Mid-centric</th>
<th>Psychocentric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tend to seek new experiences</td>
<td>Individual travel to areas with facilities and growing reputation</td>
<td>Unadventurous traveller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will make their own travel arrangements</td>
<td>Likes adventure but appreciates luxuries.</td>
<td>Often use pre-packaged holidays or tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to take more risks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prefer familiar destinations or attractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High activity level</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low activity level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig 1.8**

Plog (1974)
Tourist Typologies

Reade and Warren (1996) studied the perception of tourists at Edinburgh Zoo in relation to roles of the zoo and also their reasons for visiting. They categorised the four roles of zoos; entertainment, conservation, education and research. Visitors were then asked to score these roles on a scale of 1 – 5 in relation to importance. 74.1% of visitors scored conservation as very important compared to a 7.4% score for entertainment. As conservation received such an impressive score this would indicate that this would pay some influence on their visiting decisions, however when looking at the motivations for visiting they found that 36% decided to visit with friends compared to only 4% visited for educational purposes. Although this study provides an insight into visitor perception of a single attraction it does little for a comparison of opinions on the varying types of attractions and the way this influences tourist interaction, it is in this study the researcher will help to uncover this information.

**2.6 Conceptual Framework**

The researcher is now in a position to hypothesise and propose a conceptual framework (Fig 1.9). The conceptual framework was created by a synthesis of the theoretical concepts and ideas discussed above.

The purpose of the conceptual framework is to identify key themes that will be tested through the research. This is outlined in the research approach chapter. As shown, the framework outlines five values that have influence within the consumer buying process. These values will then have an impact on the type of products they purchase, and in the
case of the research, will impact upon their decision to interact with different types of wildlife attraction.

Sheth et al. (1991) put forward five values, and four of these are still prevalent within the conceptual framework. These are; functional value, situational value, emotional value and social value. However, there has been the further addition of a new fifth value of ethical value.

![Conceptual Framework](image)

**Figure 1.9** Conceptual Framework

The wildlife tourism industry is often associated with a number of ethical problems. The framework suggests that these ethical issues may play an important role in the decisions that consumers make when interacting with the industry. Bristol Zoo and Longleat offer visitors two different types of interaction with the animals they house. On one hand, Bristol Zoo is captive compared to the semi-captive experience they could have at Longleat.
The questions suggested by the conceptual framework, and devised to test it, will aim at the impacts on the wildlife attraction industry as well as aiming to compare and contrast both attractions specifically. Consumers’ decisions to interact with these will be explored, as will the levels of importance that each value plays within the decision. The following ‘research approach’ chapter will explain and justify the research methods that will be applied during the study.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has identified a set of key themes that are vital to this study and it has provided an important base for progressing onto the next chapter focussed on the research approach.
Chapter 3
Research Approach

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3.1.1 Primary and secondary data

3.2 Epistemology
3.2.1 Qualitative
3.2.2 Quantitative

3.3 Theoretical perspective
3.3.1 Positivism
3.3.2 Interpretivism

3.4 Methodology
3.4.1 Analysing qualitative data
3.4.2 Analysing quantitative data

3.5 Research methods
3.5.1 Quantitative research methods
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3.6.2 Validity  

3.7 **Ethical considerations**  

3.8 **Summary**
Chapter 3
Research Approach

3.1 – Introduction
Research can be looked at as a systematic investigation to find answers and results to both problems being faced, but also questions which remain unanswered (Burns, 2000). This is vital, as it allows for continual learning and growth as these answers are being uncovered and therefore allow for society to develop further.

As shown by the conceptual framework (Fig 1.9), the research being undertaken aims to understand and analyse the opinions of consumers on the impacts that ethical issues play in their opinions and decisions to interact with wildlife attractions. This involves obtaining rich insights into two particular attractions, Bristol Zoo, an urban city based zoo and Longleat a more rural safari park.

Towards the end of this chapter there, will be an explanation of the research methods used, and a justification as to why the chosen methods are effective. In addition, the researcher will consider the potential problems to be faced during the research process and the impacts this could have on the reliability and validity.

3.1.1 Primary and Secondary Research
This study involves the collection of both primary and secondary data.

Primary data is gathered through the undertaking of personal and original research around a specific problem and question. In this case, it is around the opinions about ethical problems. Secondary data is collected through the review and analysis of previous work and research around the topic. The researcher has completed secondary research within the literature review which is a critical analysis of the key literature relevant to this topic. Primary data will be collected through focus groups with groups of individuals who have previously visited the attractions and those who haven’t. As well as this there will be an online questionnaire.

3.2 Epistemology
Epistemology can be viewed as a pathway to ‘how we know what we know’ (Crotty, 1998, p:8) and is a vital part of understanding the theoretical perspective being applied as well as the results being gathered. Hamlyn (1995, p. 242) suggested that it deals with ‘the
nature of knowledge, its possibilities, scope and general basis’. There are a number of approaches that researchers can decide between when undertaking research as it will have a direct impact on the choices made.

The researcher has decided to apply a mixed method approach during the research process; this will allow for the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. The advantage of this is that there will be a greater depth of data collected, as well as working to combat any reliability and validity issues that could. The application of a mixed method approach also works to reduce any bias that could impact upon the results of the study. (Denscombe, 2008)

3.2.1 Qualitative

Qualitative data or soft data gives the researcher a chance to gain a greater insight into the way participants think and understand things as this allows for the study of patterns of behaviour. Examples of qualitative research methods are: interviews, field notes and in the case of this research focus groups. (Best and Lashley, 2003)

Soft qualitative approaches gathers a rich and deep data, however, due to being heavily reliant on personal opinion and thoughts its reliability can vary greatly and can be difficult to standardise. (Corbetta, 2003). However by supporting this researcher with quantitative data will aim to counteract these potential limitations.

Qualitative data can be seen as looking for a meaning within the research. Leavy and Hesse-Biber, (2010:4) describe qualitative data as being related to ‘the social meaning people attribute to their experience, circumstances, and situations’. As the study is in part based largely on both past experiences that participants have had and how this impacts their future purchase decisions it was vital that there was a chance to gather this information in a method that was most suitable.

3.2.2 Quantitative

Hard data is presented in a numerical form. Quantitative methods tend to be used in situations where the researcher already has a framework and is undertaking the research to test how effective it is when applied (Benz and Newman, 1998). The use of quantitative data in research allows for the researcher to be able to see relationships between the variables being investigated. (Bryman and Cramer, 1994)
3.3 Theoretical perspective

During the research process, there are two approaches that can be used. These are; inductive and deductive. The researcher will be applying a deductive approach, this involves the formation of a theory or conceptual framework and then testing this theory to see if there is any truth. (Collins, 2010)

There are a number of research paradigms that can used when undertaking a study. These serve as a base and beliefs on which allow for theories to be tested, evaluated and potentially altered. (Miller and Brewer, 2003)

3.3.1 Positivism.

Tending to be associated with quantitative research, a positivism paradigm aims to test a hypothesis to uncover the “objective truth”. (Rossman and Rallis, 2003). Through the quantitative research being undertaken the researcher is aiming to test the hypothesis put forward by the conceptual framework.

3.3.2 Interpretivism.

Compared to Positivism, Interpretivism tends to be associated with qualitative research and is used when trying to understand the word from the perspective of a participant. The researcher will be using this when looking for themes in the data gathered through the focus groups. (Rossman and Rallis, 2003)

3.4 Methodology

3.4.1 Analysing qualitative data

The qualitative data collected will be analysed using content analysis, which allows for the researcher to highlight focus group data and pull out the key themes relevant to the hypotheses.

3.4.2 Analysing quantitative data

As Qualtrics is being used to form and distribute the questionnaire, it will also be an effective tool during the data analysis. This will allow for the information to be presented in a variety of graphs and charts making it easy to understand and to look for trends and themes within the results.
3.5 Research methods

3.5.1 Quantitative research methods.

When looking into using surveys it is important to first understand what their purpose is in the research process. Creswell (2008) states that ‘a survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population’

The quantitative data will be collected through an online questionnaire, supported by Qualtrics, the researcher used this form of software as it allows for a large sample size as it can reach out to a widespread population.

The final survey consisted of a combination of 18 open and closed questions, starting from the participant's general opinions on the wildlife tourism industry before homing in on the more specific questions based on their previous experiences. Open-ended questions are important as they offer a number of benefits to the research process as they enable participants to communicate their own thoughts and opinions which could be unanticipated by the researcher (Fowler, 1993). Due to the nature of the survey, it would be possible to repeat this if needed either around the same attractions or some similar.

3.5.1.1 Survey sampling

As the internet will be used for the collection of data, specifically Facebook this will mean that the sample will be convenience sampling, although this isn’t without limitations to the research process as it leaves the researcher with little control and influence over the population that is being tested. (Davies, 2007) However with the significant quantity of data being collected this should work to counteract these potential problems. A variety of other sampling methods such as random sampling could have been adopted by the researcher however due to time and financial constraints a convenience sampling method was adopted.

Within the sample there is no bias on age and gender, as well as this, people who haven’t visited either attraction are still able to complete the survey, however, the questions specifically aimed at analysing the opinions on Bristol Zoo and Longleat will only be completed by past visitors.
3.5.1.2 Survey piloting.

Prior to publication of the questionnaire, a piloting will be conducted to test both the reliability and validity of the questionnaire so that any required corrections can be made. The researcher will ensure that the questionnaire will be piloted by a minimum of three close friends before testing it on the wider sample. This works to increase internal validity of the study and the data collected but also to ensure that the data collected will be the most valid and reliable it can be.

3.5.2 Qualitative research methods.

Researchers have previously repeatedly tried to define focus groups with little resolution, some define them as ‘a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined environment’ (King et al. 1998:88).

Focus groups provide participants with an opportunity to discuss the key issues in a safe environment. This subsequently allows for the vital collection of information and thoughts. Although the researcher could have opted to use the interview method for data collection this offers little chance for discussion and instead is just focussed on the opinion of a single participant instead of a discussion of a group of people.

The use of focus groups as part of data collection has been an increasingly popular method of research, as it places importance on the collective opinions of the group. Denscombe (2003) writes about the potential limitations that can impact studies that use this technique as the group environment can result in some participants feeling reluctant to get their point across. However, it is important the researcher takes the role of ‘moderator’ within the study to ensure that all participants are able to have their say and to allow for the collection of the most in-depth information.

3.5.2.1 Focus group structure.

The focus groups will be conducted at Cardiff Metropolitan University making use of private study rooms available, this will reduce distractions during the process and is an environment that all participants would feel comfortable.

As it is vital for the research that participants within the focus groups are discussing their opinions openly, the moderator style would be passive, however at the same time directive when it is needed, allowing for giving participants a topic and allowing them to discuss
this and any issues they feel important (Fern, 2001). All focus group sessions will be digitally recorded and stored by the researcher for analysis at a later date.

3.5.2.2 Focus group participants

There will be two focus groups used to gather the data, the first one consists of four participants who have visited either Bristol Zoo or Longleat and the second one consists of four participants who haven’t previously visited either. This will allow for seeing whether the potential ethical problems have played a role in the participant's decisions to interact with these attractions or not, as well as allowing to compare and contrast their opinions on the industry as a whole.

Due to the structure of the focus group questions these allow for them to be transferable and could be used in analysing other attractions if needed, this works to increase the validity of the results.

3.5.2.3 Focus group sampling

Convenience sampling will be used to gather the participants for the focus groups, both groups will be made up a selection of people the research knows who have either been to the attractions or not been. This form of sampling has been used it is a form of non-probability sampling methods which are often applied during qualitative research as it understands that the themes being tested are random, and understand that participants aren’t predictable.

All participants are students at Cardiff Metropolitan University, although this will limit the age of the sample size, the researcher ensured that they were all credible participants to ensure that the data would be dependable.

3.5.2.4 Focus group piloting

The researcher piloted the questions for both groups using a close friend and family member, this was to ensure that the questions were clear, valid and would run smoothly. This provides a chance to increase the effectiveness of the questions being asked and subsequently strengthen the internal validity of the results being gathered through the process.
Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2002) suggested a number of benefits that pilot studies bring to a research study including allowing the researcher to tweak the questions to increase validity and reliability.

3.6 Reliability and validity.

When undertaking research it is important that the reliability and validity of the study are constantly being taken into consideration as failure to do so can have detrimental impacts on the results of the study and subsequently affect the value of the data collected.

As the researcher is undertaking qualitative research it is important that the data gathered is; transferable, credible and dependable.

3.6.1 Reliability

For a study to be deemed reliable it should be able to be recreated with stable and consistent results. Reliability can often be compromised in research studies when a researcher takes on a subjective stance. Therefore to protect the reliability of the study the student has included a quantitative element and will ensure they remain neutral throughout the research, especially in the focus groups. The online questionnaire is completed with no interaction with participants and therefore this will allow for protection of the participant opinions and help increase reliability. In relation to the focus groups, all questions for both groups are open ended to ensure that there is little outside influence on the opinions provided.

3.6.2 Validity.

Validity is related to the extent in which the answers and data collected through the research truly reflects the feelings of the respondent. (Oliver, 2010).

3.7 Ethical Considerations.

During the entire research process, it is important that potential ethical problems are constantly being taken into consideration to reduce the impacts of these on the study. These ethical considerations are important as well as protecting the results they also work to protect the participants involved (Miller and Brewer, 2003)
To protect the participants and the researcher, the researcher ethical approval has been obtained from the ethics board before undertaking the research. This is to ensure that questionnaires, focus group questions as well as participant information sheets and consent forms all comply with the ethical guidelines set out by Cardiff Metropolitan University. The approve ethics form can be seen in Appendix 3.

3.8 Summary.
This chapter has allowed for the researcher to critically outline and justify the research approach, processes and methods that are applied during this study. These have been chosen to be the most effective in testing the conceptual framework. Additionally, this chapter there has been a considered how the data will be analysed. In the next chapter the researcher which will focus on the results, analysis, and discussion of the results.
Chapter 4
Results, Discussion, and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

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4.3 Consumer behaviour

4.4 Captive wildlife attractions

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  4.5.2 Social value
  4.5.3 Emotional value
  4.5.4 Situational value
  4.5.5 Ethical value

4.6 Bristol Zoo and Longleat; a comparison
  4.6.1 Longleat
  4.6.2 Bristol Zoo
  4.6.3 Recommendations

4.7 Constructing the model
  4.7.1 Ethical value
  4.7.2 Functional value
  4.7.3 Social value
  4.7.4 Situational value
  4.7.5 Emotional value

4.8 Summary
Chapter 4

Results, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will work to organise and analyse the data collected through the online questionnaire and focus groups that were outlined in the research approach chapter. The researcher will also work to link the data gathered back to the theories and ideas discussed in the literature review, allowing for a thorough analysis on the topics covered. The chapter will follow a similar flow and structure of the literature review and will start with a broader theme and work towards a comparison of consumer opinions on the ethics and suitability of Bristol Zoo and Longleat as wildlife attractions.

The researcher will begin by analysing and discussing the data collected around the theme of wildlife attractions including views on the ethical concerns facing the industry. This will further be developed into the next section, which related to consumer behaviour specifically for these types of attractions. Following this there will be a look into captive attractions. Finally, the final theme that will be looked at within this chapter is as mentioned, a comparison of both Bristol Zoo and Longleat.

At the end there will be a chance to revise the conceptual framework set out in Fig 1.9. This chapter will provide an opportunity to see any if issues and concerns were raised by the current framework and then provide an understanding as to whether or not this framework required changed to allow for it to be effective.

4.2 Wildlife attractions.

Firstly it’s important to gain an understanding of consumer opinions of the wildlife attraction industry and the ethical concerns that could be impacting on it. It was important to see if consumers felt these were having detrimental effects as well as which of these were the most prevalent. Participants were asked to rank which ethical issues they felt was most evident currently within the industry, as shown in Fig 4.1. The most popular response with 52 votes (38%) was overcrowding of animals within the cages themselves, the following question asked participants to justify their decisions.

Crammed environments and captivation leads to unnatural behaviour and stress – these defeats the objective of protection and studies
The answer that received the second highest ranking was the issues of animals being kept in enclosures although, however, this issue also received 33 votes (27%) when looking prevalence. Through participant justification it was clear that participants felt that keeping these animals in captivity can benefit both the species at hand and the public; however, it should only be allowed if the enclosures are suitable and conservation is the main aim involved.

There are a lot of positives to keeping animals in enclosures. As long as they are kept happy and safe and used to promote positive ethical standpoints

I believe all animals should have freedom but accept we need to conserve species or not all animals are able to go back into the wild

Fig 4.1 - Participants results when asked to rank a number of ethical issues on which was most evident within the industry

Participants placed less importance on the impacts on the species’ natural environment and potential negative impacts through their interactions with humans. This is shown by the high level of responses both options received for being placed third. However, both of these options are still viewed as issues as respondents often felt that these aspects took away from the animal’s natural life and natural independence within the wild. Animals within these enclosures are often restricted of tasks such as hunting and exploring having this restricted from them can impact on the development of these skills.
As well as this, participants within both focus groups (Appendix 1 and 2) were also asked their opinions of ethical issues which are impacting upon the industry. A common theme of overcrowding within the enclosures was bought up during both focus groups.

Sometimes I believe that if they kept less animals in enclosures they would be able to provide a better level of care to the animals.

I have heard London Zoo suffers from overcrowding and know this causes extreme discomfort and distress to the animals.

These results show that participants are aware that wildlife attractions are continually facing a number of ethical issues within their remit. It was found though that, people are still inclined to visit these types of attractions as this was found to be a theme within the group of previous visitors as well the group who hadn’t decided to visit previously.

**4.3 Consumer behaviour in relation to wildlife attractions**

To gain an understanding into what respondents felt was the most influential value in their decision, participants were asked to rank five factors in levels of importance. With each of the factors directly corresponding with one of the five values put forward in the conceptual framework, this correspondence is shown by Table 1. This was important as it allowed the researcher to present these ideas to the participants in an understandable way that still corresponded with the framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>• Is the attraction close by and does it satisfy all the visitor requirements?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>• Does the attraction promote good ethical practices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>• A consumer is more likely to interact with an attraction that their reference groups approve of.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Has the visitor heard positive or negative views on the attractions previously?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational</td>
<td>• Is there a suitable offer on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>• Have they visited there or somewhere similar in the past?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results to this are shown in Fig 4.2. With 65 responses and 42% of the top votes, it is evident that the ethical standpoint of the attraction is an extremely influential factor, in the consumer decision-making. This supports the researcher’s introduction of this as a value to Sheth et al.’s (1991) model on consumer motivations.

![Fig 4.2 - What did consumers feel was the most influential factor in their decision making process.](image)

The situational value was ranked the least important value, receiving 65 responses (42%) for least important as well as 55 (36%) of votes for being the fourth most influential factor. Indicating that although Sheth et al. (1991) determined this as a value, in relation to wildlife attractions specifically it evidentially plays a less important role and is an aspect that may not need to be included in the final model.

The functional value of the attraction received 43 votes (28%) and the social value received 28 of the responses (18%). As the functional value is the only external influential value that is found within the conceptual framework, this supports the theory put forward by Mayo and Jarvis (1981). As the remaining values are all internal influences on a consumer’s decision making, and through the research that Mayo and Jarvis (1981) undertook they found that consumers often place a lot of focus on the influence of internal factors. This positively correlates with results these results, however this study focuses on a specific industry compared to the research they completed.

Although the functional value does play an important role in the process as mentioned before, this is often based around the attraction itself and whether or not this is satisfying the requirements of a consumer. For example, if a consumer wants to experience animals within their natural habitat they will be more drawn to activities such as whale watching or safari parks compared to a zoo.
4.4 Captive wildlife attractions

Respondents were asked whether or not they felt that captive wildlife attractions were seen as unethical, 44% of which ‘somewhat agreed’ with the statement followed by 32% who ‘strongly agreed’ with this. This shows that a majority of these participants do see problems with the industry; however, 10% ‘somewhat disagreed’ with this statement. These results show that although consumers are aware that there are ethical issues with this aspect of the industry, they do not view it as an issue that would completely stop them from interacting with such types of attractions. This is shown by the results when participants were asked when they had last visited a wildlife attraction and only 25% of respondents had never visited one compared to 61% who had visited within the last 3 years. Therefore, this indicates that although there are levels of knowledge consumers are willing to look past this due to the benefits that these attractions offer as well.

Following this, participants were asked to select their motivations for visiting (Fig 4.3). Leisure received the highest number of results with 66 (58%) votes, which implies that although the visitors don’t believe that the role of these attractions is for our entertainment, the reason they are visiting is at their leisure.

**Fig 4.3 - Participants motivations for visiting**

- Leisure: 66 votes (58%)
- Visiting with friends: 30 votes
- Conservation: 10 votes
- Education: 5 votes
- Other: 5 votes

This is partially down to the fact that although these attractions are perceived as serving the purpose of conservation, they are promoted heavily as fun and friendly attractions. Within the literature review there was a look at tourist typologies and looking at this it can be said that these attractions will tend to appeal to psychocentric tourists. As Plog (1974) stated, these tourists are drawn by familiar attractions with low activity levels, which therefore could explain why they would decide to interact with these attractions as a leisure experience.
When respondents were asked about the roles in which captive wildlife attractions have within the industry, conservation received 97 responses, the highest number of votes with (65%), compared to entertainment which only scored 22 votes (15%). This supports the research conducted by Reade and Warren (1996) who found similar results when looking at tourists visiting Edinburgh Zoo. This also supports the earlier results in which participants felt that the issue of captivity can be justified through ensuring this is for the purpose of conservation and education instead of using them just for entertainment.

It is important that attractions are promoting positive ethical practices both within their running but also their marketing and PR tools as this will appeal to consumers. Participants were asked whether or not they felt that attractions were doing enough to promote good ethical practices, Fig 4.4 shows the results of this.

![Fig 4.4 - Do participants feel good ethical practices are being promoted within wildlife attractions](image)

This shows that ‘somewhat agree’ was the most popular choice receiving 57 votes (37%). This was closely followed by ‘agree’ that received 51 votes (33%). This indicates that within the industry there are a number of positive practices being promoted and integrated within the industry. However, together the options of ‘disagree’ and ‘somewhat disagree’ received 32 votes (12%) of the votes. Therefore, although there was a large amount of positive feedback in relation to the question, these responses indicate that there still could be improvement.

**4.5 Consumer motivation in relation to wildlife attractions.**

Through the conceptual framework (Fig 1.9) there was the suggestion of five influential values that were suggested to have an impact on the consumer decision-making process. This section
will now look to evaluate the suggestion of these values and whether they were effective as well as a look at whether or not they will play a part within the final framework.

4.5.1 Functional value

Through the results of the questionnaire, it is clear that the functional value plays an important role in a consumer’s decision to visit. However, this is can be looked at as operating as a base decision that a consumer will make, seeing as they will decide which type of attraction they are looking for during this decision and then subsequently also use this value to settle upon a specific attraction for which is most suitable. As well as being a theme within the online questionnaire this is also a theme that presented itself through the focus group of non-visitors (Appendix 1).

Participants A and C stated that the reasons they hadn’t yet interacted with the attractions was due to distance and that if these attractions were closer they would have visited already. It is clear that the functional value does play an influential role in a consumer’s decision-making process, and this supports its place within the conceptual framework.

4.5.2 Social value

In comparison to the results in the questionnaire, participants within the focus group placed a higher level of importance on the impacts of social values in their decision as shown by the response of Participant A:

I think the most influential factors would be social and ethical as it is important to enjoy these attractions with friends, however, if an attraction isn’t being ethically responsible this would stop me from wanting to visit.

This indicates also that the values are able to work together and have differing levels of importance in the eyes of visitors, and instead of working as independent influential values they could, in fact, work as stepping-stones. This is similar to the research undertaken by Kalafantis et al. (2010), who previously researched into the values working as a hierarchy but subsequently found that it had no substantial differences in the results gathered.

It also supports the inclusion of the social value within the framework, as it’s clear that this plays a role, both through the 28% response in the questionnaire and also the results of the both focus groups. These attractions are presented through marketing as social attractions, it’s clear through the responses that they are popular attractions for leisure and day trips; therefore, it is clear to see why this value received positive responses from participants. Appendix 3 shows the transcript of the previous visitors’ focus group, participants were asked their primary motivation for visiting, Participant H stated;
My primary motivation was a day out with friends as this was somewhere that everyone felt would be a good day out.

This shows that consumers are driven by the thoughts and opinions of their reference groups, similar to the suggestion made by Kotler and Armstrong (2010) that reference groups should be considered as an influential factor in consumer behaviour.

4.5.3 Emotional value

Similarly to the results shown by the social value, participants within the focus groups scored ‘emotional value’ higher than the results of the questionnaire. It was found with past visitors that the idea of creating memories is important, when asked which value they felt was most important in their visiting decisions Participants E and F responded with:

Emotional value, I always like going places if I know it will create fond memories for me to look back on in the future.

I also think the emotional value is important as these places hold fond memories for me, however, the ethical standpoint is extremely important as I wouldn’t want to visit an attraction that didn’t put the animals first.

As mentioned through the questionnaire results, the internal values have been seen to be playing a more important role in consumer motivations and decision-making. This is supported by the high level of response from the focus groups in relation to both the social and emotional value. The second response again indicates that although seen in the framework as independent values there is again evidence that they work together within the decision making process, which is an aspect of the study that could be looked at with further research and considered within the final framework.

4.5.4 Situational value

As shown by the results in Fig 4.2, the situational value received the smallest level of responses as well as little notice within the results of the focus groups as well. This indicates that it could be viewed as a less important value compared to the others mentioned. Although included within the conceptual framework there has been little indication that this actually plays a factor in the decision making process and could, therefore, be removed from the final framework.

The results gathered indicate that visitors aren’t drawn to attractions due to the availability of offers; however, consumers are more concerned about other aspects of the attractions, such what they are offering to visitors and their CSR policies. As previously, mentioned Mohr et al. (2001)
found that consumers were placing higher importance on factors such as the ethical responsibilities and this supports these results. Therefore, it is less about what consumers can get on offer but more about which attractions promote good practice. This is due to the fact that organisations are operating in a more ethically conscious environment and this also means that consumers are placing greater importance on this also.

4.5.5 Ethical value

Through the results it is become clear that the inclusion of an ethical value has been widely supported by both the quantitative results as well qualitative data. Firstly, receiving 42% when asked which the most important factor in decision-making was (Fig 4.2). This emphasises the importance of this in the eye of the consumers when looking at wildlife attractions, and subsequently supports and confirms the ideas put forward within the conceptual framework. These results are supported further by the data gathered during the of the focus groups, as there were common themes that found that participants felt that they would be less inclined to visit an attraction if they felt that they weren’t behaving ethically:

I would only want to visit an attraction if I felt the animals within the care of these attractions are being treated fairly.

I definitely would not visit an attraction if I felt it wasn’t providing suitable care for the animals, especially as these attractions promote themselves as being highly ethical.

Similarly to what was found by Mohr et al. (2001) consumers are willing to avoid interacting with attractions that they feel aren’t being ethically suitable, this, therefore, is something that attractions will need to be aware off. Ensuring that they are always undertaking good ethical practices and promoting this through their marketing will pass on this information to potential customers and therefore draw them to visiting more. This should allow for them to avoid potential negative repercussions, if consumers are seen to have been driven away by these problems this could therefore impact upon the success of these as attractions.

4.6 Bristol Zoo and Longleat; a comparison

Prior to gaining an understanding of participant’s experiences at the attractions, it was first important to see which participants had visited them. Fig 4.5 shows the results of this, although Bristol Zoo only received 8 votes compared to Longleat, which received 27 votes; however, 55 people had visited both. This allows for a greater comparison, as these people are able to give knowledge on both attractions.
To further understand why participants hadn’t decided to visit these attractions, they were asked to justify this within the questionnaire; the results for this are shown in Fig 4.6. There were two main reasons as to why the 7 (29%) of respondents had not visited either of the attractions; they were (i) a lack of interest in the attractions; and (ii) that they did not agree with the ethics of the attractions. Participants were given the chance to select other, and if their answer wasn’t suggested they were given a chance to explain their reasons. Five of these responses indicated that their reason for having not visited was due to the distance from where they live, as well as having closer options available to them. These results indicate that although the ethical standpoint of the attractions has played a part in tourists’ decisions, it also isn’t the main factors that are impacting upon that and that is something that should be taken into account.

4.6 - Participants reasons for not visiting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There attractions don't interest me</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't agree with the ethics of these attractions</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have heard negative things about them</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous negative experiences at similar attractions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, when asked if they would be interested in visiting in the future, 36% of respondents said yes, 36% said maybe, and 28% of respondents said that they still wouldn’t be interested in visiting. When asked what could be improved to make them think about visiting in the future the responses were varied as shown below.

- More like a safari, not stuck in small cages. Especially away from city environment where their habitats are completely unnatural

This indicated that the participant feels as if the safari park experiences offers a more natural experience, this is a problem that would impact on the consumer choices to visit Bristol Zoo more than Longleat as Longleat is able to provide their animals with a greater level of space to their animals.

- Better promotion of the attractions and evidence of good ethical practice for the animals.

As participants are interested in learning about the conservation of the animals within these attractions and place this with high importance in the roles that they have, promoting this heavily and ensuring that visitors and potential visitors are kept up to date with this information could sway these people to visit for the first time.

When looking into the experiences of past visitors, it was important to understand whether or not their past experiences had been positive. When asked if they had enjoyed their previous visit, the most popular choice was strongly agree which received 43% of the votes followed closely by somewhat agree which received 38%. In comparison only 2% of past visitors said that they ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement, this highlights that although ethical issues might be something that is on the mind of visitors, it does little to impact on their enjoyment of the attractions when they are there. Subsequently, it is clear that both of the mentioned attractions are successful at operating attractions and provide their consumers with enjoyable and interesting days out.

When looking at the ethics of the attractions, past visitors were asked whether or not they felt that the animals there were being respected and treated fairly. The results are seen in Fig 4.7 show that 45 participants (51%) ‘somewhat agreed’ that the animals were treated well, and although a majority of participants either ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’, there was 8 participants (12%) who ‘disagreed somewhat’ or ‘strongly’ with the statement. This highlights that visitors feel that even with these ethical problems in mind, Bristol Zoo and Longleat work to promote good practices within their running and ensure the animals within their care are looked after. This is supported by the views and opinions of members of the focus groups with Participant F saying that;
Being a strong lover of animals, I felt during my visit that the animals were cared for and this made it even more enjoyable and has led me to visit many times.

4.7 - Did participants feel that the animals within the enclosures were treated fairly?

Participants of the questionnaire were given the chance to provide more information on their visits and were also given the chance to give comparisons for those participants that had visited both. A common theme which came up through a number of the responses was the issue that because Bristol Zoo is a captive attraction they are unable to offer their animals the space that is found in semi captive attractions such as Longleat.

Longleat is better as the animals have more freedom. Some of the animals at Bristol Zoo are very restricted for space.

I think Longleat is very good in terms of conservation, enclosures. Bristol seems to be good at conservation in the wild but are obviously limited in terms of space and so some enclosures seem a lot smaller than they should be.

Although, when compared the visitors viewed Longleat as a more ethical and suitable attraction for the animals. A number of responses felt that Longleat was more concerned with being an all-round attraction and although they are able to provide a more natural habitat and lifestyle for the animals some participants felt that they were more concerned with using them as an attraction than for conservation, compared to Bristol Zoo who are solely focussed on the conservation of the animals within the care.
Longleat has space but Bristol I think is more educational. A balance between the two may work well.

I found Bristol Zoo to do more for conservation and the re-introduction of rare animals to the wild, while I found the cages to be overcrowded and too small. Longleat does have larger enclosures but does too much and makes the animals just for show.

Participants place importance on feeling that the animals aren’t just being exploited within the attractions, as they understand that although they are there for the enjoyment of visitors it is important that they are being treated respectfully and fairly within these attractions. Times have grown since animals were being kept in enclosures far too small and kept enclosed by metal bars, thankfully the industry has gained a greater knowledge on the needs are requirements of these species.

4.6.1 Longleat

Participants believed that Longleat is able to offer a more ethical experience due to the larger amount of space they are able to provide. This satisfies the ethical value for potential visitors and will, therefore, draw them in. This supports the idea of an ethical value being included within the conceptual framework, as it is clear that this has played an important role in influencing consumers buying decisions, along with the other values put forward.

Another common theme was that although it holds a positive ethical outlook on the care of the animals within their care they were perceived by participants as doing less to promote conservation and education. When participants were given the option to present recommendations for what could be changed within the attractions, although a majority of participants presented recommendations for Bristol Zoo, the only common theme related to Longleat is a worry about the interaction between the animals in the safari park and the cars being driven round their enclosure.

Longleat could possibly replace the drive through enclosures with observation hides, which I feel would be less stressful on the animals.

However Longleat is a safari park and therefore their drive-through safari park is at the heart of their attraction and therefore something, which is unlikely to be changed, compared to Bristol Zoo, which offers a different type of interaction with their animals.
4.6.2 Bristol Zoo

Through the results gathered it became clear that participants view Bristol Zoo as a less ethical attraction compared to Longleat, as they aren’t able to provide the level of space in their enclosures; however, they are highly focused on the conservation and rehabilitation of the animals that they do have within their care.

A large majority of responses were able to look past the ethical problems, as they understand the animals aren’t treated like this due to the ignorance or neglect but due to a lack of space and facilities and are able to see that the care and conservation is at the heart of the attraction. This allows Bristol Zoo to be a successful attraction, although there are people who will always view zoos as unethical. Bristol ensures they are always putting the animals within their care first and promoting good practice and this allows for them to continue attracting consumers.

When participants of the questionnaire were able to give recommendations on what could be improved within the attractions, the most common theme was an increase in the enclosure size and an increase of the information being given to visitors both about the problems facing these animals in the wild but also the positive work that the zoo is doing to better the lives of the animals both in their care but also in the wild. This could be communicated to consumers through posters put up throughout the park or talks for visitors. As well as this, this could be communicated to potential visitors further through the websites of both attractions. As Kotler et al. (2009) outlines in their model of the consumer buying process (Fig 1.1) the evaluation of alternatives stage is vital, during this stage potential visitors could look for information relating to these factors and the more information that is presented to customers will help draw them to visit.

4.6.3 Recommendations.

It is clear through the results gathered that potential consumers are influenced by the ethical standpoint of attractions. Current consumers have shown that they have a greater understanding of the concerns that are facing the industry and the attractions that operate within it. Therefore, ensuring the attractions that they interact with are doing their best to promote the welfare of these animals is important to them, to the point that this could restrict this.

Although both Longleat and Bristol Zoo are successful attractions at working to overcome these issues, it is clear that consumers still feel that there are things that can be changed to increase their appeal. Where a lot of the common themes included, increasing the size of the enclosures or making changes to the layout of these attractions as a whole would be a positive long term goal for the attractions to work towards However, due to the spatial and financial constraints related to this recommendation there are a number of short term options which could be considered.
Participants and consumers feel that strong promotion of the strong ethical values that attractions like this hold, such as the rehabilitation and care that they provide for the animals. This would provide consumers with a greater understanding and information on the situation allowing for them to make buying decisions that are greater informed. This was a common theme, which appeared in both the responses for the focus groups and questionnaire responses.

More promotion of ethical issues, it is important that people are educated on these problems and work to help fix them.

4.7 Constructing the model

Through this chapter there has been the analysis and discussion of the results that have been collected, this has allowed for the researcher to put together a framework which outlines influential values that will impact on a consumer’s decision making process. The researcher now puts forward a final framework (Fig 4.8), In comparison to the conceptual framework shown in Fig 1.9. The proposed framework operates in the form of a triangle with the functional value working as a base value, followed by the social, emotional and ethical values.

![Fig 1.9 Final Framework](image)

4.7.1 Ethical value

Through the research, there has been a clear indication that ethical standpoint of wildlife attractions play an important role in a consumer’s decision-making process. This could be the
decision on which type of attraction to visit or a decision between two specific attractions as looked at within this study. Participants within the questionnaire and focus groups felt that it was the most influential value in their decision making process.

This indicates that the addition of the value to the framework was justified, and is, therefore, an aspect which attractions will have to appeal to when attracting their consumers. Whether this is through ensuring their attractions are up to ethical guidelines as well as maintaining high levels of care and standards of living for their animals. However, it is important that these processes are communicated and promoted to the customers, as they feel that this knowledge will allow for them to have a better understanding and make better judgements between these attractions. Subsequently, the idea of an ethical value has remained within the framework, due to the high level of positive responses for an ethical value it has been placed at the top of the triangle.

As stated by Mohr et al. (2001) consumers are placing a greater importance on the ethical standpoint of organisations and this is having direct impacts on the purchasing decisions that they make. This is supported by the results collected through the data collection and therefore promotes the idea of this within the framework.

4.7.2 Functional value

The idea of a functional value put forward by Sheth et al. (1991) relates to the purpose that an attraction serves as well as the location and functionality of said attraction. Participants voted this the second most influential value in their decision making process, therefore the value has remained within the framework shown in Fig 4.8.

As Longleat and Bristol Zoo are both different varieties of wildlife attractions they will satisfy similar functions for consumers, due to this the functional value is at the base of the triangle, as although it is an influential value a consumer will often make this decision prior to making decisions based on the other three values within the model. However, this placement signifies that the functional value is less influential than the other three values found within the hierarchy.

Kalafantis et al. (2010) found that there was no significant difference when the values were investigated as working as a hierarchy therefore to counter this idea the research proposes they work together as a formed triangle. This indicates that they work together, with, as mentioned the functional value acting as a base decision to then put forward the rest of the values. Instead of working as a hierarchy of differing level of influence the research proposes they work together with equal levels of influence.
4.7.3 Social value

The social value refers to the level of influence felt by a consumers reference groups, whether this is their friends or families. This influence can come in the form of perceived social gain that they would acquire from visiting these attractions or whether or not their peers agree or disagree with this. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) outlined social as an important factor in consumer behaviour and this is supported widely through the focus group and questionnaire participants within this research project. As well as this it was also outlined by Mayo and Jarvis (1981), therefore the inclusion of this within the final framework is not only supported by the data gathered by the researcher but also a variety of other literature that is available.

4.7.4 Situational value

Although included in the conceptual framework (Fig 1.9), the situational value has been removed from the final framework. In the conceptual framework this was described as relating to whether or not the attractions were offering deals or offers as this could be looked at as appealing to consumers and therefore influence them to visit these attractions. However across the data gathered there seemed to be little importance placed on this as an influential value, especially in relation to the case of wildlife tourism attractions.

Consumers placed little importance on the deals that are being offered to them in comparison to the welfare, which is being provided to the animals within the enclosure. This signifies that consumers understand that to support these attractions in providing high levels of care to these animals they will be required to spend a little more on the entrance ticket. Due to this lack of importance and influence, the situational value was removed from the final framework.

4.7.5 Emotional value

The emotional value put forward by Sheth et al. (1991) outlined that consumers would be more drawn to interacting with attractions that provided them with fond memories or that they would see the appeal in attractions similar to those in which they are visited previously.

Participants of the questionnaire placed less importance on this as a value than what was seen in the focus group participants, however, it still remains within the framework shown in Fig 4.8. As these attractions will tend to be used for day trips, these are important for building memories and this highlights the level of importance that the emotional value would play in particularly in consumer decision-making in relation to attractions similar to these. Both of these attractions are heavily promoted as fun filled days out for all groups of people, including couples, friends and families. This allows for them to reach out and appeal to a larger group of visitors.
4.8 Summary

To summarise, this chapter has allowed for the results and data gathered during the study to be analysed and discussed allowing for conclusions to be drawn from this. To start, this allowed for an understanding of participants opinions on the wildlife attractions industry in general and included an understanding of their thoughts on the ethical issues. This was followed by a closer look at the attractions Bristol Zoo and Longleat providing recommendations for what these attractions, and those similar could do to influence the impact that these values are having on consumer’s behaviour and decisions.

This data gathered has allowed for the researcher to investigate the effectiveness of the conceptual framework put forward by the researcher in Fig 1.9, this has subsequently allowed for adequate changes to be made to the model where required and resulted in the proposition of the framework put forward in Fig 4.8. These changes see the removal of the situational value and propose that the remaining values work together in a triangle formation due to them being seen to be operating together to appeal to customers.
Chapter 5
Conclusion

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Aims and objectives re-visited
5.3 Contribution to theory
5.4 Contribution to practice
5.5 Contribution to methodology
5.6 Further research
5.7 Limitations
5.8 Summary
Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction
The results, discussion, and analysis chapter allowed for researcher to piece to organise the data collected through the research process and draw reliable and valid conclusions from this. This data was gathered through testing a hypothesis outlined in the conceptual framework (Fig 1.7).

5.2 Aims and objectives re-visited
The aim of this research project was to test the effectiveness of a conceptual framework, which was influenced by Sheth et al.’s (1991) model of five influential values on consumer buying decisions. As well as presenting this through a case study on Bristol Zoo and Longleat allowing for seeing the impacts that these values have on these attractions. Through testing this it allowed for the creation of a model shown in Fig 4.6. This model will allow for a more specific and detailed look at the values which directly influence on a consumers’ buying decisions. This aim was achieved through the completion of a number of objectives which were as follows.

1. The first objective was to critically review the literature related consumer behaviour as well as wildlife attractions followed by a closer look at captive wildlife attractions and the ethical issues which are often related to this.

2. Through undertaking the literature review the researcher was able to construct a conceptual framework which was tested through the data collected.

3. Secondly, the researcher was tasked with putting together a mixed method research approach including the use of online questionnaires and focus groups to allow for testing the conceptual framework and an effective collection of primary data.

4. Primary research was completed through the undertaking of focus groups and an online questionnaire.
5. The researcher was able to critically analyse and evaluate the ethical motivations of both the past and potential visitors using consumer behaviour theory allowing for a comparison of Bristol Zoo and Longleat as successful wildlife attractions.

6. As well as this through the data collected the research was able to gain an insight into the impacts that prevalent ethical issues have on the wildlife tourism industry as well as allowing for recommendations on what can be done to reduce this impact.

5.3 Contribution to theory
The researcher has been able to contribute to theory through the creation of a model shown in Fig 4.6. Although the values present in the framework (Fig 1.9) were adapted from Sheth et al. (1991) through the research undertaken the researcher was able to make changes to both the format and content of the model to adapt it to the wildlife attraction industry specifically. The model was enhanced by putting the values together in a triangle, allowing for them to work together instead of as independent values. The model was subsequently improved through the removal of a situational value which played little role in the results which had been gathered.

5.4 Contribution to practice
This study provided an insight and understanding into the ethical issues that are currently being faced by wildlife attraction industry and will continue to impact into the future. The direct impacts that these issues have within the industry or attraction specific are something which is lacking previous research and therefore this study is able to contribute where these have not. It has provided an insight into the way that consumers view the ethical issues and the direct impact that these play within their decision making. As well as this the study has looked at values that are influencing on consumers of the attractions specifically.

Through the completion of both secondary and primary research, the researcher has been able to propose a model which can be looked at by similar types of attractions as a basis for understanding the influential values that have an impact on consumers buying decision. Allowing for these attractions to take into consideration these values and adapt their organisations to best appeal to their consumers.
5.5 Contribution to methodology

The researcher has been able to contribute to methodology through the creation of unique and specific questions for both focus groups and questionnaires. Both of these are based around the wildlife tourism industry, followed by a closer look at the ethical issues involved with this before a more specific look at Bristol Zoo and Longleat.

As well as this the focus group questions allowed for a greater expansion of opinions and thoughts on both consumer buying influences as well as the influential values laid out within both frameworks. Furthermore, they allowed for previous and potential visitors to provide expanded on their opinions and views on both attractions.

5.6 Recommendations for further research

Although the research project was in part based on the specific opinions on both the attractions Longleat and Bristol Zoo, due to the nature of the study and the methods used it could be adapted and applied to a variety of similar wildlife attractions within the UK. The research has repeatability and therefore if required could be repeated within the future, this would allow for a more in depth understanding of the attraction industry as a whole. As well as this the industry is always changing and as this happens there will need to be a continued understanding of the impacts that this has, therefore the research has put together recommendations for potential future research:

1. Increase the sample size for the online questionnaire to allow for greater feedback on the ethical problems facing the industry.
2. Extend and adapt the research to cover other attractions within the UK, for example, London Zoo and Whipsnade Zoo.
3. Present survey to visitors to attractions to allow for a greater insight and understanding into their motivations and buying decisions.

5.7 Limitations

Although successful the research project is not without limitations, the first limitation is less than 154 participants completed the online questionnaire and although this is a reasonable response rate to make the data more reliable a greater sample size could be reached. As well as this due to the fact that the researcher knew participants within the focus groups, this could of lead to natural bias in the data gathered, as well as this the researcher had little experience of conducting focus groups and this could impact on the organisations and running of these within the project.
As the questionnaire was completed online and therefore the researcher has no interaction with the participants during the process of filling these out, this, therefore, provides a limitation as participants could struggle to understand these questions and fail to complete it correctly. As well as this the research has no way of telling whether or not the answer participants are provided is reflective of their true thoughts and opinions.

5.8 Summary.

The research has allowed for a greater understanding of the consumer buying decision and the values that will impact on consumers, specifically when making decisions based on wildlife attractions industry. Through the completion of the aims and objectives, the researcher has been able to put forward a model on influential values during the consumer buying process.

As mentioned although the research was effective it is not without limitation and if the researcher was to expand the project further a larger sample size would be used to develop the depth of the data being gathered. To test the new model the questions put forward could be adapted and enhanced to relate to a variety of wildlife attractions in the UK similar to Bristol Zoo and Longleat. This would allow for further data to be collect and harnessed to improve and develop knowledge of the subject area and further testing would allow for a further insight into the comparison between attractions of varying captivity levels.
Chapter 6

References


