

Study about Perception of Visitors while Visiting the Nature Places: A Case Study of Lucknow Zoo

Mubashahireen¹; Ruchira Nigam²; Asif Ahmad Siddiqui³; Shritika Rai⁴; *Chitra Singh⁵

^{1,2,4,5}Department of Zoology, Isabella Thoburn College, University of Lucknow, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

³Department of Environmental Science, Integral University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract:- Natural diversity is what makes it so beautiful. It really never ends. An enduring human impulse to cherish nature to the fullest is also present. For this reason, adventurers and discoverers have embarked on daring expeditions since ancient times, despite any challenges they may encounter. Gradually, the notion of travelling to new locations in order to enjoy their natural beauty gave rise to the contemporary tourism industry. The research was carried out between December and January of 2024 in the study area (Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Prani Udyan), Lucknow. Focus group discussions are employed in the investigation of the visitor perception questionnaire approach. In-person interviews were used for this study at the zoo's main entrance. Studies underscore the intricate interactions among variables that shape tourists' perspectives when they visit natural areas, particularly zoos. Zoo management may better customize their products to match visitor expectations, improve educational opportunities, and advance conservation goals by having a greater grasp of these attitudes and preferences.

Keywords:- Visitors, Perception, Tourism, Focus Group Discussion, Questionnaire Study.

I. INTRODUCTION

The infinite variety of nature is what makes it so beautiful. This is also true of humans' enduring yearning to fully appreciate nature. This is the reason that, despite all obstacles they encountered, explorers, discoverers, and travellers have embarked on daring expeditions since ancient times. Over time, the fundamental notion of travelling to new locations to enjoy their beauty gave rise to the contemporary tourism industry. It is the responsibility of the tourist sector to identify these sites of interest and beauty and, by offering all the comforts and amenities, to physically bring people and places closer together. Therefore, region development makes use of natural scenery, a temperate temperature, and cultural heritage through the promotion of tourism. "Paryatan" means to leave one's home and travel in search of relaxation and education in Sanskrit. Another word for travel for business purposes is "deshatan." The third equivalent, "Tirthatan," refers to visiting places of worship. The notion and meaning of tourism are considerably more effectively conveyed by all three words. "A person is considered a tourist if they travel to India on a foreign passport for a minimum of 24 hours and a maximum of 6 months, provided that they do not establish permanent residence or find employment here." This pertains

to visitors from other countries. The term "tourism" as it is used now can refer to both domestic and foreign travellers. It involves relocating individuals temporarily to locations other than their usual places of employment. A traveller who travels for pleasure is one who moves about or makes repeat visits to the same location. Professional or business travel is concerned with fostering communication and cooperation between various parties. In the context of a globalised economy, this is a time of economic transformations. The largest and capital city in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh is Lucknow. It has long been regarded as a multicultural city that thrived in the 18th and 19th centuries as the seat of Nawab's rule and a centre of North Indian culture and the arts. It continues to be an important centre of governance, administration, education, commerce, aerospace, finance, pharmaceuticals, technology, design, culture, tourism, music and poetry. Known affectionately as the "City of Nawabs," Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh today, was home to the Nawabs of Avadh, who were renowned art enthusiasts in the 18th and 19th centuries. Their influence can still be seen in the city's rich legacy, architecture, food, and handicrafts.

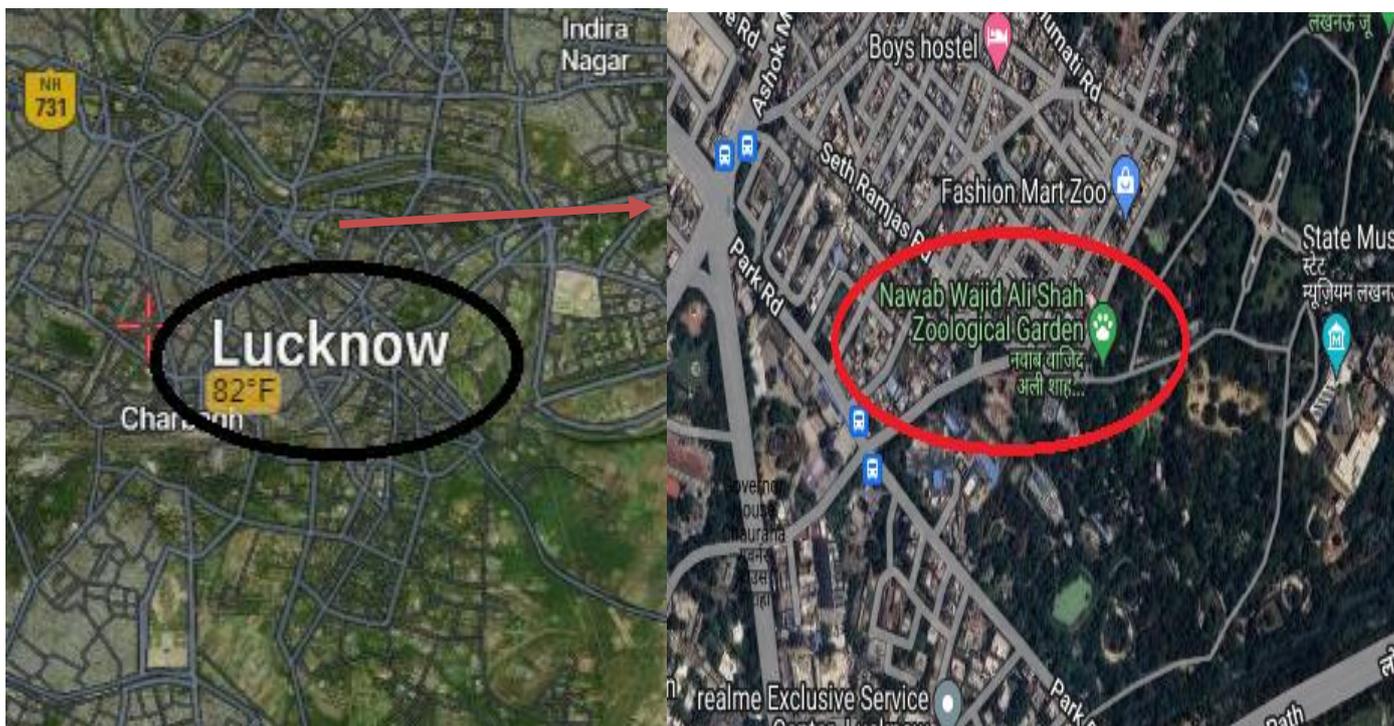
II. STUDY AREA

Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Garden, Lucknow Zoo is located in the heart of the Lucknow city. Nearby area of the Zoo is densely populated and hub of the political, social, financial, beaurocratic and administrative activities of the state. The campus comprises area of 29 hectare near Gontinagar in Hazratganj area. The Zoo comprises more than 1050 animals of 98 species in addition to this zoo has more than 700 fishes of 67 species and more than 74 species of Butterflies in Butterfly garden. This campus is lush green arboretum having more than 5000 trees of 100 species and act as lung of the city.

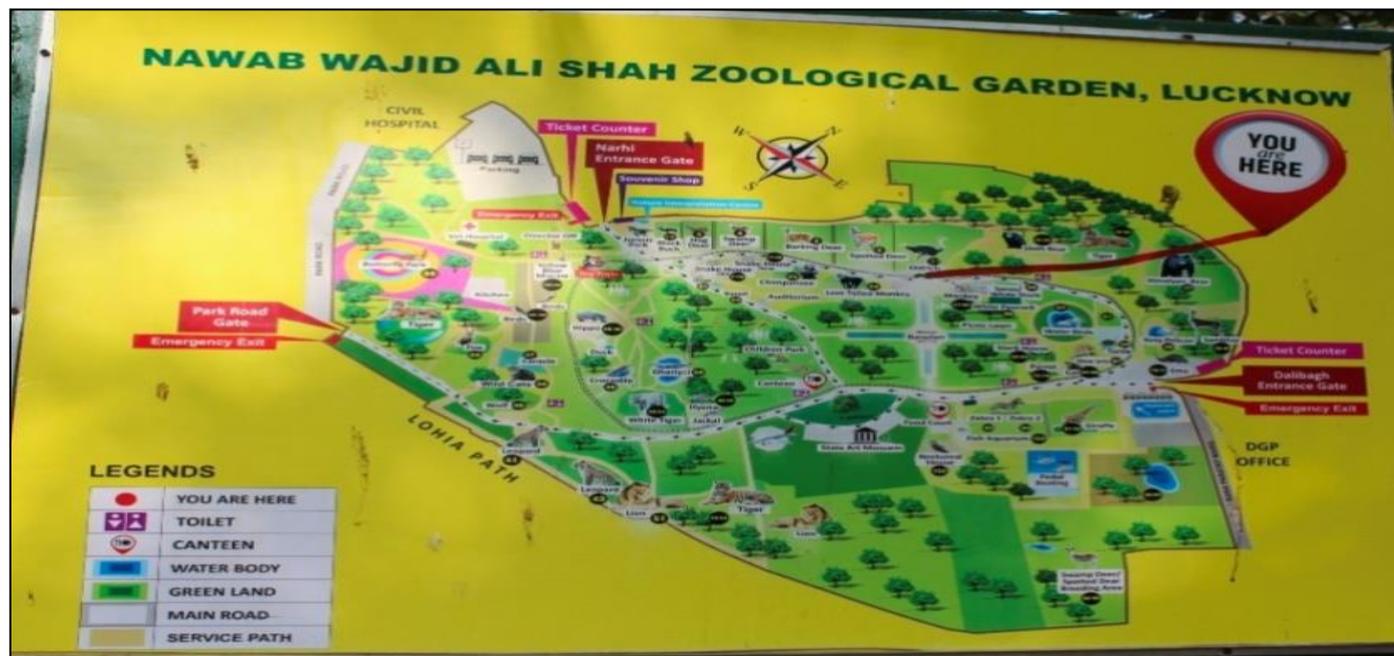
Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Prani Udyan, Lucknow, popularly known as Lucknow Zoo. (Earlier known as "Prince of Wales Zoological Gardens") was established in the year 1921 to commemorate the visit of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales to Lucknow. The idea of establishing Zoological gardens at Lucknow emanated from Sir Harcourt Butler, then Governor of the State and it was received enthusiastically by the prominent landlords and the leading citizens of the State who donated liberally for the construction of animal houses and cages and also presented animals and birds for display from time to time.

The Lucknow Zoo also houses an exhibit of Awadhi antiques from the State Museum. Aside from that, several

events, such as Wildlife Week and Children's Day, are held here.



Map 1: Satellite map of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Garden (Lucknow Zoo)
(Source: satellites.pro)



Map 2: Map of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Garden (Lucknow Zoo)

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Preparations and Data Collection

The study was conducted from December 2023 to January 2024. For the study of visitor's perception questionnaire method, Focus group discussions (FGD,) method was used.

B. The Survey Method

This research conducted through interviews of 10 to 14 mins at the Lucknow Zoo. There were five visitors skipped for each person departing the zoo in the process of selecting respondents at random. Interviews were started at 10:00 am. Additionally, to minimize bias, the same individual conducted all of the interviews, guaranteeing that the

respondents' questions would always be answered and explained in the same manner.

C. The Questionnaire Method

A questionnaire is a research tool featuring a series of questions used to collect useful information from respondents. These instruments include either written or oral questions and comprise an interview-style format.

The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions that covered a wide range of topics such as frequency, duration, and motivation of the visits, the level of satisfaction with the existing infrastructures; the distance travelled to visit the zoo; and the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Demographic Information:

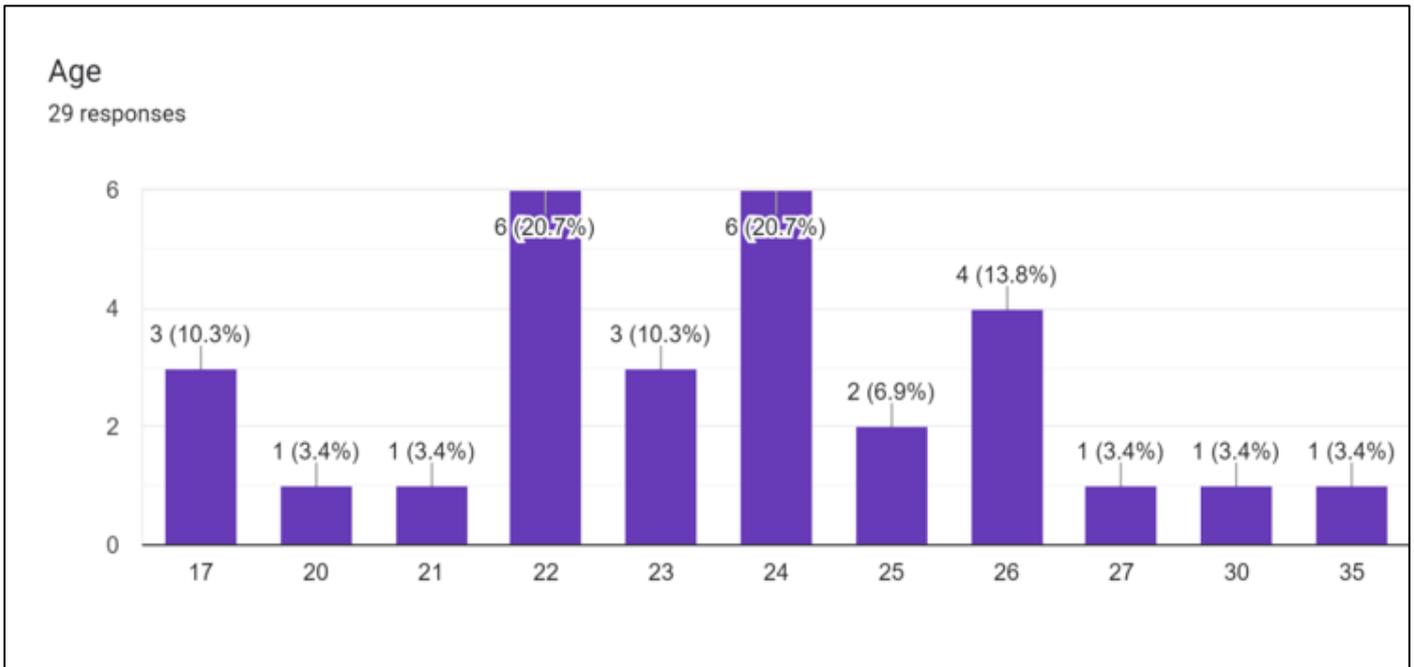


Fig 1: Age-Wise

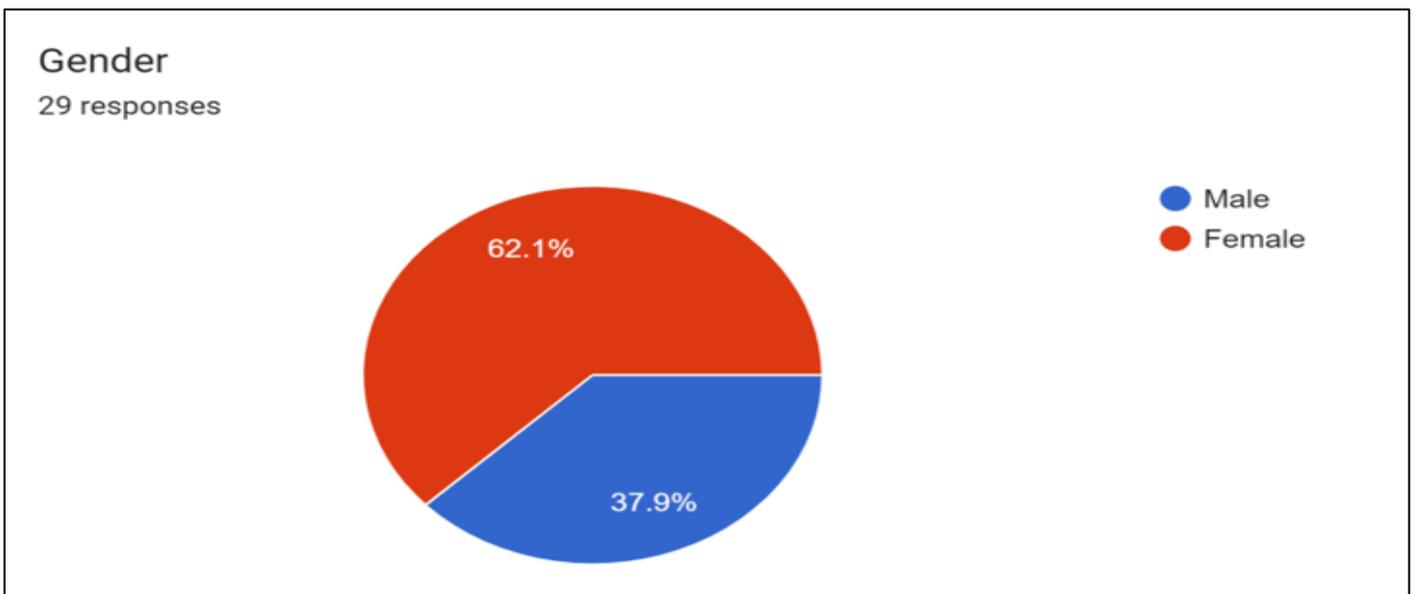


Fig 2: Gender-Wise

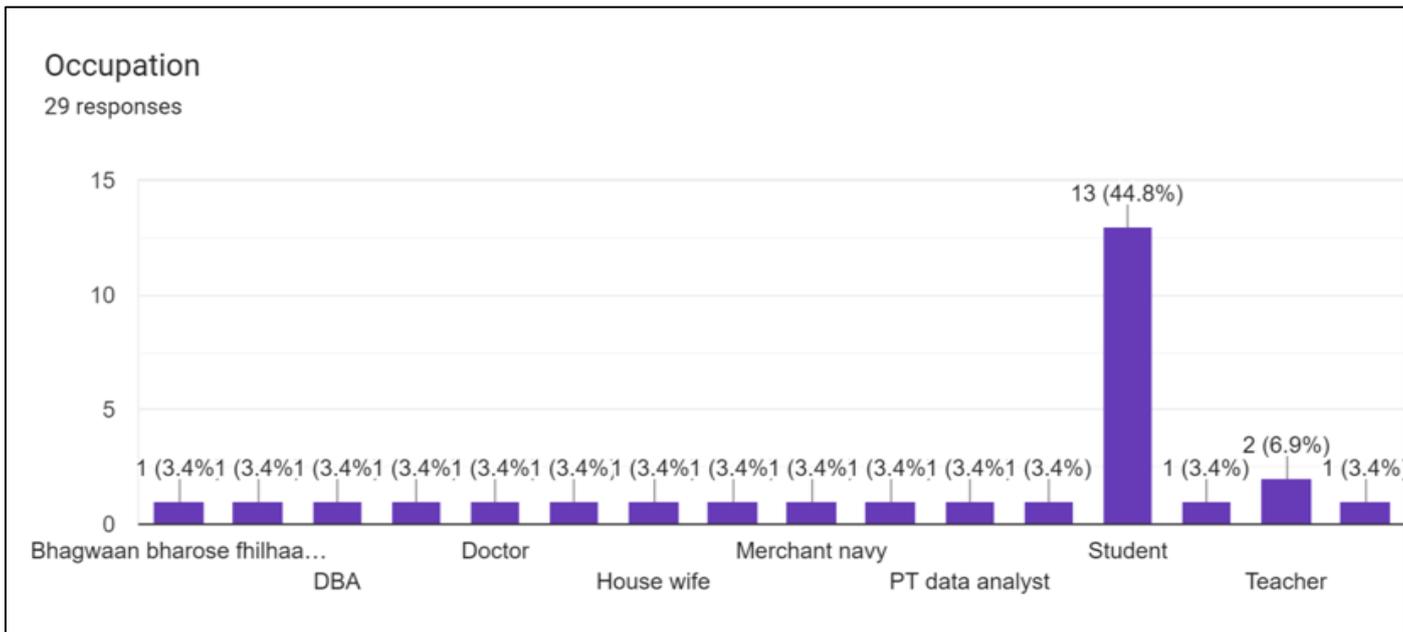


Fig 3: Occupation-Wise

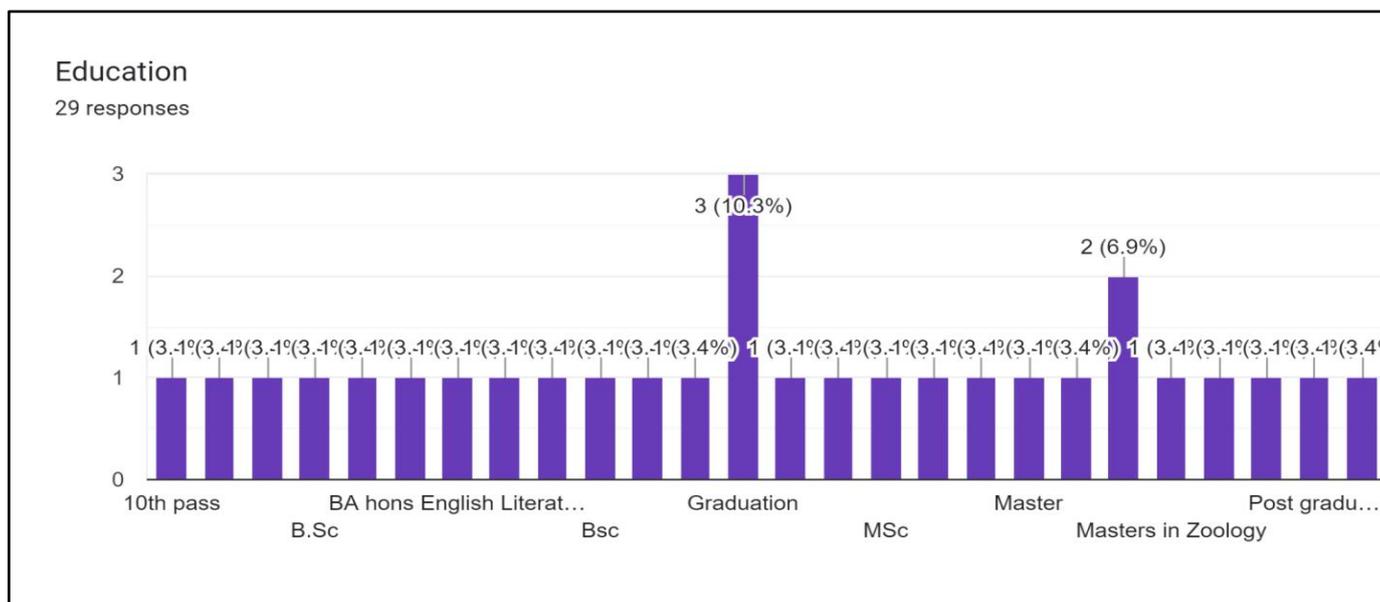


Fig 4: Education-Wise

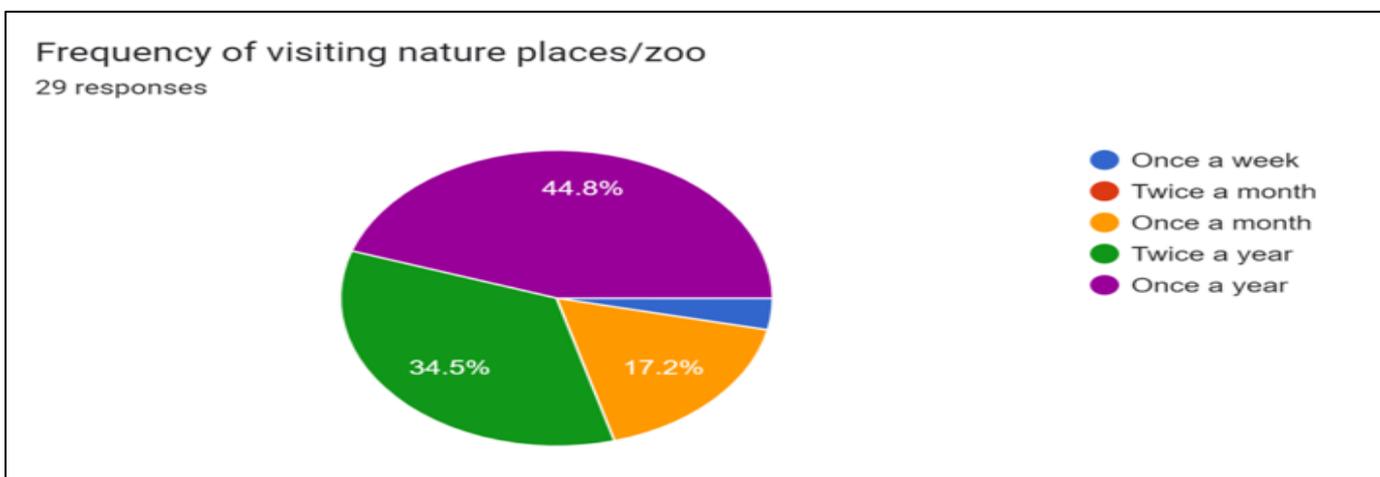


Fig 5: Frequency of Visiting Nature Places/Zoo

B. Prior Experience and Expectations:

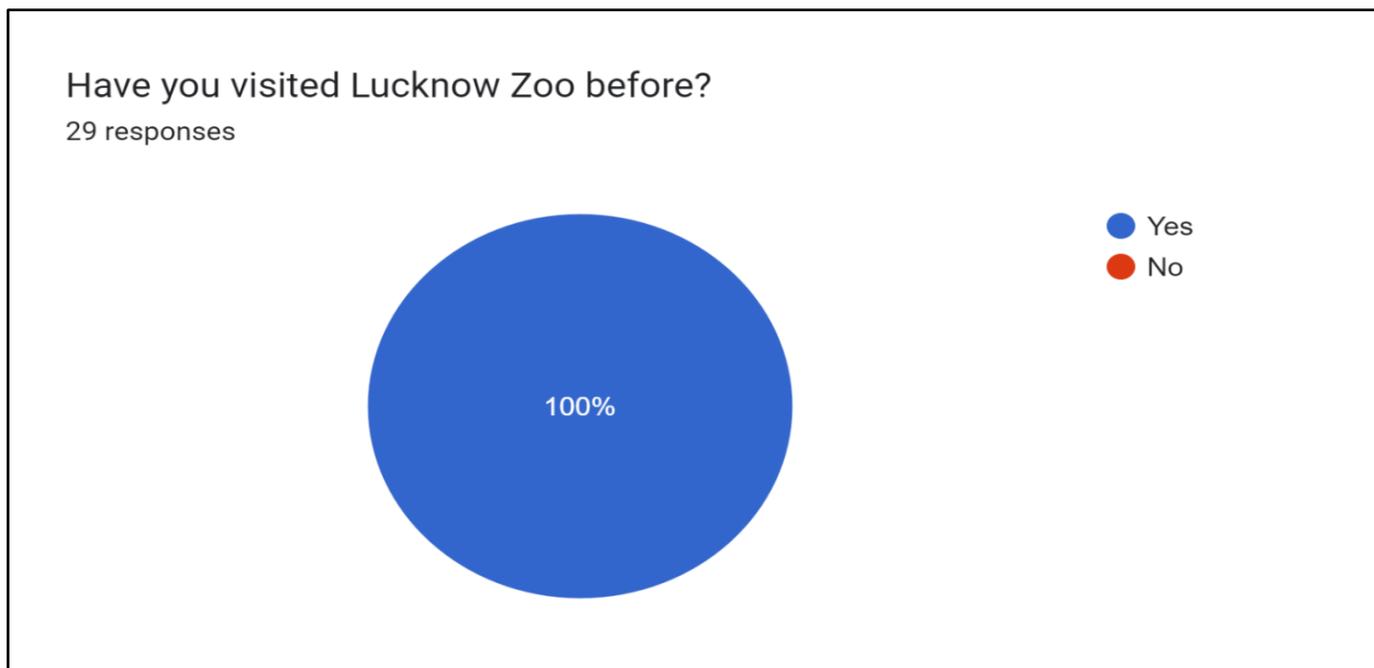


Fig 6: Have you visited Lucknow Zoo before? (Yes/No)

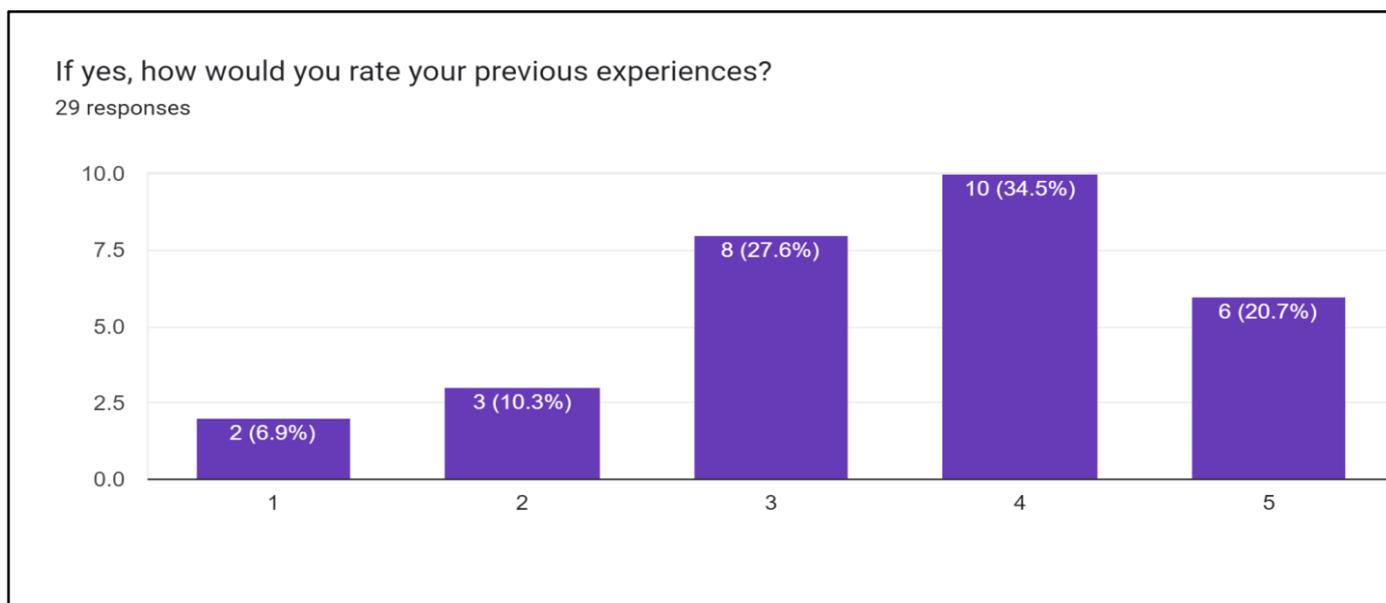


Fig 7: If yes, how would you rate your previous experiences? (Scale of 1 to 5)

➤ *What Motivated you to Visit Lucknow Zoo Today?*

- Family
- As a Zoology student, visiting zoos are a part of my education.
- The white tiger’s presence captured my attention
- As I am a Zoology student so I am Wildlife lover
- Family picnic
- Heard about renovation of the place
- For exploring the different species of animals and birds or fish and enjoying the nature

- Visiting Lucknow Zoo could be motivated by a desire to see and learn about different animal species, appreciated nature, or spend time outdoors with family and friends
- To observe Faunal Diversity with their Behaviours
- When I went inside the zoo, I found the natural environment there very nice. Green environment for people is rarely seen in a city but the person experienced great peace after visiting the zoo
- Seeing the Tiger or Lion
- Aquarium or Machli ghar/ Fish Diversity
- Wildlife week competitions
- As a kid it was a fun experience but now it hurts me to see animals in cages with lack of care and concerns

➤ *What were your Expectations before Visiting Lucknow Zoo?*

- I was expecting to see Animal Diversity and observe their Behaviours
- It would be fun
- Before visiting the zoo might have included seeing a diversity of animals up close, experiencing different habitats, enjoying time outdoors, and perhaps learning

something new about the animals you would encounter. You might have also anticipated having a fun and memorable experience with friends or family

- I'm curious to see the nature
- Not much but it was good
- Animals like Rhino
- My expectations were that by spending time around animals at my local zoo, I could enjoy multiple mental and emotional benefits that could improve my quality of life

C. *Perception of Facilities and Amenities:*

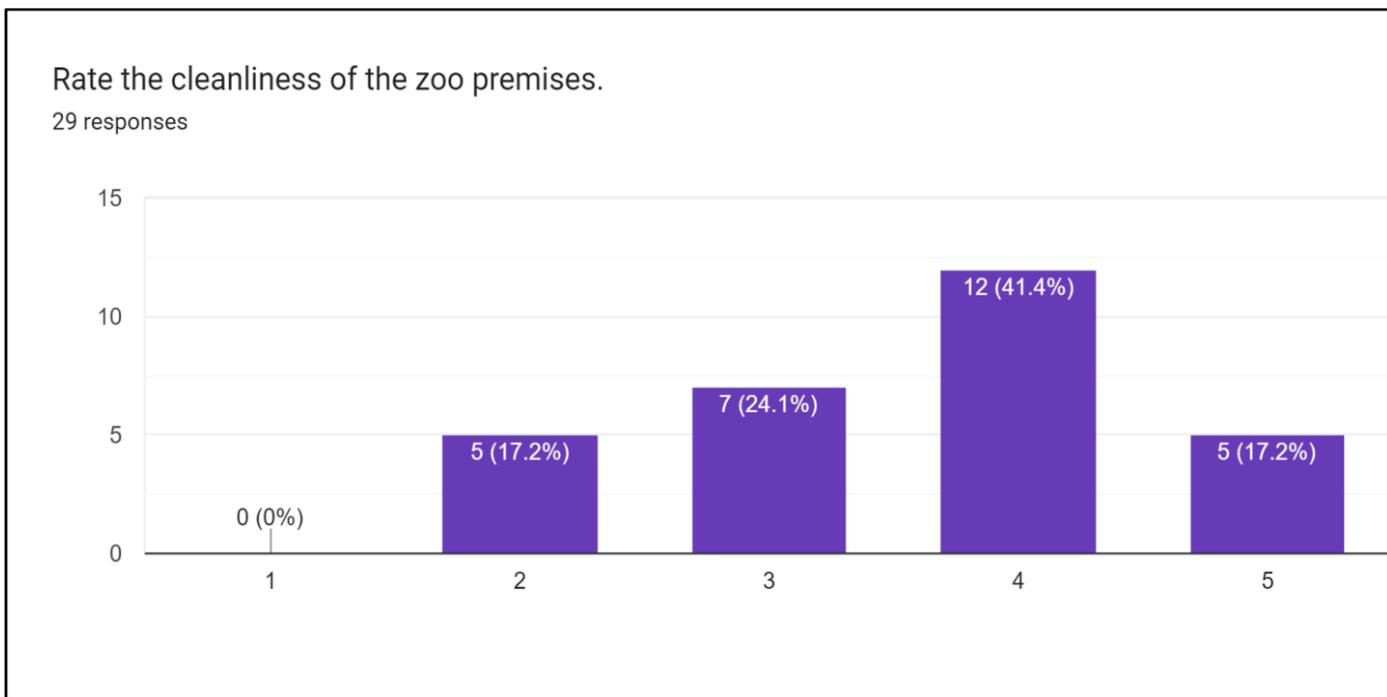


Fig 8: Rate the Cleanliness of the zoo premises (Scale of 1 to 5)

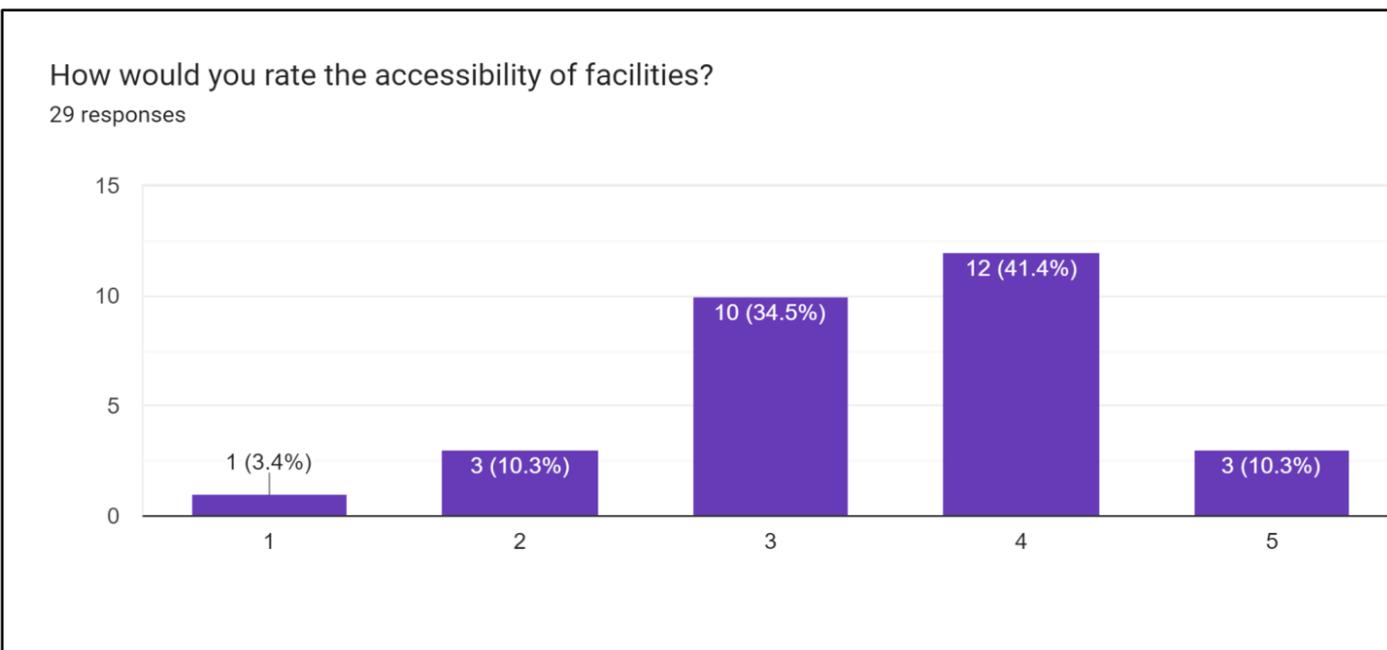


Fig 9: How would you Rate the Accessibility of Facilities? (Scale of 1 to 5)

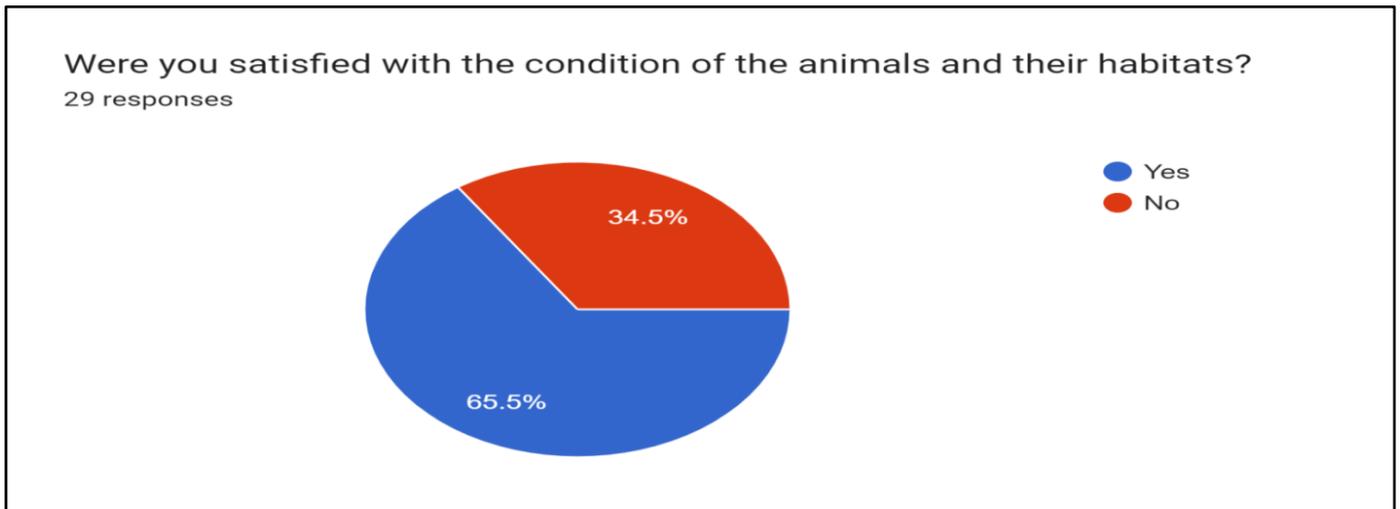


Fig 10: Were you Satisfied with the Condition of the Animals and their Habitats? (Yes/No)

D. Interaction with Animals:

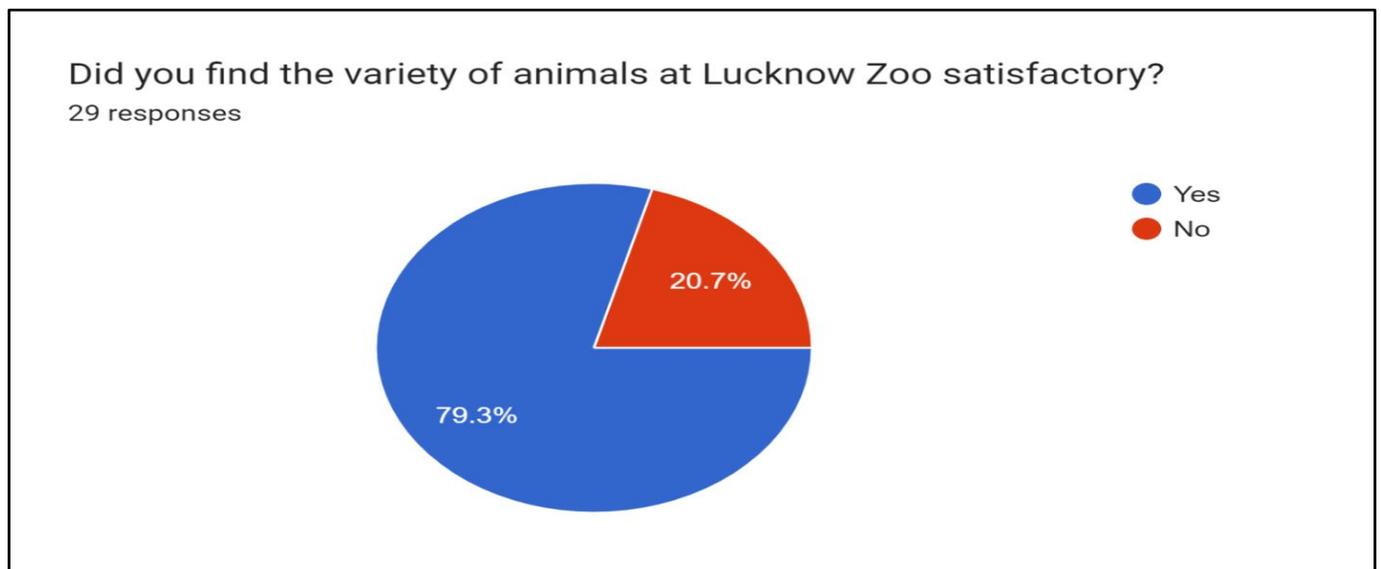


Fig 11: Did you Find the Variety of Animals at Lucknow Zoo Satisfactory? (Yes/No)

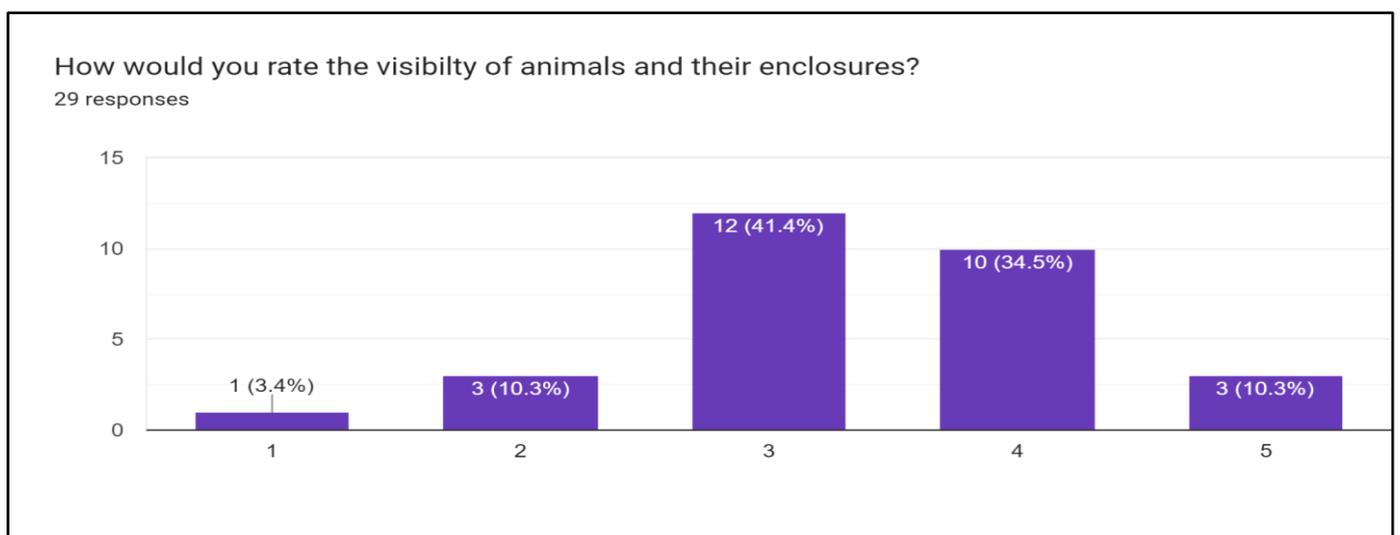


Fig 12: How would you Rate the Visibility of Animals and their Enclosures? (Scale of 1 to 5)

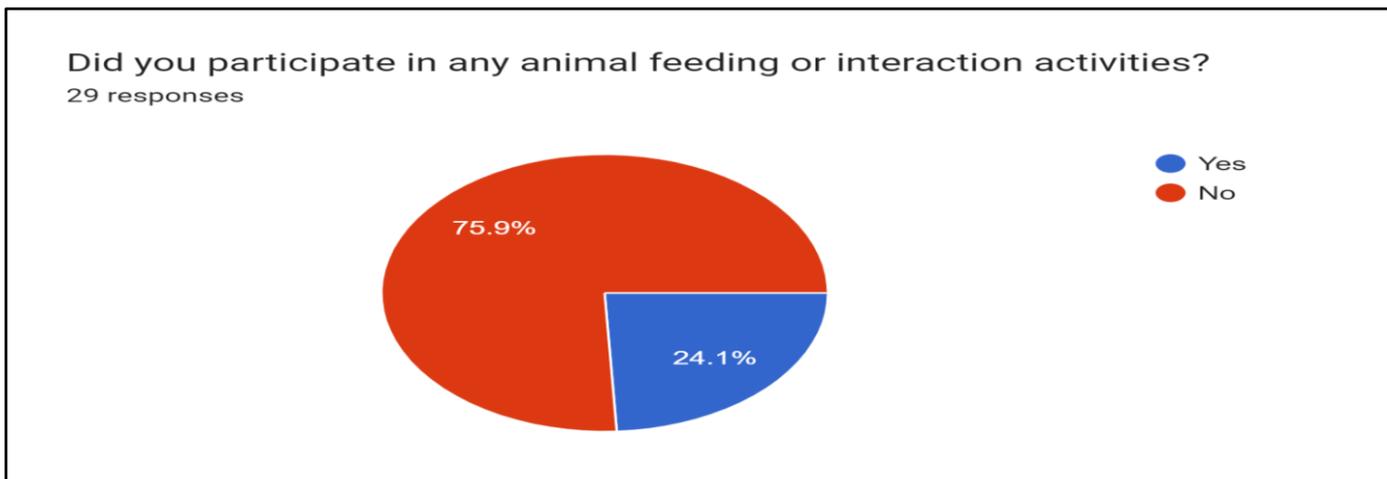


Fig 13: Did you Participate in any Animal Feeding or Interaction Activities? (Yes/No)

E. Emotional Response and Enjoyment:

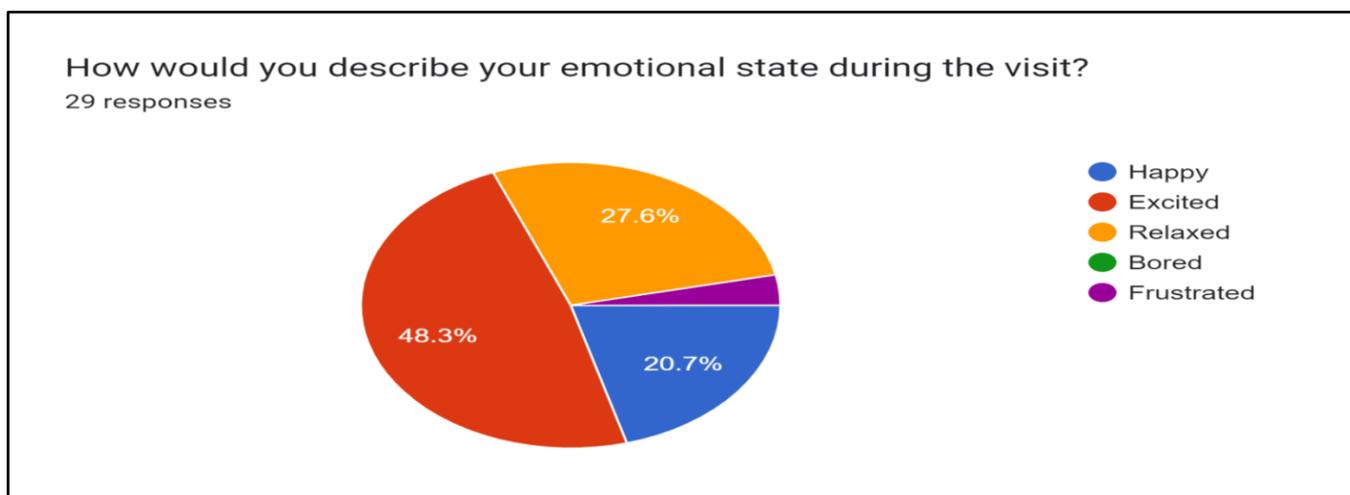


Fig 14: How would you Describe your Emotional State during the visit?
(Options: Happy, Excited, Relaxed, Bored, and Frustrated)

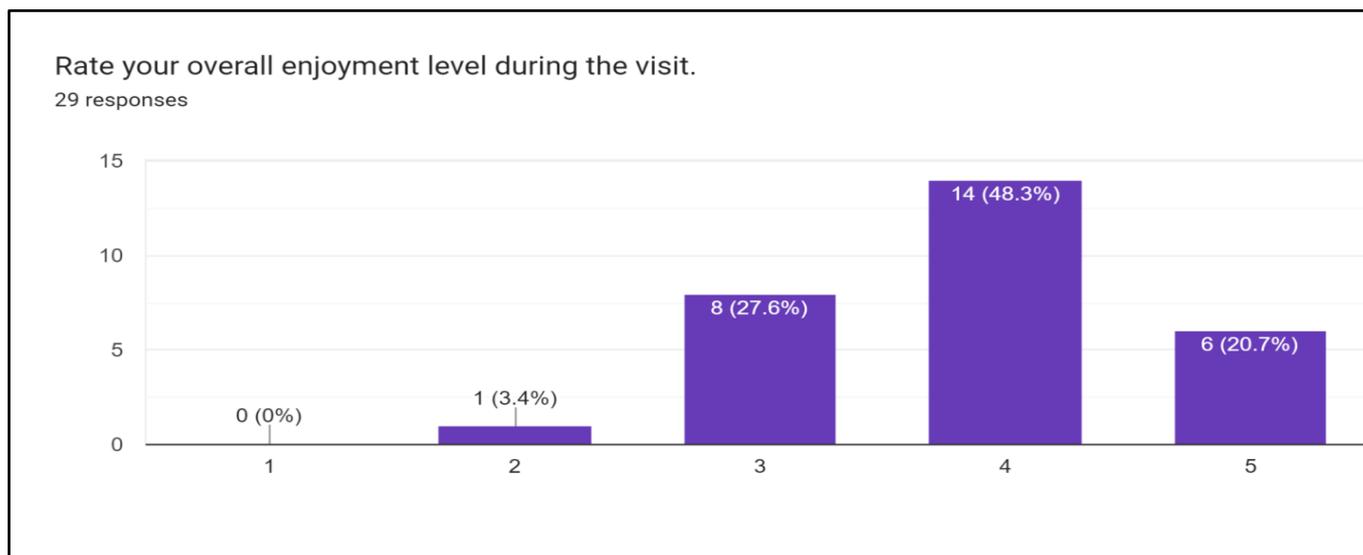


Fig 15: Rate your overall Enjoyment level during the Visit. (Scale of 1 to 5)

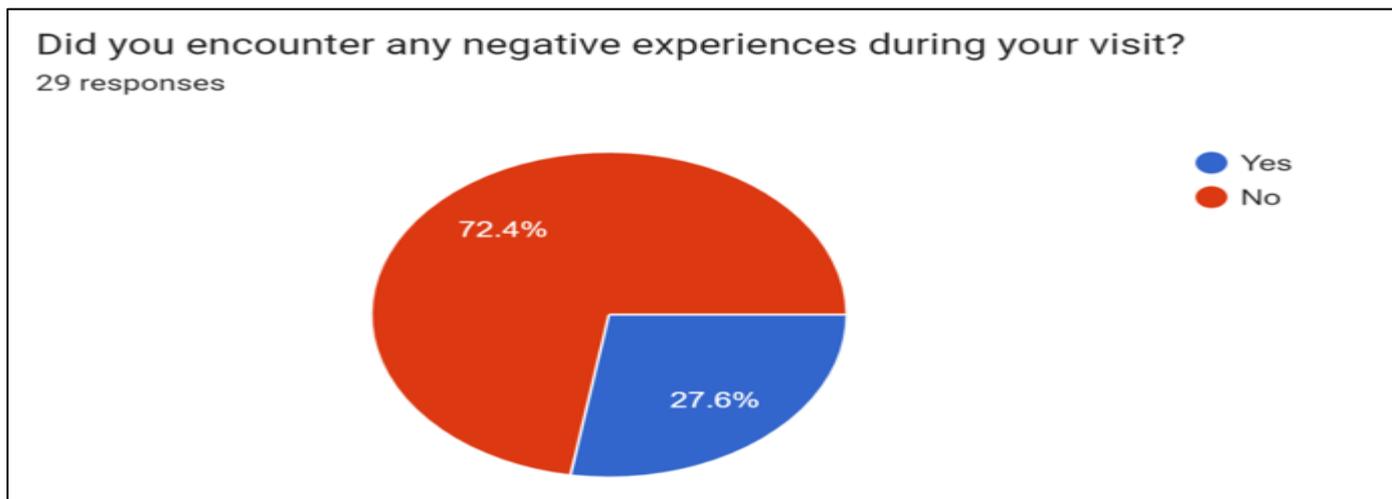


Fig 16: Did you Encounter Any Negative Experiences during your Visit? (Yes/No)

F. Education and Awareness:

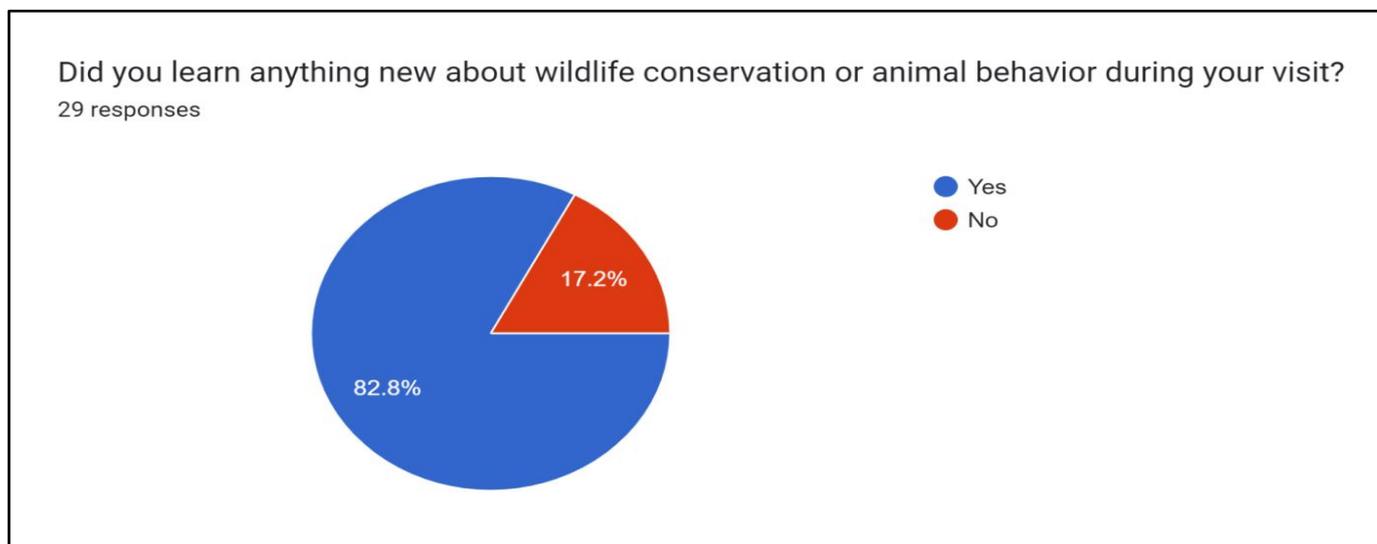


Fig 17: Did you Learn Anything new about Wildlife Conservation or Animal Behavior during your Visit? (Yes/No)

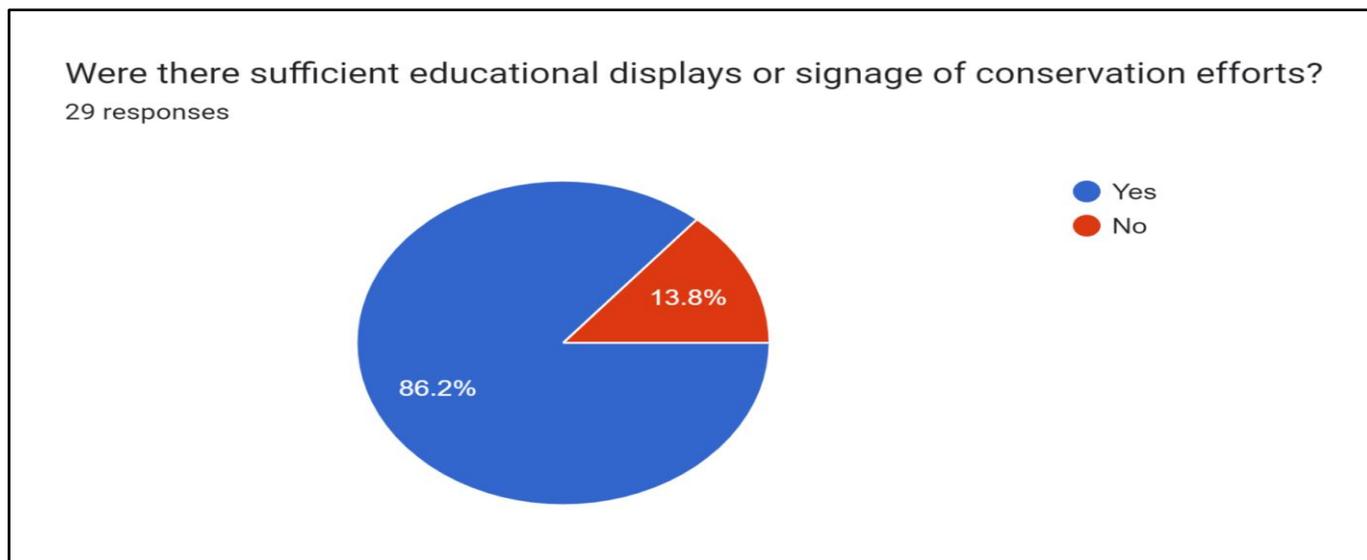


Fig 18: Were there Sufficient Educational Displays or Signage of Conservation Efforts? (Yes/No)

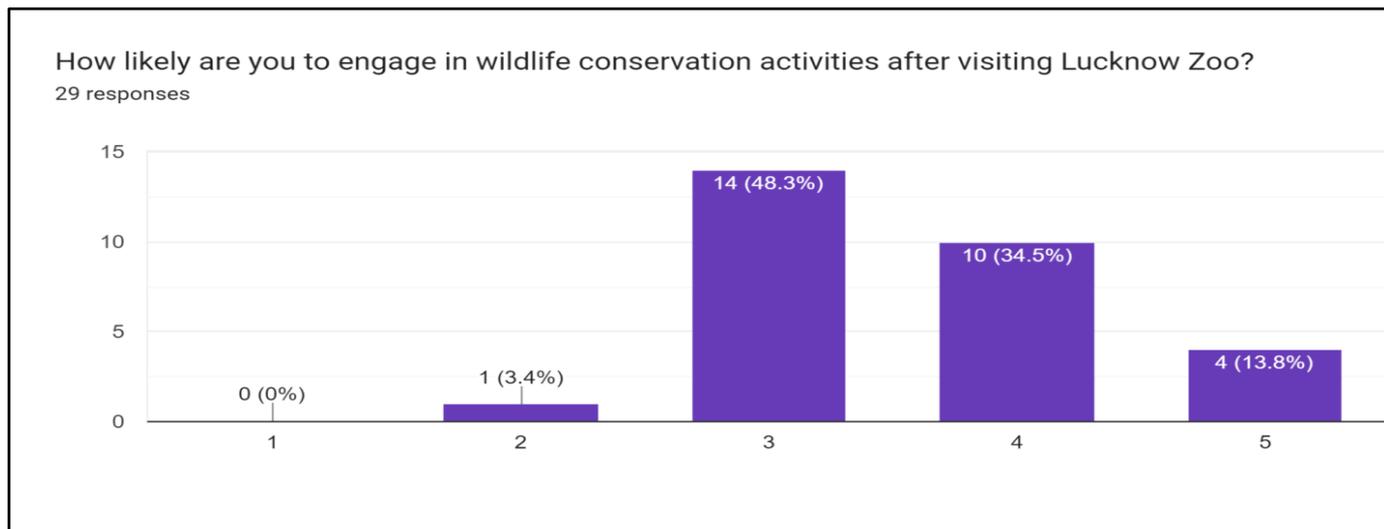


Fig 19: How Likely are you to Engage in Wildlife Conservation Activities after Visiting Lucknow Zoo? (Scale of 1 To 5)

G. Frequency of Visits:

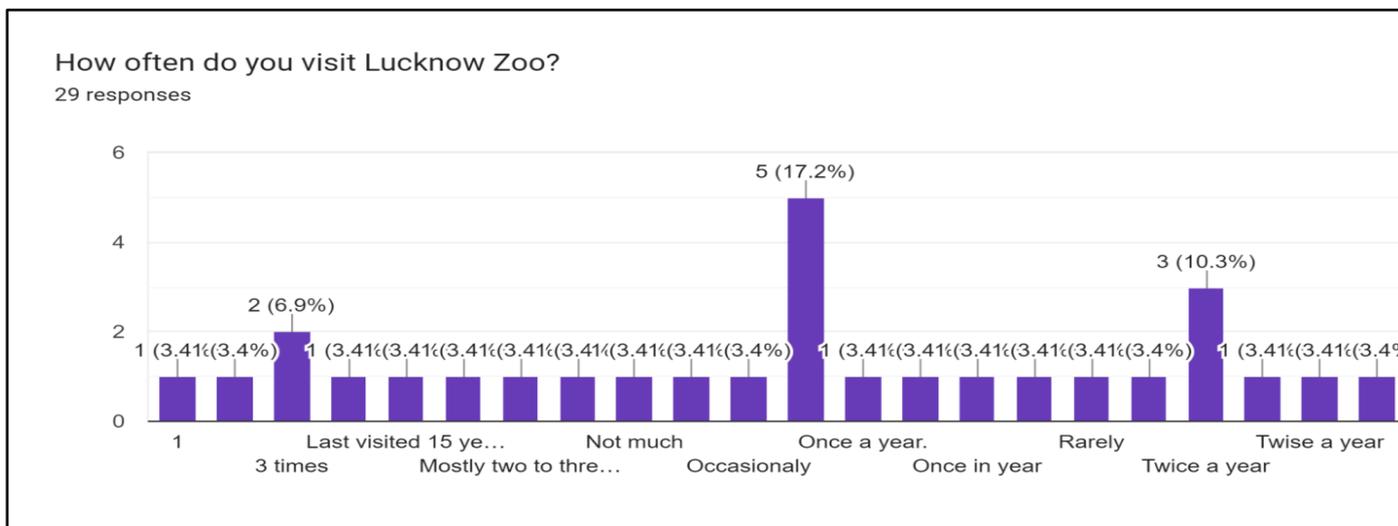


Fig 20: How often do you Visit Lucknow Zoo?

H. Perception of Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation:

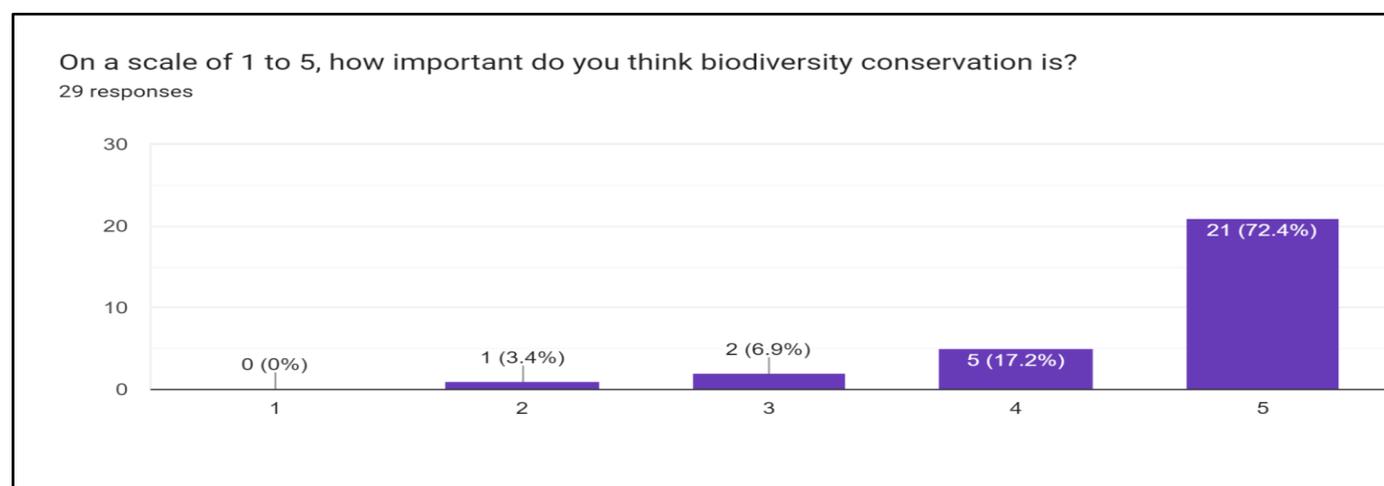


Fig 21: On a Scale of 1 to 5, how Important do you Think Biodiversity Conservation is?

➤ *What Measures do you Think are Crucial for Wildlife Conservation?*

- Yes
- I don't know
- Effective awareness among masses, from the importance of wildlife to the consequences we will face if we lose the wildlife
- Afforestation, Stop poaching and Hunting
- Rehabilitation centres, zoological parks, national parks, hotspots, wildlife sanctuaries

- Proper health checkups of animals
- No Idea
- Awareness among the average population about wildlife and the government of course, even if everyone gets aware of saving wildlife, our government should be the one to promote it on a national level instead of just deforestation by selling important biodiversity hotspots of our nation to private companies for mining and other such activities
- Community participation. Proper allocation of funds.

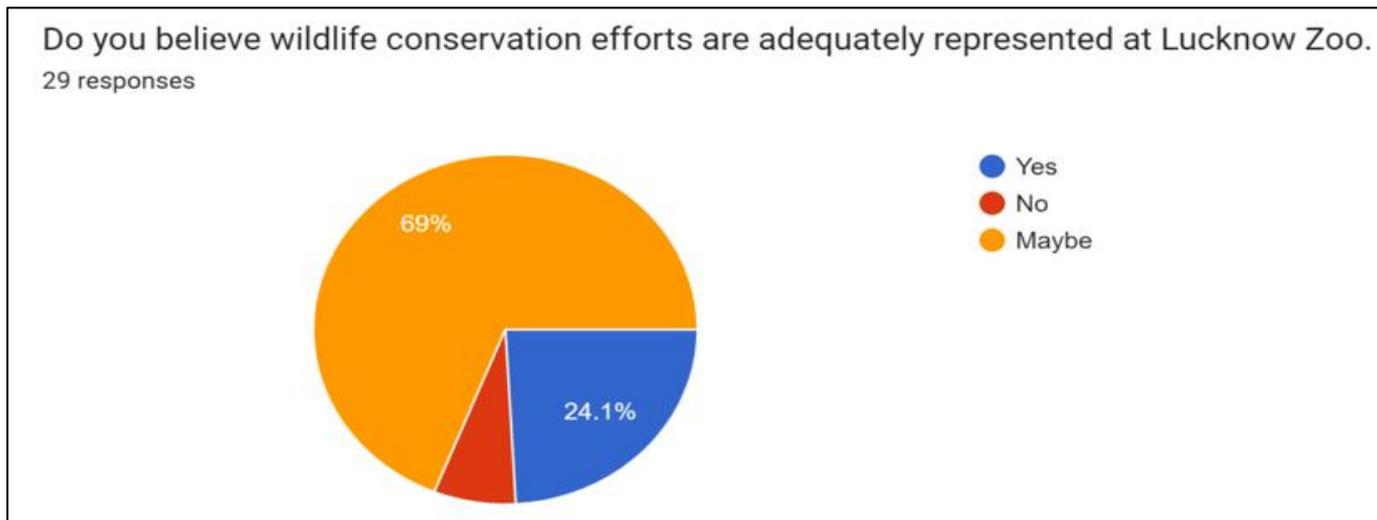


Fig 22: Do you Believe Wildlife Conservation Efforts are Adequately Represented at Lucknow Zoo?

I. *Educational Impact:*

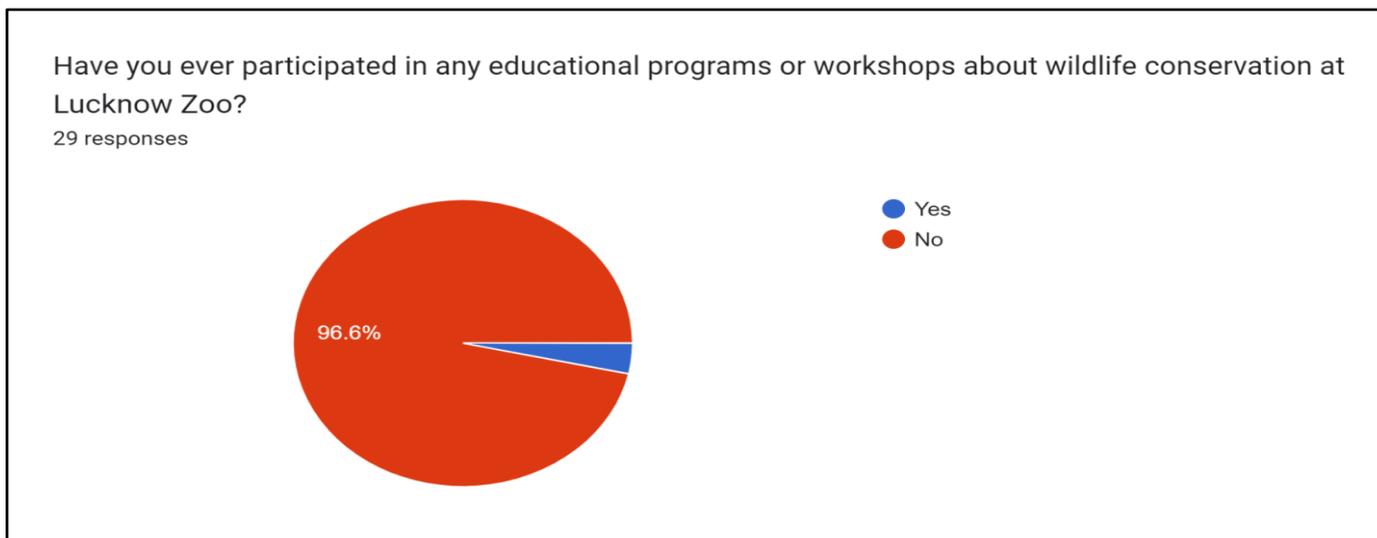


Fig 23: Have you Participated in any Educational Programs or Workshops about Wildlife Conservation at Lucknow Zoo?

➤ *If Yes, How did it Influence your Perception of Wildlife Conservation?*

- No
- Yes
- Very much

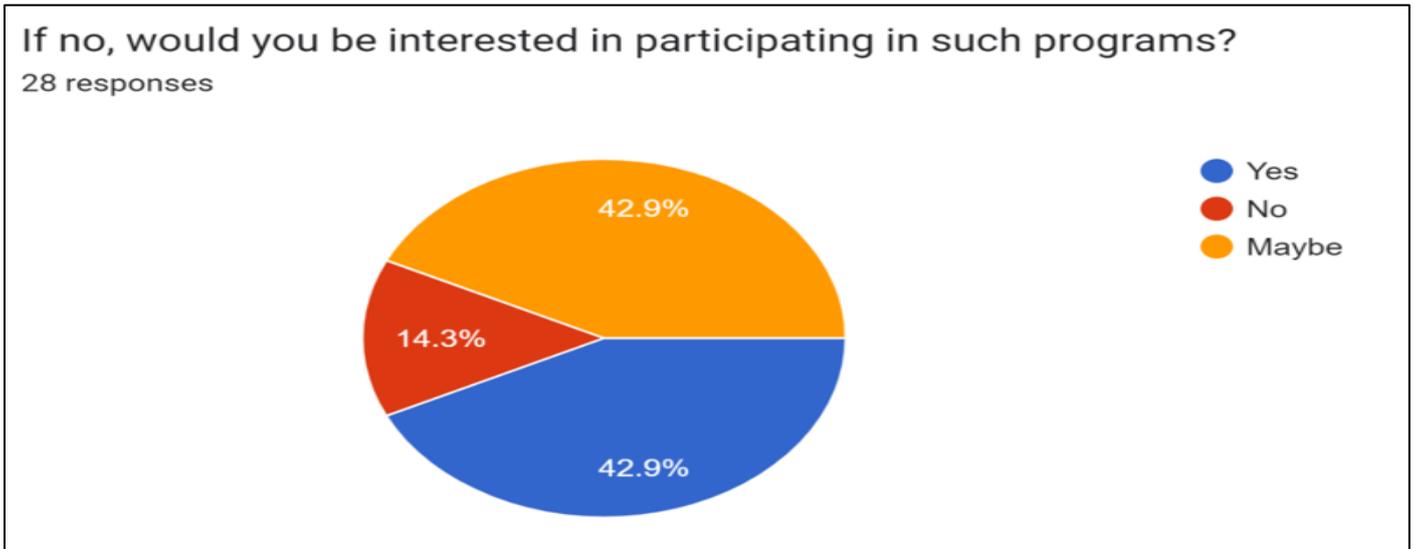


Fig 24: If Not, would you be Interested in Participating in Such Programs?

J. Experiences and Interactions:

➤ *Describe your Most Memorable Experience at Lucknow Zoo*

- I have some very dear childhood memories of visiting the zoo with my family
- Aquarium
- Sighting the Faunal Diversity
- Family & friends have fun together

- I have saw lion cubs playing among themselves. That was quite a cheering moment for me that still after 3 or 4 years I do remember it very properly
- My most memorable experience at Lucknow Zoo was witnessing the birth of a rare animal species. It was incredibly heart-warming to see the new addition to the zoo family and to know that the conservation efforts in place were contributing to the preservation of this species. The joy and excitement among the zoo staff and visitors made it a truly unforgettable moment
- School trip
- My first photo

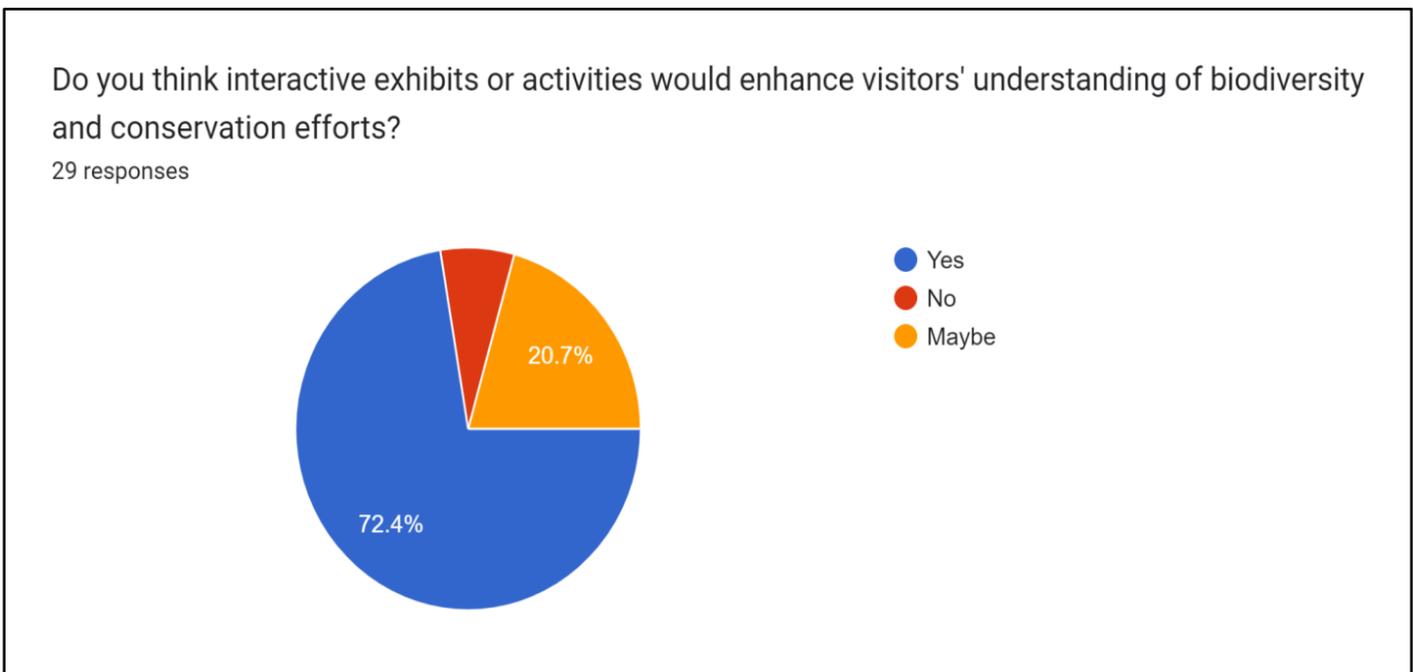


Fig 25: Do you Think Interactive Exhibits or Activities would Enhance Visitors' Understanding of Biodiversity and Conservation Efforts?

K. Awareness of Threats to Wildlife:

➤ *How Aware are you of the Various Threats Facing Wildlife Today?*

- Aware
- I am aware
- I would say fairly aware
- Spraying of Pesticides and Fertilizers to the agricultural crops or fields

- I'm quite aware of the various threats facing wildlife today, including habitat loss, climate change, poaching, pollution, invasive species, and human-wildlife conflict. These threats pose significant challenges to the survival of many species around the world and require concerted efforts from governments, organizations, and individuals to address them effectively
- By news clippings, social media outreach

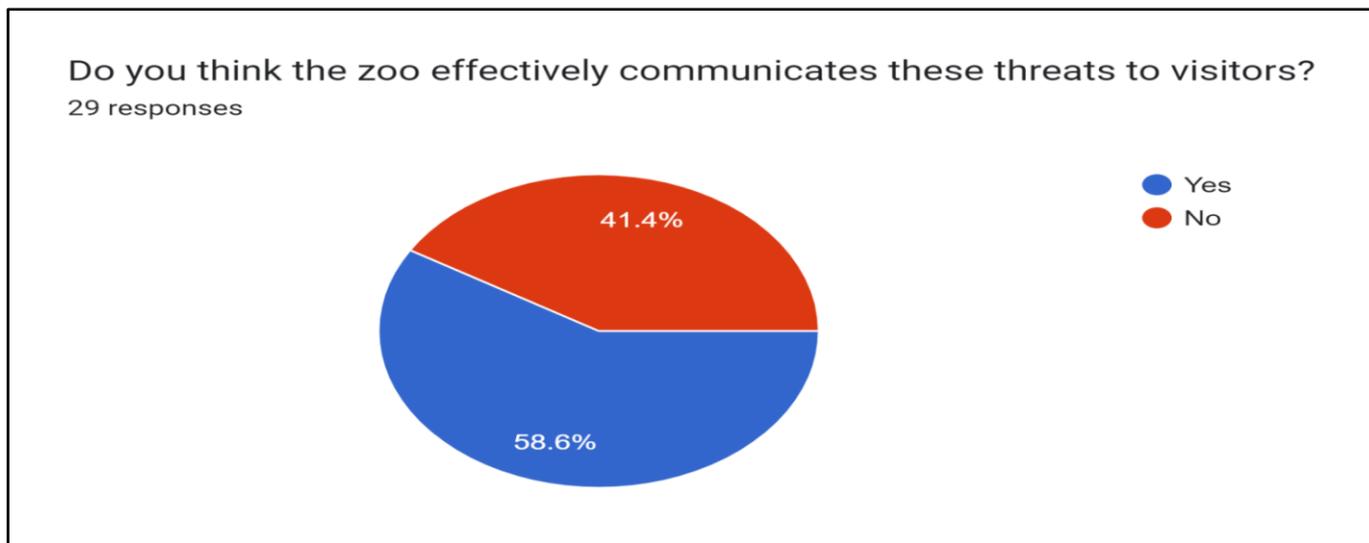


Fig 26: Do you Think the Zoo Effectively Communicates these Threats to Visitors?

L. Feedback and Suggestions:

➤ *What Improvements would you Suggest to Enhance Visitors' Experience at Lucknow Zoo in Terms of Biodiversity Education and Conservation?*

- Proper interactive sessions and displays. Along with documentaries and plays
- More precise messages in different languages
- Cleanliness is more important as dirt attracts more bacteria
- Assistance of well trained guides who can help visitors to educate them about the conservation practices
- Distribution of educational materials like brochures, pamphlets, bookmarks, field guides, etc.
- An Interpretation Centres where people can purchase items marked with various conservation ideas
- Better canteen facility and more seating area, golf carts for elderly visitors
- To enhance visitors' experience at Lucknow Zoo in terms of biodiversity education and conservation, I would suggest implementing interactive exhibits and educational programs that highlight the importance of biodiversity and the threats facing wildlife
- Additionally, incorporating signage's and displays throughout the zoo that provide information about conservation efforts and ways that visitors can contribute to wildlife conservation would be beneficial
- Zoo staff prioritize animal welfare, including medical treatment, nutrition, habitat enrichment, and enclosure

design. They should actively participate in research and conservation practices, including captive breeding and species reintroduction projects

➤ *How can the Zoo Better Engage Visitors in Wildlife Conservation Initiatives?*

- By adding the importance and status of the animal in terms of how much threat is imposed on their species next to the description of the said animal. Also, an updated census on the species and population of the animal left in the present day wildlife scenario
- By making it more clean and healthy environment for the visitors
- Educational, Awareness Activities or Programs
- Several Awareness activities like nukkad natak, seminars, and competitions etc. to educate youth, general public, students, research scholars, Zoo officials and staff
- There should be a virtual guide screen in front of every cage about that particular animal
- The zoo can better engage visitors in wildlife conservation initiatives by offering interactive experiences such as behind-the-scenes tours, hands-on activities like animal feeding or enrichment programs, and opportunities to participate in conservation projects or volunteer programs
- Additionally, providing educational workshops, seminars, and sessions on wildlife conservation topics can help raise awareness and encourage visitors to take actions
- Implementing digital platforms or mobile apps where visitors can learn more about conservation efforts

M. Overall Satisfaction:

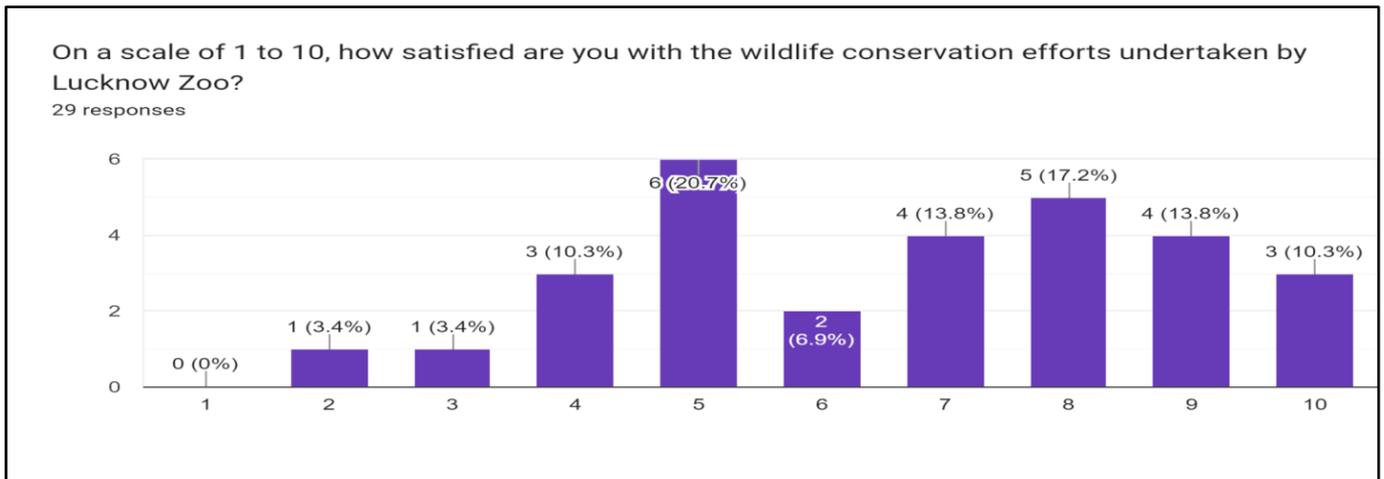


Fig 27: On a Scale of 1 to 10, how Satisfied are you with the Wildlife Conservation Efforts Undertaken by Lucknow Zoo?

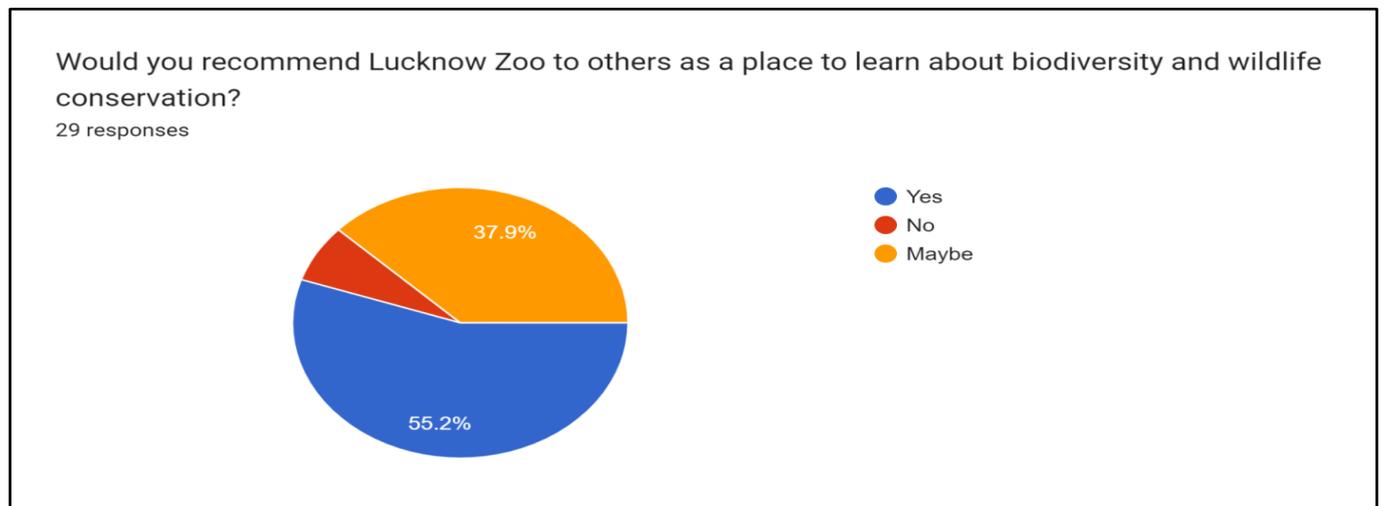


Fig 28: Would you Recommend Lucknow Zoo to others as a Place to Learn about Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation?

N. Suggestions and Improvements:

➤ *What aspects of Lucknow Zoo did you Find Most Enjoyable?*

- The amalgamation of old traditions with new ones.
- Cleanliness
- The Diversity of Animals
- Toy train
- Museum and Butterfly park
- Aquarium
- Interpretation Centres
- Natural and Green Space
- Museum

➤ *What Improvements would you Suggest to Enhance the Visitor Experience?*

- Better cleanliness
- Educational and Awareness Workshops, Events, Programs

- Educate more & please get different species of animals
- Same as mentioned in previous section

➤ *Any Additional Comments or Suggestions for the Management of Lucknow Zoo?*

- Availability of clean washrooms in different areas of the Zoo
- Setup of virtual guide screens in front of every cages
- Involvement of local communities in conservation efforts and educational programs
- Engaging nearby schools, community groups, and organizations in zoo activities and initiatives could foster a sense of ownership and stewardship over the zoo and its conservation initiatives
- Additionally, collaborating with local conservation organizations and researchers could provide valuable expertise and resources to further enhance the zoo's conservation programs and initiatives
- Regularly seeking feedback from visitors through surveys or comment cards could help the management

O. Overall Satisfaction and Recommendation:

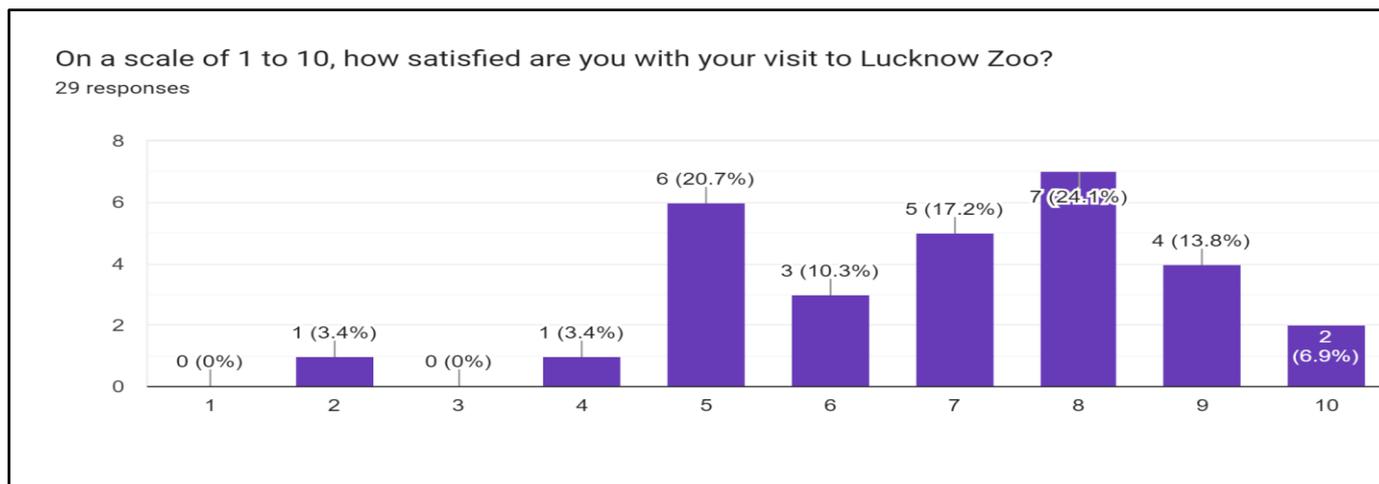


Fig 29: On a Scale of 1 to 10, how Satisfied are you with your Visit to Lucknow Zoo?

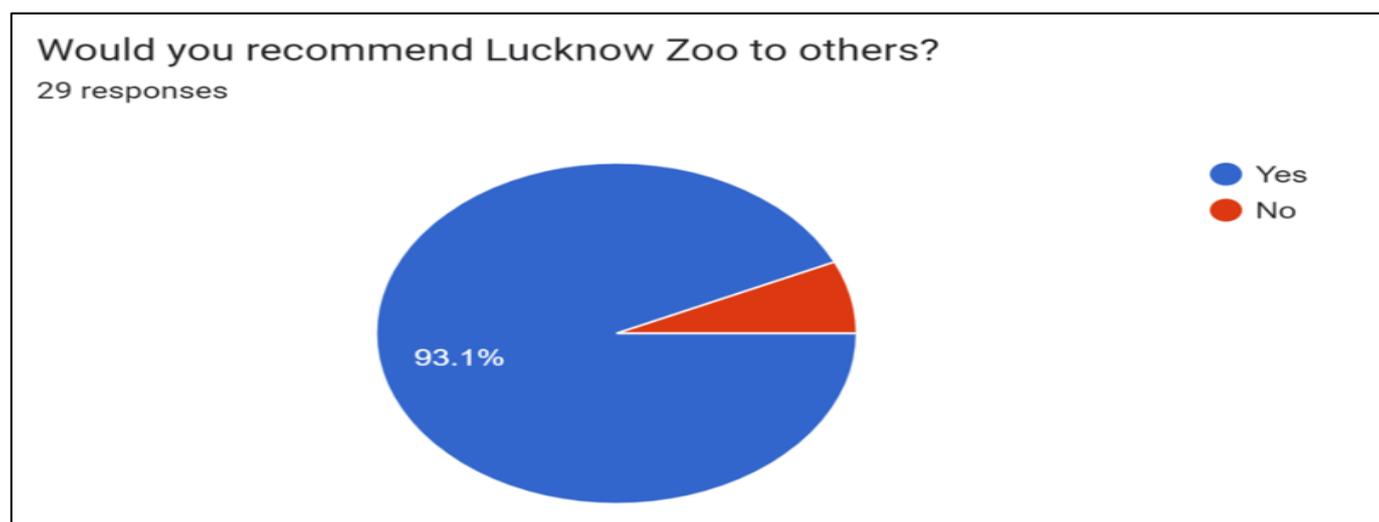


Fig 30: Would you Recommend Lucknow Zoo to Others? (Yes/No)

P. Optional: Visitor Profile Analysis:

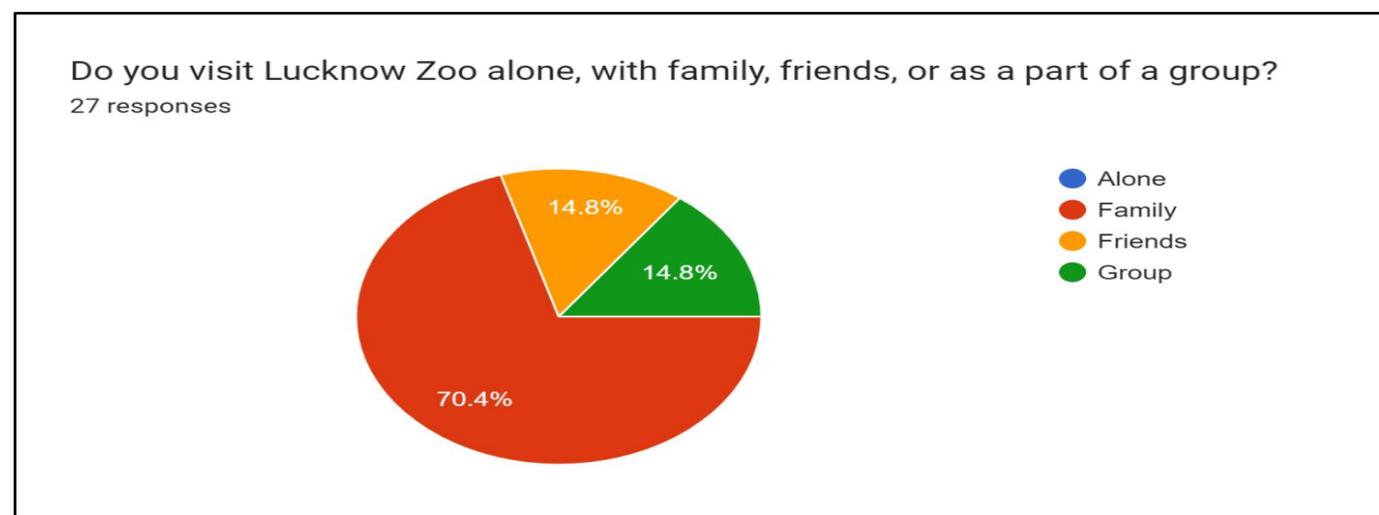


Fig 31: Do you Visit Lucknow Zoo alone, with Family, Friends, or as Part of a Group?

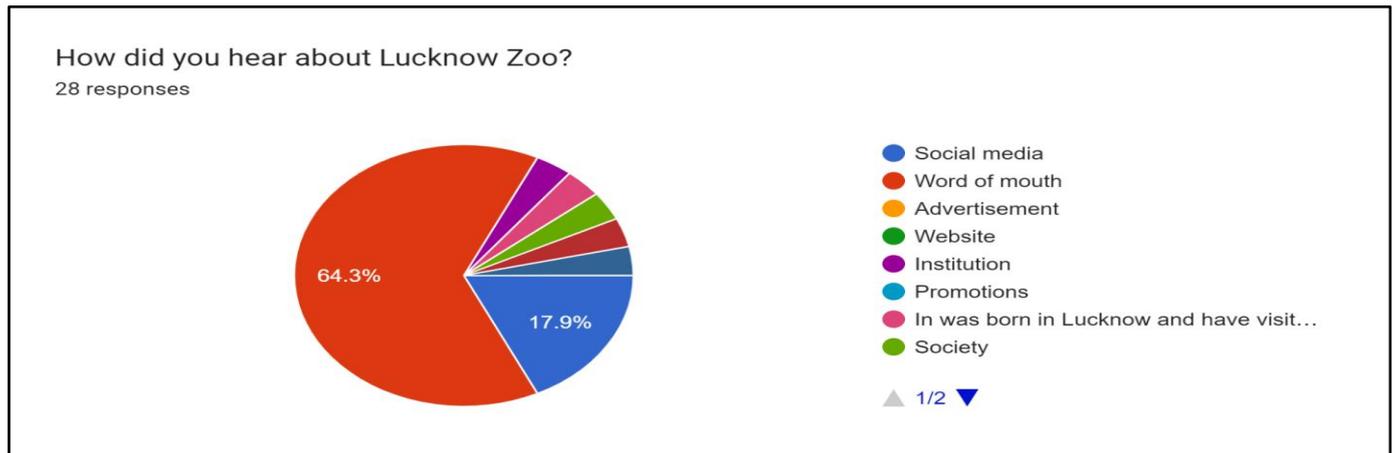


Fig 32: How did you Hear about Lucknow Zoo? (Social Media, Advertisements, Website, Institution/Schools, Promotions etc.)

Q. Additional Comments:

- Is there anything else you would like to add regarding your perceptions and experiences at Lucknow Zoo or thoughts on wildlife conservation?

V. CONCLUSION

After conducting an in-depth study on the perception of visitors while visiting nature places, focusing on a case study of a zoo, several significant conclusions have emerged.

Firstly, it's evident that visitors perceive zoos as more than just recreational spaces; they view them as educational and conservation-oriented institutions. The majority of respondents expressed a positive perception of zoos' role in wildlife conservation, education, and research. This highlights the importance of zoos in raising awareness about biodiversity and promoting environmental stewardship among the public.

Secondly, the study revealed that visitors' perceptions are influenced by various factors, including the quality of animal exhibits, educational programs, and the overall visitor experience. Exhibits that closely resemble natural habitats and provide enriching experiences tend to receive higher praise from visitors. Additionally, interactive and educational activities such as guided tours, animal feeding sessions, and informational signage significantly contribute to visitors' overall perception and satisfaction.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that visitors value the opportunity to observe and learn about a diverse range of animal species during their visit to the zoo. The presence of rare or exotic animals, along with opportunities for close encounters and animal interactions, enhances the visitor experience and leaves a lasting impression.

Moreover, the study underscores the importance of conservation messaging and ethical considerations in shaping visitors' perceptions of zoos. Institutions that prioritize conservation efforts, promote sustainable practices, and prioritize animal welfare are likely to garner greater support and positive feedback from visitors.

In conclusion, this research highlights the complex interplay of factors that influence visitors' perceptions while visiting nature places, specifically zoos. By understanding these perceptions and preferences, zoo management can better tailor their offerings to meet visitor expectations, enhance educational experiences, and further their conservation objectives. Moving forward, continued research and collaboration between zoos and academic institutions will be essential in fostering positive visitor experiences and promoting wildlife conservation efforts globally.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors express their gratitude to **Prof. Chitra Singh**, Head, Department of Zoology, Isabella Thoburn College, Lucknow for the timely guidance and support in the dissertation research work. I am also grateful to Lucknow Zoo to give me the permission to carry out this Research Work; and last but not the least thanks to the guards of zoo for their cooperation and support.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Adetola B., Adedire O. Visitors' motivation and willingness to pay for conservation in selected zoos in Southwest Nigeria. *J. Appl. Sci. Environ. Manag.* 2018; 22(4):531–537.
- [2]. Arabatzis G., Grigoroudis E. Visitors' satisfaction, perceptions and gap analysis: the case of dadia-lefkimi- souflion national park. *For. Pol. Econ.* 2010; 12:163–172.
- [3]. Bacher J., Wenzig K., Vogler M. 2004. SPSS Two-step Cluster.
- [4]. Ballantyne R., Hughes K., Lee J., Packer J., Sneddon J. Visitors' values and environmental learning outcomes at wildlife attractions: implications for interpretive practice. *Tourism Manag.* 2018; 64:190–201.
- [5]. Barbeitos I., Valle O.P., Guerreiro M., Mendes J. Visitors' motivations, satisfaction and loyalty towards Castro Marim medieval fair. *J. Spatial Organ. Dynam.* 2014; 2(1):89–104.

- [6]. Bigne J.E., Andreu L., Gnoth J. The theme park experience: an analysis of pleasure arousal and satisfaction. *Tourism Manag.* 2005; 26:833–844.
- [7]. Brace I. Kogan Page; Philadelphia, PA: 2009. *Questionnaire Design: How to Plan, Structure and Write Survey Material for Effective Market Research.*
- [8]. Bruni C.M., Fraser J., Schultz P.W. The value of zoo experiences for connecting people with nature. *Visitor Studies.* 2008; 11(2):139–150.
- [9]. Carr N., Cohen S. The public face of zoos: images of entertainment, education and conservation. *Anthrozoös.* 2011; 24(2):175–189.
- [10]. Chi C., Qu H. examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: an integrated approach. *Tourism Manag.* 2008; 29(4):624–636.
- [11]. Colléony A. Vol. 227. 2016. *Evaluating the Potential of Zoos in Reconnecting People with Nature and Conservation Issues*; p. 318. PhD Thesis in Architecture and Town Planning—Israel Institute of Technology. Ecole Doctorale Sciences de la Nature et de l'Homme – ED.
- [12]. Conway W. The role of zoos in the 21st century. *Int. Zoo Yearbk.* 2003; 38:7–13.
- [13]. Couch A.S. Michigan State University; East Lansing, MI, USA: 2013. *Zoo Visitor Satisfaction with Animal Visibility.* Master Thesis.
- [14]. Davey G. Visitor's effects on the welfare of animals in the zoo a review. *J. Appl. Anim. Welfare Sci.* 2007; 10(2):169–183.
- [15]. Dibb S. Understanding the level of marketing activity in the leisure sector. *Serv. Ind. J.* 1995; 15(3):257–327.
- [16]. Djoufras I., Karlis D. *Elements of multivariate data analysis.* University of the Aegean; Chios, Greece: 2001.
- [17]. Dominici G., Guzzo R. Customer satisfaction in the hotel Industry: a case study from sicily. *Int. J. Market. Stud.* 2010; 2(2).
- [18]. Fernandez E., Tamborski M., Pickens S., Timberlake W. Animal–visitor interactions in the modern zoo: conflicts and interventions. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.* 2009; 120:1–8.
- [19]. Filias V., Pappas P., Antonopoulou M., Zarnari O., Magganara I., Meimaris M., Nikolakopoulos I., Papachristou E., Perantzaki I., Sampson E., Psychogios E. Gutenberg Social Library; Athens, Greece: 2000. *Introduction of the Methodology and Techniques of Social Research.*
- [20]. Frangos C.K. Interbooks Publications; Athens, Greece: 2004. *Methodology of Market Research and Data Analysis with the Use of the Statistical Package SPSS for Windows.*
- [21]. orest for nongame birds, Workshop. *Proceedings of the USDA for Serv. gen. Tech Rep NC-51 268* (pp. 4–8).