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The effect of environmental enrichment and visitors on the behaviour and welfare of two captive hamadryas baboons (*Papio hamadryas*)

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Abstract

The welfare of zoo animals depends on a combination of physical, social, dietary and other ecological characteristics of the captive setting. We analysed the influence of the transfer of an adult couple of hamadryas baboons (*Papio hamadryas*) from a small and non-enriched cage that was closed to the public to a larger and enriched exhibit at the visitation area of the Sapucaia do Sul Zoological Park, RS, Brazil. A total of 350 h divided into four stages were spent observing the baboons: (i) in the non-enriched enclosure before the transfer; (ii) soon after the transfer to the enriched enclosure; (iii) six months; and (iv) 12 months after the transfer. The occurrence of stereotypic, social aggressive and social affiliative behaviours was recorded by 'all occurrences' sampling. The female showed a decrease in frequency of a stereotypic behaviour (spinning) and an increase in grooming in the enriched enclosure. The male showed a decrease in the frequency of certain stress-related or stereotypic behaviours after transfer, but other stress-related behaviours either increased or remained constant. The male behaviour of throwing faeces was affected by the presence of visitors. We suggest that the well-being of the female was more positively influenced by the new enclosure than that of the male, although gender differences may reflect the normal behavioural repertoire of this sexually dimorphic species.

Keywords: animal welfare, hamadryas baboon, public influence, stereotypic behaviour, stress-related behaviour, zoo animals