ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the group of Japanese adventure tourists to the island of Oahu, Hawaii. Its main purpose was to test a survey instrument and a set of constructs to provide socio-demographic profile of Japanese adventure travelers to Hawaii, identify their current behaviors, explore motivations to participate in (adventure) tourism activities as well as depict environmental values and beliefs. Data were obtained from a survey of Japanese travelers who were participating in selected adventure tours conducted by tour operators to the island of Oahu, Hawaii.

RESULTS: MOTIVATIONS

The motivational scale was modified and adapted from a study on leisure motivation of scuba divers from a study on leisure motivation of scuba divers where motivations were classified into four subscales (Beard and Ragheb, 1983): Intellectual (the extent to which individuals are motivated to engage in leisure activities involving substantial mental activities); Social (the extent to which individuals are motivated to engage in leisure activities for social reasons); Competence-Mastery (the extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities in order to achieve, master, challenge and compete); and Stimulus-Avoidance (the extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities in order to escape from over stimulating life situations).

RESULTS: ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES AND BELIEFS

The New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) scale was originally developed by Dunlap and Van Liere in 1978 to analyze environmental attitudes of various groups. In this study, eight value statements were adopted from the NEP framework in order to measure environmental perceptions of study participants (falling into three categories: Balance of Nature, Limits to Growth, and the Role of Humanity in Nature). Respondents were asked to answer each of the statements on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 2 = “disagree”, 3 = “neutral”, 4 = “agree”, 5 = “strongly agree”). Table 2 reports the distribution of responses for each of the statements, in percentages, along with the mean scores on a 5-point scale. Overall, respondents showed a high degree of acceptance of all NEP dimensions offered. However, it is noteworthy that some of the NEP scale items were worded in the way when actual agreement with the statement indicates rejection of it. “Balance of Nature”, most of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with all three items (all mean scores were greater than 3.0). More than 95% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the statement “Human must live in harmony with nature in order to survive” (mean score=4.3). The second statement “When humans interfere with nature, it often produces disastrous consequences” scored lower overall (mean score=4.2). Finally, about 13% of respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed with the third statement – “The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset”, versus 73% who answered positively.

“Limits to Growth”, respondents showed an overall positive attitude towards all three items, although mean scores were lower compared to the NEP dimension (“Balance of Nature”). However, it is interesting to note that 41% of respondents answered “neutral” on the statement “We are approaching the limit to the number of people that the earth can support.” Furthermore, over 20% of respondents disagreed with the statement “There are limits to growth beyond which our industrialized society cannot expand.” It is possible that rather high negative percentages attributed to these items, could be explained merely by a conceptual problem discussed above, as the terms used for wording of the items, might have been perceived differently nowadays then when developed (Alond and Jackson, 2002). “Humanity Over Nature”, the two statements within this dimension scored least, showing respondents’ rejection of the items (both mean scores were lower than 3.0). At the same time, responses within this dimension were widely distributed, mainly falling into the “neutral”/”disagree”/”strongly disagree” part.