

Leisure involvement differences in information searching difficulty and wilderness knowledge among hikers

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Abstract — This paper draws on findings from recent research to examine the type of information searching difficulty in searching hiking-related information and the relationships between the level of leisure involvement of hikers and their information searching behaviours as well as wilderness knowledge. The information difficulty include their information difficulties as measured by perceived easiness of acquiring four types of hiking-related information, and their channel preferences. The relationships are presented in a proposed conceptual framework of the outdoor recreationist information search process, and tested through two hypotheses using a survey sample. It became apparent in the study that hikers who have higher level of leisure involvement have least difficulty to acquire different types of hiking-related information and have better understanding of Leave No Trace practices. It is also found that there are significant differences in the level of difficulty of acquiring instrumental information and reassurance information. Generally, reassurance information was rated the most difficulty to obtain for hikers. The article concludes by discussing the implications for wilderness managers that is presented, and highlights the need for further investigation into outdoor recreationist information searching difficulties.

Index Terms — Information searching difficulty, Leave no trace, wilderness knowledge, hiker, backcountry, Taiwan.



TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF HIKER GROUPS ON THE LEVEL OF LEISURE INVOLVEMENT

	Hiker Group ^{1,2}				
	1	2	3	4	Overall
	N=184/sd	N=31/sd	N=293/sd	N=195/sd	N=703/sd
Attitude toward hiking	2.2/0.5 ^{2,3,4}	1.0/0.0 ^{1,4}	1.0/0.1 ^{1,4}	2.1/1.28 ^{1,2,3}	1.6/0.6
Level of expertise	17.0/8.5 ^{2,3,4}	12.9/5.3 ^{1,3,4}	2.2/1.5 ^{1,2,4}	3.8/1.7 ^{1,2,3}	7.0/7.9

¹. Comparison between hiker groups was conducted using Oneway ANOVA; both variables were found to be significant ($\alpha=0.05$) at 702 df.

². Tukey HSD was used to test post hoc differences between hiker groups; ^{1,2,3,4} indicate a significant difference ($\alpha=0.05$) was found between the respective groups.

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF HIKER GROUPS ON WILDNESS KNOWLEDGE, AND INFORMATION SEARCHING DIFFICULTY

	Hiker Group ^{1,2}					Sig.
	1 N=184/sd	2 N=31/sd	3 N=293/sd	4 N=195/sd	Overall N=703/sd	
Knowledge of LNT practices	76.4/6.5	74.7/6.9	75.3/7.0	75.9/6.8	75.7/6.8	0.282
Information Searching Difficulty	79.7/16.4 ³	81.6/14.2	74.1/18.1 ^{1,4}	78.4/15.8 ³	77.1/17.0	0.001

¹. Comparison between hiker groups was conducted using Oneway ANOVA.

². Tukey HSD was used to test post hoc differences between hiker groups; ^{1,2,3,4} indicate a significant difference ($\alpha=0.05$) was found between the respective groups.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF HIKER GROUPS ON THE FOUR MAJOR DIMENSIONS OF INFORMATION SEARCHING DIFFICULTY

Dimensions	1	2	3	4	Overall	Sig.
	N=184 %	N=31 %	N=293 %	N=195 %	N=703 %	
Orientation information	17.0	17.6	15.3	16.8	16.7	0.110
Instrumental information	26.9	27.0	24.7	26.7	25.9	0.001
Educational information	22.7	23.6	21.8	22.6	22.4	0.162
Reassurance information	13.1	13.4	11.4	12.3	12.2	0.000

¹. Comparison between hiker groups was conducted using Oneway ANOVA.

². Tukey HSD was used to test post hoc differences between hiker groups; ^{1,2,3,4} indicate a significant difference ($\alpha=0.05$) was found between the respective groups.

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