

ABSTRACT

Environmental impact of tourism is a critical issue in the mountain regions around the world. This research was conducted to study the foreign tourist's perspective about the environmental pollution and their behavior about mountain tourism activities in Hunza valley.

The data was collected by a set of questionnaires which were distributed among 300 foreign tourists, who visited Hunza in 2009 during 12th September, 2009 to 17th October, 2009. Two detailed interviews were also conducted with two tour leaders to get their perspective about environmental pollution and tourist's behavior in Hunza. Descriptive statistics along with one-way ANOVA was performed to analyze and test the hypotheses.

The research outcomes revealed that eco-tourists have identified more pollution in terms of human waste and animal litter, sanitation, scattered rubbish, noise pollution and crowding than mountaineers, trekkers and general tourists in Hunza. They strongly agreed that their behavior is positive towards environmental preservation, following the codes of conduct, local laws, customs and caring about health issues. Tourists staying for more than a week felt more pollution than those who stay in Hunza for a lesser time than a week. The tourists also agreed that they behave positively during their visit to Hunza. Furthermore, research revealed that group of more than 6 persons identified more pollution than those tourists who travelled in a smaller travel party size. The larger group also indicated that they behave positive about environmental preservation.

Results of statistical analysis indicated that there are significant differences in tourist's perception about environmental pollution and their behavior in terms of tourist type, travel party size and length of stay during their sojourn in Hunza.

On the basis of results, researcher recommends to attract more eco-tourists in the Hunza valley because of their friendliness towards the environment. This study also recommends motivating tourists to stay longer, as they seem to be concerned towards environmental preservation.

Key words: environmental pollution, eco-tourists, mountaineers, trekkers, behavior, Hunza

