



FIGURE 7. IMPACT PERCEPTION RESPONSES (N = 210).

5. Visitor perceptions of impacts

Sea-kayakers perceptions of 29 specific impact items were surveyed, covering social impacts, physical impacts, and impacts associated with the facilities and services (refer Appendix 1, Question 5). Visitors were asked to respond to each item using the options of not experiencing the impact, experiencing it but not being bothered, being bothered a little, and being bothered a lot. The complete list of responses, as summarised in Figure 7 (and Figure 8), shows that in the main most visitors did not experience most of these impacts. This may be because the impacts did not occur, or because they were not noticed by the visitor.

The most prominent impacts reported here are indicated through combining the responses of those who were 'bothered' by impacts, and those who simply 'noticed' them. These 'impact aware' responses often represented a majority of the visitors. The main examples of these more prominent impacts, which were noticed by over 60% of visitors, included 'Uncertain water hygiene' (80%), 'Motorboat disturbance on the water' (74%), 'Too many at campsites' (71%), 'Seeing too many kayaks on the water' (67%), and 'Inadequate water supply' (61%). Other impacts noticed by over 40% of visitors were 'Motorboat disturbance at huts/camps' (55%), 'Seeing litter on the water/at beaches' (54%), 'Seeing big groups' (53%), 'Noise from aircraft' (53%), 'Seeing litter at campsites' (51%), 'Inadequate toilet facilities' (50%), 'Overdeveloped campsites' (49%), and 'Over-developed signs' (42%). These were the most prominent impacts noticed by kayakers, although it should be remembered that there is a clear distinction between the impacts being 'noticed' and tolerated, and being seen as 'negative'. What contributes to the progression from noticing and tolerating an impact, to becoming bothered by it (e.g., it becomes negative) represents an important question for future research.

The most negative impacts, representing those which most 'bothered' the visitors, were those associated with water hygiene, litter, motorboat disturbance and campsite congestion. The most prominent of these was 'uncertain water hygiene', which bothered over half (59%) of kayakers. This was a response to the statement 'uncertainty about the water always being safe to drink'. From consultations with managers, it can be concluded that this response most often represents general caution about water quality, rather than being a direct reaction to hygiene problems experienced on the visit. It was not clear if this caution was related to all water sources on the trip, or just those in streams. Many visitors were also bothered by perceptions of inadequate water supply (28%) and toilet facilities (23%), indicating the water, toilet and hygiene conditions were a particular issue for kayakers. Other perceptions of physical impacts which notably bothered kayakers included seeing litter on the water/at beaches (42%), at campsites (41%), and on the tracks (25%), along with seeing toilet paper/waste (28%).

Perceptions of social impacts that bothered visitors included disturbance by motorboats on the water or at beaches (53%), and at overnight huts or campsites (42%). A high proportion of kayakers (38%) were also bothered by seeing too many other visitors at campsites. However, only 19% of kayakers were bothered

Continue to next file: Sfc079d.pdf