

Motives for climbing Mount Fuji: A Comparative Study of Domestic and International Climbers

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The increasing number of international climbers at mountainous destinations necessitates monitoring of the demographic profile and motivation of existing and emerging visitor segments. This paper compares domestic and international climbers descending from Mount Fuji in the summer 2015 season. An intercept survey was conducted over five days near the 5th station trailhead on Yoshida, which has the highest footfall of Fuji's four trails. In total, 989 questionnaires were collected from domestic (n=408) and international (n=581) climbers. Findings revealed international climbers to be younger, with lower annual income. Most international climbers were tackling Fuji for the first time (95%), whereas 42% of Japanese had climbed before. The two segments showed common and unique motives. Amongst commonalities, the challenge of reaching the highest peak in Japan dominated both segments, but Japanese were less likely to seek solitude or meeting new people. This research identified variance in climbing motivations. These findings have applications for segment-based monitoring research, and implications for targeted management strategies.

Keywords: mountain climber segments, comparative study, motivation, Mount Fuji