



Figure 6. Satisfaction responses ordered in summary scale structure. (This is a reorganisation of material presented in Figure 5.)

#### 4.1.2 Significant findings

Using the SPSS MANOVA routine, a series of multivariate analyses of variance were carried out on these satisfaction scales. The same approach was subsequently used for impact perception scales (Section 5.1) and scales of attitudes toward management options (Section 6.1).

Differences in these satisfaction scales according to age-group (over and under 40 years), gender (male/female), nationality (New Zealand and overseas), and crowding perception (uncrowded/crowded) were analysed (refer Section 4.1 for method). The significant effects and interactions associated with the analysis using these independent variables are summarised in Table 2. These results indicate that hut conditions, and to a lesser extent track conditions and information services are particularly important for management attention.

TABLE 2. SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON SATISFACTION SCALES (HUT USERS ONLY)\*.

| SOURCE OF SIGNIFICANT EFFECT†                        | SIGNIFICANT SATISFACTION SCALES‡                    | MEAN VALUES (ADJUSTED§) |         |
|--|---|-------------------------|---------|
|  |   | Uncrowded               | Crowded |
| Crowded effect<br>( $F(3,338) = 6.68, p = .000$ )    | Hut conditions<br>$F(1,3408) = 14.95, p = .000$     | 1.84                    | 2.10    |
|  | Information services<br>$F(1,340) = 5.11, p = .024$ | 1.46                    | 1.54    |
| Age-group effect<br>( $F(3,3384) = 2.80, p = .040$ ) | Information services<br>$F(1,340) = 8.00, p = .005$ | 1.56                    | 1.29    |
|  | Track conditions<br>$F(1,340) = 3.52, p = .061$     | 1.67                    | 1.40    |

\* The significance of overall satisfaction effects was tested using the Wilks' criterion in the SPSS MANOVA.

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‡ A series of univariate ANOVAs in the MANOVA identified the contribution of each satisfaction scale to the overall significant effect, and identified these listed scales as being significant.

§ Mean values for the summary scales are divided by the number of constituent items to give a interpreted using the original question categories (e.g., 1 = Very Satisfied 3 = Neutral 5 = Very Dissatisfied).

#### ***Crowded effect***

Visitors who felt crowded were significantly less satisfied with facilities and services than were uncrowded visitors. This difference was based most upon their relatively lower satisfaction with hut conditions, and with information services to a lesser extent. However, this finding must be seen in context of the generally high levels of satisfaction, where their mean scores of less than 2.00 places them well within the 'satisfied' category overall. This means that crowded visitors should be considered as being only less strongly satisfied rather than distinctly more dissatisfied. Reference to the other mean scores in Figure 8 indicates this interpretation applies to all the effects summarised there.

Additional exploration<sup>6</sup> of the individual items comprising the ‘hut conditions’ and ‘information services’ scales (refer Table 1 and Figure 6) revealed that some items appeared to contribute more to the uncrowded/crowded difference. For the ‘hut conditions’ scale, insufficient bunk numbers and space to relax in huts appeared the most prominent items. Impact items of secondary importance included space for washing-up in huts, and the hut toilet facilities. For the ‘information services’ scale, satisfactions with all constituent items were consistently lower among the crowded visitors, suggesting they had a general preference for more information. Overall, the bunk capacity and space characteristics of huts appeared the most important sources of difference between the specific satisfactions of uncrowded and crowded visitors.

### ***Age-group effect***

Younger visitors (under 40) were significantly less satisfied with facilities and services than were older visitors (over 40). This difference was predominantly based on their relatively lower satisfaction with information services. Of secondary importance was the lower satisfaction with track standards among younger visitors. Additional exploration of the ‘information services’ scale indicated that while all the constituent items exhibited relatively similar lower satisfaction among younger visitors at similar levels, information from visitors centres emerged as a prominent individual item. Additional exploration of the ‘track standards’ scale indicated a similar general pattern, with satisfactions with steps and distance/time signs on tracks emerging as more prominent individual items. These findings suggest that although satisfaction with facilities and services is high overall, younger visitors appear relatively less positive about what they receive.

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<sup>6</sup> Comparison of response to the dependent variable, for each item comprising the significant scales, was carried out mainly using the Mann-Whitney test. This provided a conservative test to identify the items which appeared to contribute most to the overall effect. Multiple ANOVA tests were also run which supported Mann-Whitney test findings. This complementary approach was applied to the constituents of all significant scales identified in this report.

#### 4.2 RELATING SATISFACTION SCALES TO OVERALL TRIP EVALUATIONS

None of the satisfaction scales were significantly associated with the overall satisfaction or use-level evaluations (e.g., crowding). No notable correlations or significant relationships (using SPSS Multiple Regressions) were found. The state of facilities and services experienced on the Kepler Track did not appear to contribute at all to how the overall trip was evaluated. In particular, the lack of any notable relationships between overall satisfaction and any of the facility and service satisfaction scales indicates these questions represent distinctly different visitor perspectives on visit satisfaction. This is an important distinction to acknowledge as simply applying a single overall evaluation of satisfaction appears unlikely to highlight any specific-issue satisfaction problems until they are of an order where visit quality may be already highly compromised, and the problems are more difficult to manage.

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