

# **Research into Activity Recreation**

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- 1. Researching Trends in Activity Recreation**
- 2. Understanding Lifestyle Activities**
- 3. Participation in Activity Recreation**
- 4. Implications for Resource Management**



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FAMILY	SPECIES			MUTANTS		
CLIMBING	High-altitude mountaineering Solo climbing Ice climbing	Indoor climbing Rock climbing Sport climbing	Bouldering Sea-level traversing Coasteering Abseiling	BASE (buildings, antenna tower, span, earth) jumping	Extreme ironing	
CAVING	Pot-holing	Mine exploration				
MOTORISED WATERSPORTS	Water-skiing Ribbing	Wakeboarding Jet skiing	Powerboat racing	Barefoot waterski jumping		
WIND-POWERED WATERSPORTS	Windsurfing Dinghy sailing	Cruiser sailing	Yachting	Speed sailing Endurance sailing	Ocean yacht racing	Kitesurfing Trifoiling
WAVE/ WATER-POWERED WATERSPORTS	Body boarding	Surfing	Rafting			
MUSCLE-POWERED WATERSPORTS	Canoeing	Kayaking	Dragon boating	Canoe polo Play canoeing Whitewater kayaking	Open water swimming Deep water swimming	Snorkelling Underwater hockey
DIVING	SCUBA diving	Free diving	Deep water diving			
MOTORISED LAND SPORTS	4x4 driving Enduro biking	Motocross Rally driving	Quad biking			
NON-MOTORISED LAND SPORTS	Skateboarding Snowboarding	Land yachting Street luge	Rollerblading/ in-line skating	Ice yachting Ice sailing Mountainboarding Sandboarding Speed skiing	Barefoot snowskiing Parachute skiing	Mono skiing Extreme skiing
AIR SPORTS	Hang-gliding Parachuting	Microlighting Gliding	Paragliding	High wire Ski flying Soaring Air chair	Para bungee Heli-bungee	Hot air balloon epics
CYCLING	Trail riding	Downhill riding	BMX	Speed biking	Bicycle polo	Bicycle stunt
OTHER LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES	Orienteering Canyoning	Bungee Rope courses	Gorge walking Parakarting	Ultra marathoning Ultimate fighting		

### Introduction: researching emerging trends in activity recreation

- Ethos of 'doing it'; participation; fun; hedonism; involvement; self actualisation
- Emphasis on the 'grass roots'
- Distinctiveness from conventional/traditional sports and recreation activities
- Potential to engage alienated youth



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### Introduction: researching emerging trends in activity recreation

- Lifestyle sports tourism: a learning environment
- C. 3m UK adults take holidays that include activity recreation (collectively worth £700m + per annum)
- C. one-third on US domestic flights are related to activity recreation
- Spectrum of participation: club weekends; activity holidays; extreme action
- 'Hard' and 'Soft' adventure
- Activity sports camps
- Extreme sports participants as semi-permanent/professional tourists



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## 2. Understanding Lifestyle Activities

- Life 'style' sport, consumption and choice
- new forms of social identity, consisting of:
  - I. Choices* – people themselves identifying the attitudes values and tastes that are significant to them;
  - II. A Cultural, consumption or leisure* base to these choices; and
  - III. Patterns, affiliations or sensibilities* that characterise these personal choices.



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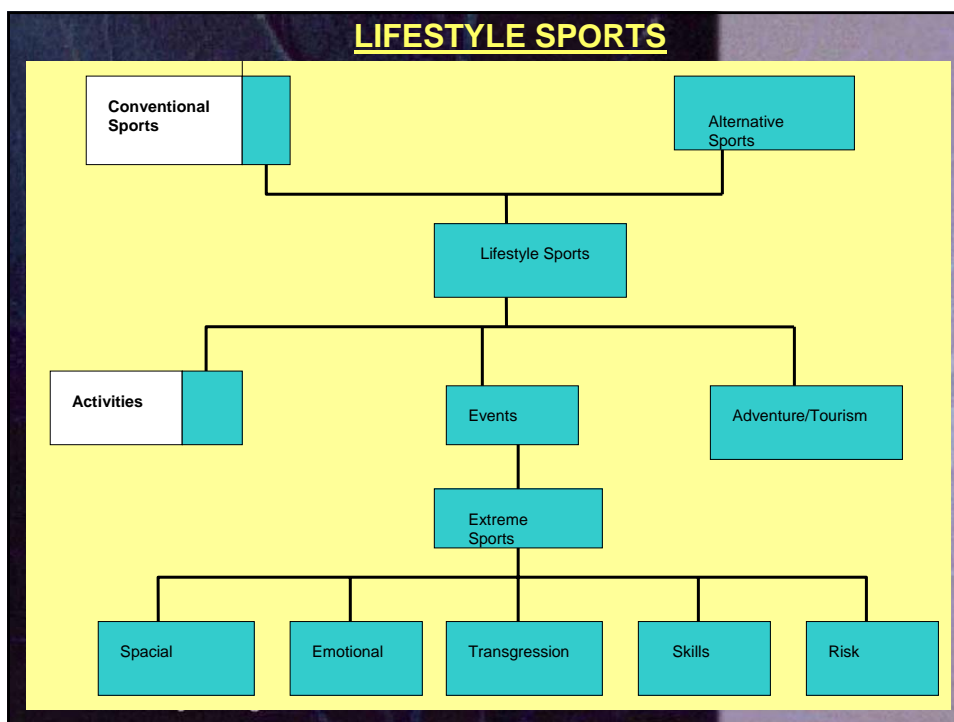
- “Ask any extreme sports participant and they will tell you that their sport is more than just a sport – it’s a state of mind and a way of life. Its about challenge, adventure and pushing the boundaries. Sometimes it involves competing against others, more often it involves challenging your own limitations and pushing them to the max. Its about meeting and sharing your enthusiasm for your sport with a like-minded group of people and its about fun, challenge and excitement”.



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## Three central concepts:

- **'alternative'** (practiced in different ways to conventional sports and incorporating descriptions such as 'new', 'post modern' and 'post industrial');
- **'lifestyle'** (meanings related to personal factors beyond success in competition – although not denying that competition can be an element of the practice of lifestyle sports, and incorporating descriptions such as 'action', 'wizz' and 'panic' sports);
- **'extreme'** (a label given to some aspects of practice associated with risk-taking; also associations with branding and commodifying some aspects of practice);



## Understanding Lifestyle Activities

- Lifestyle activities and governance

**“Climbing is a game without rules. Many people can’t handle that. So they put their trust in ever more seductive technology, blindly follow their guidebook grading or utterance, no matter how daft. If the only rules is that there are no rules, then following the rules can get you killed.” (Ward, 1996b, p.2)**

- Pushing the boundaries



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## 3. Participation in Activity Sport

- The player not the sport
- Understanding the participants: serious leisure
- “the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that is sufficiently substantial and interesting for the participant to find a career there in the acquisition and expression of its special skills and knowledge” (Stebbins, 1992, p.3).



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1. the occasional need to persevere
2. tendency toward careerism
3. significant personal effort based on specially acquired knowledge, training, or skill
4. durable benefits
5. the development of a unique ethos
6. strong identification with the chosen pursuit



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## Participation in Activity Sport

- Keeling (2003), the Welsh adventure tourism market:
  - 
  - *Samplers.*
  - *Learners.*
  - *Enthusiasts.*
  - *Dabblers.*
- Participation Data, age, SEG, gender



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### Extreme sports that 11-14 year-olds participated in, by gender, 2003

	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Mountain biking	22.7	13.3	18.1
Snowboarding	8.1	4.0	6.1
Mountain Climbing	10.6	9.3	10.0
Skateboarding	27.5	13.8	20.8
Rollerblading	21.7	31.7	26.6

Taken from TGI Youth Survey of 5,859 youths aged 7-19 years. (Source 2003a)



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### Participation in Activity Sport (cont) Penetration of popular sports and fitness activities (% of adults), 2001 and 2003

	2001 regular	2001 occasional	2001 total	2003 regular	2003 occasional	2003 total
Outdoor pursuits						
Mountain biking	0.7	1.9	2.6	1.3	2.0	3.3
Climbing or mountaineering	0.5	2.0	2.5	1.0	2.1	3.1
Roller skating/ blading	0.4	1.2	1.6	0.6	1.5	2.1
Extreme sports (BMX, skateboard)	0.3	1.0	1.3	0.8	1.2	2.0
skating				0.6	No data	
Water sports						
Surfing	0.2	0.9	1.1	0.3	0.9	1.2
Windsurfing	0.2	0.9	1.1	0.2	0.7	0.9
Water skiing	0.2	1.2	1.4	0.2	No data	
TOTAL*	2.5	9.1	11.6	5.0	8.4	13.4



\*note: totals relate to participation, not Participants ( Source :TGI, BRMB International,2003 cited in Key Note, 2004c,pp.54-55.)

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## Future Trends

- about 12% of the adult population (c. 5.8m people) would like to participate in extreme sports.
- The overwhelming majority of all interest is in the age groups 15-34.
- 
- Other than age, the prime characteristics of those interested in lifestyle sports are:
  - Terminal age of education;
  - Marital and parental status;
  - Economic activity of local community



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## Constraints and limitations

- Person-specific perceptions: health, fitness
- Financial constraints (to seek tuition, or to access regular participation)
- Climatic perceptions (UK is not the place for activity recreation)
- Physical constraints (lack of suitable terrain)
- Accessibility (legal and physical considerations)



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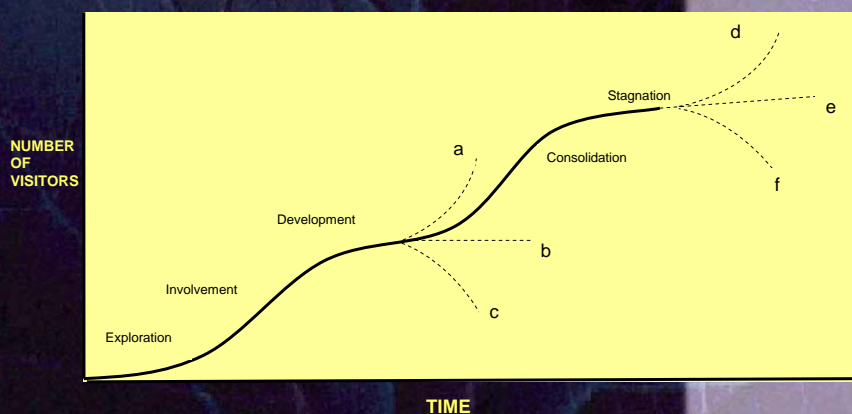
## 4. Implications for Resource Management

- **Narrow age-dominated target market**
- **Quality of recreation experience highly dependent on physical quality of the site allied to the social quality of the experience**
- **Demand and consumption driven by the elite performers, who seek ever more extreme experiences**
- **Authenticity of experience (and location) is important**
- **Result: most sites and facilities have a 'life cycle' that describes their development from new attraction to old hat**



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## Resort Life Cycle Model



ADAPTED FROM BUTLER (1980) and LUNDTORP AND WANHILL (2006)



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## Conclusions

**Providing for activity recreation is high risk because:**

- **Narrow market segment (and minority participation even in this segment)**
- **Competition for spend**
- **The person, not the sport**
- **Relentless pursuit for new challenges**
- **Quality of the social scene = core to the recreation experience**
- **Thus investment = high risk**



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