Empirical Testing of a Trajectory of Women’s Participation in Recreational Snow-Sports

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Abstract 2019-041 Room: Napoleon A3

Adoption of an active lifestyle involves continued participation in physical activity. This commitment to the activity usually forms patterns of participation that simulate a career (Getz, 2008). To understand such patterns different models have been developed (e.g. ASTEC Buning & Gibson, 2015; PCM Funk & James, 2001). Following this line of research, Mirehie (2017) applied a mixed-methods approach involving a qualitative inductive phase followed by a quantitative deductive phase to explore patterns of women’s participation in recreational snow-sports. In the qualitative phase, a model of the career path for snow-sport participation for women was proposed that involved four stages: initiation, attachment, commitment, and interruption. This study reports the quantitative examination of this proposed women-centered snow-sports career model.

The concept of enduring involvement (EI) (McIntyre, 1989) was used to operationalize the inductively derived career progression variable. An online questionnaire was used to collect data via MTurk and recruitment from snow-sport clubs (N=794). Respondents self-classified their career stage according to four vignettes (Types I-IV - initiationI to commitmentIV). Data were analyzed using EFA and MANOVA. The EI items loaded on two factors that cumulatively explained 73% of the total variance; labeled as ‘identity/centrality’ (α=.95, M=4.03), and ‘hedonism’ (α=.86, M=1.35).

MANOVA revealed a statistically significant multivariate effect between the grouping variable-‘types of skiers/snowboarders’ and the dependent EI variables- ‘identity/centrality’ and ‘hedonism’ Pillai’s Trace=.43, F(6,1576)=72.041, p<.05. There were significant between group differences for each of the dependent variables and the grouping variable. Bonferroni post hoc analysis showed that there was a significant increase in EI dimension ‘identity/centrality’ from Type I to Type IV (M=2.57I< M=3.46II< M=3.94III< M=5.16IV) at p<.05. Also, the EI dimension ‘hedonism’ increased from Type I to Type IV (M=4.21I< M=5.18II< M=5.40III< M=6.32IV) at p<.05, however, the mean difference between Type II and Type III for ‘hedonism’ was not statistically significant.

The mean ratings of the identified dimensions supported the theoretical propositions of the qualitative phase that aligns with other sport career models (e.g. ASTEC Buning & Gibson, 2015; PCM Funk & James, 2001). The mean rating of ‘identity/centrality’ fell below the mid-point of the scale for Type I, about the mid-point for Type II and Type III, and above the mid-point for Type IV. This aligns with propositions regarding the necessity of a certain level of skill and knowledge for individuals to identify with an activity or setting (Fendt, 2015), which is not acquired unless involvement endures over time. The mean rating of ‘hedonism’ was above the mid-point of the scale for all stages which mirrored the high hedonic value of snow-sports (Hallman et al., 2012). There was a significant increase in hedonic ratings from initiation to commitment which relates to enhancement of skill and expansion of social network around snow-sports throughout the career. The identified stages of participation provide a practical tool for attracting more women to snow-sport facilities. The characteristics associated with each stage provide some guidelines for practitioners in satisfying female customers’ needs and creating better experiences as women remain an underrepresented group in snow sports (Hudson, 2004).