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Title: ‘Just want to surf, make boards and party’: How do we identify lifestyle entrepreneurs within the lifestyle sports industry?

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Title Page

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'Just want to surf, make boards and party': How do we identify lifestyle entrepreneurs within the lifestyle sports industry?

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Abstract

This paper aims to further our understanding of the identity of the lifestyle entrepreneur operating within the lifestyle sports industry. The lifestyle entrepreneur has to date been the subject of numerous definitions. However, understanding the context in which entrepreneurs operate has been identified by researchers as impacting upon the actions they take, and so therefore linking context to the entrepreneur is critical to the understanding of these individuals. A mixed methods study comprising of 80 questionnaire responses, and 21 semi-structured interviews focussed on identifying lifestyle sports entrepreneurs. Two groups of entrepreneurs were targeted; those entrepreneurs operating within a sport (Engagers) and those who run a business to participate (Enablers). Issues surrounding the identification of lifestyle entrepreneurs are presented. Through the analysis of the data, entrepreneurs identified through their own narratives how their identities are created. The results demonstrate that while the current external interpretation of the lifestyle entrepreneur is of a fixed nature, the entrepreneurs themselves evidence a much more complex approach to their identities.

Key Words

Lifestyle entrepreneurship, Lifestyle sports, Identity

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to begin to unpick the complex nature of identity creation of the lifestyle entrepreneur who operates in the lifestyle sports setting. Lifestyle sports provide a novel but relevant context in which to examine the phenomena of lifestyle entrepreneurship; both have the shared use of 'lifestyle' to describe them, and both share in their literature conflicting understanding and definitions. It is the view of McKeever et al. (2015) that 'context is now recognised as a critical factor in explaining the situatedness of the entrepreneurial process. According to this view, entrepreneurs are embedded in networks, places and communities which socially frame resources and opportunities' (2015: 50). Therefore, we seek here to further our understanding of the interplay of the individual entrepreneur and his/her context in shaping an entrepreneurial identity within lifestyle sports.

While a body of literature now exists on lifestyle entrepreneurship, predominantly within the tourism discipline (Altejevic and Doorne 2000; Bredvold and Skålén 2016; Marchant and Mottiar 2011; Shaw and Williams 1987, 1998, 2004; Walmsley 2019), there is no consensus as to who specifically is a lifestyle entrepreneur with most studies skirting over this issue (this is further elaborated on in the literature review). Some insights into the role of identify are provided within the creative industries (Eikhof and Haunschild 2006; Tregar 2005) which recognises the difficulties for individuals to separate and manage the two identities of individuals and businesspeople. Anderson Cederholm (2015), again within tourism, progress this thinking to understand the boundaries and crossing of boundaries that can be present, but there remains a gap both in the depth of understanding this 'boundary', and how this specifically applies in the lifestyle sports context, in which cultural embeddedness is resilient. Thus, research on lifestyle entrepreneurs is an acknowledged research domain, and yet, we contend, remains in many respects still only superficially understood. By exploring the individual-context nexus within lifestyle sports specifically, we offer a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon of the lifestyle sports entrepreneur.

The aim of this paper is to offer insight into the creation of the identity of entrepreneurs who operate within the context of lifestyle sports. The paper will firstly consider the current literature on the subject of lifestyle entrepreneurship and lifestyle sports, and review the current definitions. A methodology which highlights the approach to achieving the aims is then offered, detailing the approach to data collection. Results are then presented, and discussed, before conclusions are drawn.

Literature Review

Lifestyle entrepreneurs are difficult to define, as noted by Marcketti et al. (2006); they are 'neither wealth seekers nor financially independent hobbyists' (2006: 241). There are many definitions that therefore exist for the lifestyle entrepreneur, not least the discussion on whether a lifestyle entrepreneur and their subsequent business endeavours are entrepreneurial at all.

Lack of growth aspiration is firstly a key denominator in defining lifestyle entrepreneurs. This is best summed up by Lewis (2008), who states that lifestyle 'SME owners who share certain characteristics (i.e. have micro firms), operate to achieve personal objectives or a satisfactory level of income, and are growth averse' (2008: 61). A similar conclusion was drawn by Jones, Jones, Williams-Burnett and Ratten (2017) who explored the experiences and motivation of 'dual-occupation' entrepreneur sports coaches in that these were also described as not actively seeking growth. There is however a body of research which highlights this growth aversion as deliberate; applying the definition to those entrepreneurs who pursue entrepreneurial ventures that stagnate in the growth phase of the enterprise life-cycle (Hanks et al, 1993; McMahon 2001), and are described by some researchers as individuals who are therefore not acting entrepreneurially. There are however arguments to support the conscious decision for entrepreneurs to stall the growth of their businesses at a particular point (Carson, Cromie, McGowan and Hill 1995; Peters and Frehse 2009), where profit and workload meet the quality of life required. Peters and Frehse (2009) identify that this 'optimal growth' point is crucial to the success of the lifestyle entrepreneurship endeavour; if the entrepreneur moves beyond this point, there will be an imbalance between profit and workload, and quality of life, which would be suboptimal from the perspective of the lifestyle entrepreneur. These definitions identify the decision of entrepreneurs to actively stop growth once a certain level of income is reached, noted by Burns (2001) 'once a level of activity that provides the adequate income is reached, management becomes routine and tactical' (2001: 11).

Other definitions centre on defining lifestyle entrepreneurs as supporting their businesses' activities with their personal interests, often seen as turning a hobby into a business enterprise (Marcketti et al. 2006; Andersson Cederholm 2015; Sorensson, Borgen and Cawthorn 2017). While not trying to define 'the' lifestyle entrepreneur, Jones, Jones, Williams-Burnett and Ratten (2017) also recognised the hobby-element in their sample of sports coaches/entrepreneurs. While these definitions focus on the balance and integration of their work and personal lives, other definitions position lifestyle entrepreneurs as highlighting personal lifestyle as more important than the business success, and that success would only be deemed a success if the personal lifestyle was also obtained. Building on this, the importance of goal attainment lies at the heart of other lifestyle entrepreneurship narratives. The consequences of the lifestyle entrepreneurs' behaviour on the organisation are examined by Kuratko and Hodgetts (2001), who state that 'Lifestyle ventures appear to have independence, autonomy, and control as their primary driving forces. Neither large scales nor profits are deemed important beyond providing a sufficient and comfortable living for the entrepreneur' (2001: 362). The particular goal of attainment in the lifestyle entrepreneurs' case however is a lifestyle one, and less so of business progression goals. Lewis (2008) identifies the requirement to expand the current understanding of goal attainment of lifestyle entrepreneurs, identifying through her research that growth is not ignored by lifestyle entrepreneurs, but is instead reviewed as part of a series of other goals by the individual.

From some research perspectives, the focus of lifestyle entrepreneurs is situated on the boundaries between work, life and other social settings, such as individuals' community engagement and cultural positioning. Andersson Cederholm (2015) state that 'lifestyle enterprising is a mode of living and working betwixt and between social spheres commonly perceived as separate' (2015: 330), and Bredvold and Skålén (2016) state that 'the modern lifestyle entrepreneur narrative suggests a relationship between being true to cultural traditions and business success' (2016: 104). These characterisations reflect the complex ways in which lifestyle entrepreneurs manage their identities in a holistic manner. One such example is Eikhof and Haunschild's (2006) research which identified that entrepreneurs' had to 'bridge' the opposing identities of creative and business person.

Entrepreneurship context – Lifestyle sports

Turning attention to lifestyle sports, here too definitions vary as they grapple with the complexity of the phenomenon. The notion of lifestyle sports comes from the belief that sports can be defined in different ways, as Coakley (2007) states that 'it is a mistake to assume that all sports are defined in the same way, organised around the same goals and orientations, and played in the same spirit' (2007: 102). In her seminal work on this phenomenon, Wheaton (1997) proposed the idea of identifying a group of sports as lifestyle. In a similar vein to lifestyle entrepreneurship however, debates have emerged in the literature on whether these activities should be identified as sports (Rinehart 2002; Wheaton 2013).

While some researchers have sought to group lifestyle sports around themes of counter cultural movements (Beal 1995; Rinehart 2002; Beal and Weidman 2003), there is still great complexity surrounding the terminology, where 'extreme', 'new', 'alternative' and 'lifestyle' are all used to describe the same type of activity. Tomlinson, Ravenscroft, Wheaton, B. and Gilchrist (2005) go some way to explaining this, citing that 'lifestyle' is a sub-division of 'alternative' and 'conventional' sports, where 'alternative' and 'conventional' are "institutional structures in which participation takes place" (2005: 16), whereas 'lifestyle' is a sub-section of this. How individuals then interpret their participation and association will reflect on how they then individually define the sports. Booth and Thorpe (2007) identify the physical 'sensation of pleasure' and social 'rewards' (2007: 183) that participating can bring. Beaumont's (2011) work into the typologies within surfing culture (a sport seen by many as indicative of the lifestyle sport culture of South East Cornwall) provides great insight into how these sports, or rather their participants, can be subdivided in such a way;

It is at this point that the Local Surfers' experience of surfing is focused upon and a conclusion drawn as to whether they experience surfing as a sport or pursuit. Sport is characterised by a competitive element which places itself in opposition to the Local Surfer who has little or no involvement with competition (Beaumont 2011: 138).

The indicative message here is that a definition of what is, or is not, a lifestyle sport will depend on participants' lived experiences of the activity. While it is perhaps too offhand to immediately suggest that only the participant can determine if the practice of an activity is sport or part of a lifestyle, following the discussions above, there is an alternative view to positioning an activity solely as lifestyle, or not. If the 'sport' in its competitive capacity is of little value or interest to the individual, but the encompassing lifestyle is of great value, then that sport can be said to be a lifestyle, for the individual identifying with it specifically.

In reflecting on the above, seeking to identify lifestyle entrepreneurs within the lifestyle sports industry can provide a unique opportunity to help us understand them in more detail, their provenance, motivation and behaviours, for example. Some attempts at bringing the two areas together (lifestyle entrepreneurship and lifestyle sports) have occurred. Thus, Ratten (2018) comes close to a suggestion of how the two areas are interlinked by discussing athlete entrepreneurs;

Some athlete entrepreneurs are interested in their lifestyles and pursue business ventures around certain themes that fit with their own ideologies. This helps provide a motive for innovations that is in line with personal goals. (Ratten 2018: 56)

Without having a clear definition of who lifestyle entrepreneurs are, specifically in operational terms how they can be identified through particular traits, characteristics or behaviours as prescribed by 'regular' entrepreneurship definitions, it is difficult to identify them in a practical

setting. In reviewing the handful of studies that have to date focussed on lifestyle entrepreneurship within the lifestyle sports sector, it is not clear how the concept of lifestyle entrepreneur was operationalised, and therefore what criteria were used for sampling purposes. For example in identifying their population, Marchant and Mottiar (2011) drew on all surf tourism businesses within their target area and 'those matching the characteristics of a lifestyle entrepreneur were interviewed' (2011: 8), and Beaumont, Walmsley, Wallis and Woodward (2016) again targeted all surfing related businesses in their target area, before asking 'a series of initial questions' to find only the lifestyle entrepreneurs. The sampling criteria of Al-Dajani's (2009) study into lifestyle and graduate entrepreneurs did not refer to any particular lifestyle characteristics. Pinning down exactly what these 'characteristics' and 'initial questions' were was lacking from these papers, and so does not aid the reader in understanding a clear identification process. Ultimately then, in research practice the unsatisfactory 'I'm not sure what a lifestyle entrepreneur is but I'll know one when I see one' approach still tends to prevail.

To conclude the literature review, a great deal of interest in the concept of lifestyle entrepreneurship has been documented. Conceptually however, and with evident implications for research practice, there is very little clarity about who in fact is a lifestyle entrepreneur. The ways in which these individuals present themselves through their enterprises does not appear to be a something that has been examined to date. Using the context of lifestyle sports, this study aims at developing our understanding of the lifestyle entrepreneur with a view to assisting their identification in future studies.

Methodology

The paper uses a mixed methodology described by Creswell (2014) as a sequential explanatory approach (quantitative survey followed by qualitative interviews) to clarify who lifestyle entrepreneurs are in the context of lifestyle sports. Overall, a pragmatic approach was taken towards data collection given a largely unknown population (no sampling frame was readily available) and the need to obtain sufficient data to offer credible results. The flexibility in our approach also reflects difficulties faced by previous studies of lifestyle entrepreneurs (see Beaumont, Walmsley, Wallis and Woodward 2016).

Table 1: Overview of data sources

Survey	Total responses:	Valid responses:	Effective Response rate:	Type of entrepreneur:
	240	80	33%	Engager = 59 (73.8%)
				Enabler = 21 (26.3%)
Interviews		Participants		Type of entrepreneur:
		21		Engager = 12
				Enabler = 5 Engager & Enabler = 3

Beginning with the survey, because of the absence of a pre-existing sampling frame, and the difficulty in defining and therefore identifying lifestyle entrepreneurs, we used filtering

questions to ensure only relevant individuals completed the survey. Here we drew heavily on Tomlinson, Ravenscroft, Wheaton, and Gilchrist's (2005) characteristics of lifestyle entrepreneurs. Furthermore, to enhance the breadth of the study, the entrepreneurs included within the sampling were also highlighted as needing to be diverse. Therefore, entrepreneurs whose businesses were associated with sports, and those that were not, but allowed them to participate in their chosen sport, were part of the sampling frame.

Difficulties in obtaining sufficiently robust samples in terms of sizes in studies of lifestyle entrepreneurs, particularly in lifestyle sports, have been noted previously. Thus Nelsen (2012) reported difficulties in obtaining questionnaire responses from specialist groups such as surfers (see also Beaumont, Walmsley, Wallis and Woodward 2016): 'Surfers are representative of a "hard to measure" user group because their numbers are too small to capture by random samples of the population [when referring to beach recreation]…they have a low response rate to on-site surveying, and they use the coast at times that are different than other beach goers' (Nelsen, 2012: 34-35). Because of these difficulties a snowball sampling approach (Patton, 2015) was adopted to identify and then contact participants. To further increase the sample size contact was made with clubs and organisations of lifestyle sports, online advertising through social media, and the researchers' own networks of lifestyle sports contacts.

The questionnaire included open and closed questions was delivered electronically using the online Qualtrics survey platform. A total of 240 responses were recorded, of which however 80 were identified as legitimately completed responses according to the purpose of the study. This meant that 160 participants were removed during the phase of screening questions including "Do you own/run the business?" and "Does your participation influence the way in which you run the business?" It was important to the researcher to distinguish that the owner entrepreneur was answering the questionnaire, as the focus of the research is on the individual entrepreneur, and their engagement in lifestyle entrepreneurship. A similar screening approach has been described by Dusek, Yurova and Ruppel (2015) when adopting a snowball sampling approach 'to confirm the respondents were members of the targeted population' (Dusek, Yurova and Ruppel 2015: 285). This early screening also alleviated any unnecessary data accumulation and wasted time on the part of respondents.

Within the 80 respondents to the questionnaire a distinction was noted between respondents who were running businesses directly related to a lifestyle sport (referred to as 'Engagers') and those whose businesses which were non-sport related (referred to as 'Enablers'). These are demonstrated in Table 1 above. While these two groups were not explicitly identified through the literature, the researchers felt it was important to allow for these different types of lifestyle entrepreneurs to engage with the research. It was also important that this distinction was made clear, so that any differences between the two groups could be identified given the study's aim to explore the phenomenon of lifestyle entrepreneurship, with the context of lifestyle sports as the setting for which entrepreneurial behaviour occurs. 67 survey respondents were male, eight were female (10.7%). The majority of respondents to the survey (76.25%) were aged between 35 and 59 years old. Although the study used a mixed-methods approach we do not cover the full quantitative results here, only those of immediate relevance to the aim of the paper.

The researcher recognises the low uptake of the questionnaire. There are several ways of interpreting this difficulty in obtaining participation. Firstly, Ratten's (2018) thoughts on the relationship between athletes and entrepreneurs identify that individuals can struggle to identify as an entrepreneur. Her opening statement on entrepreneurship claims that 'some people associate entrepreneurship with positive developments in terms of creating new businesses or ideas. However, some see it as detrimental as it involves risk and can involve financial

setbacks' (2018: 55). She goes on to state that 'most [athletes] have specific personality traits that make them entrepreneurial such as being competitive and a desire to achieve' (2018: 55). It is possible to suggest, therefore, that as the traits of the athlete differ to those of the lifestyle sports' person (as discussed previously) that perhaps they do not see themselves as entrepreneurial. This engagement and complexity surrounding identification will be discussed. Open question responses were coded and analysed around the theme of identity.

Twenty-one interviews were completed as a result of self-referrals from the questionnaire. These were conducted through a semi-structured approach and were facilitated via face to face, over the phone and video calling. These interviews were then transcribed and coded using the content analysis (Lieblich et al. 1998). With regard to interview sample size the notion of saturation was key. Here Fusch and Ness (2015) identify that data saturation can be met in part 'when further coding is no longer feasible' (2015: 1408). Through an iterative process of evaluating and coding the interview transcripts using NVivo, the researcher was able to identify when no new codes or themes were emerging through first order coding. This process was informed by the key writings of Saldaña (2013) who discusses a process of coding through a First Cycle and Second Cycle approach. This meant that the initial interviews were reviewed by the researcher, and the researcher was able to conduct initial coding of the data provided to 'see the direction in which to take the study' (Glaser, 1978: 56, in Saldaña 2013: 101). In their review of this approach Saldaña (2013) recognises that 'proposed codes during this cycle are tentative and provisional' (2013, 101). This is an appropriate tool therefore to use given of the process described above.

Results

As highlighted through the current literature, there is limited representation of who participants are, and how they were identified as lifestyle entrepreneurs. The results here will firstly address how participants were identified as being lifestyle entrepreneurs for inclusion in the study, and how this compares with other studies of lifestyle entrepreneurship. One of the biggest challenges with this was understanding how individuals perceived themselves to be relevant to the study. The results will then go on to address how the entrepreneurs identify themselves within the context of lifestyle entrepreneurship, including some of the underlying complexity inherent in this task, for example when different identities collide.

Engagers and Enablers

It is important to address the differences between the two 'types' of entrepreneurs that have been targeted within the research; those for whom the sport is reflected in both the entrepreneurial pursuit and the leisure time (the Engagers), and those whose entrepreneurial pursuit is nothing to do with the sport that they engage with in their leisure time (Enablers). The prior literature provided little evidence of research into this second group of individuals. Engagers do however represent the group of lifestyle entrepreneurs more traditionally researched in the lifestyle sport (Beaumont, Walmsley, Wallis and Woodward 2016) and other lifestyle entrepreneurship literature (Tregar 2005; Eikhof and Haunscild 2006). Here, studies have provided evidence that suggests the type of work that is undertaken is more conducive to the individual's chosen lifestyle, but to date has provided little to support the understanding of how these entrepreneurs develop their identities.

Engagers were those participants more readily researched within the lifestyle entrepreneurship and lifestyle sports literature (Altejevic and Doorne 2000; Marchant and Mottiar 2011). They represent those participants for whom the business and the sport merge. The research has however identified that there are some subtle differences within this group partly as a result of different sector focus. Figure 1 has been developed using the results of the study to depict this:

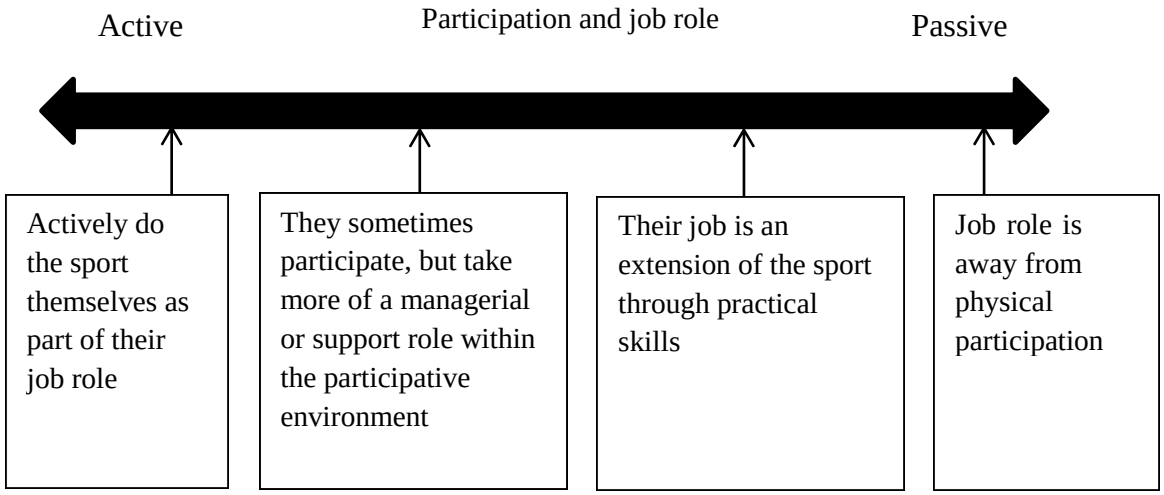

Figure 1. Engagers scale of proximity to the sport

The types of Engager entrepreneurs can therefore be described on a scale from active to passive in the connection with the lifestyle sport. This approach was highlighted by Ollenburg (2005, in Helgadóttir and Sigurdardottir 2008) in their research into equestrian tourism, where they identified a number of different ways in which a consumer would interact with the horse through the business activity, and therefore the different enterprises that occurred. As the current research project is concerned with the individual entrepreneurs, the approach to categorisation identified how the entrepreneur engages with the lifestyle sport through their involvement in their enterprise.

Those Engagers who actively participate in the sport as part of their job role are typically instructors and guides, and were categorised through having full active participation as their job role. The next group are represented by those active participants who have taken on more of a managerial role, and are seen as owning and managing organisations with one or more employees. The next group are represented by those entrepreneurs who carry across skills from the sport that they participate in. There is a high level of experience and knowledge associated with these roles, and can be exemplified by surfboard shapers, kit repairers, and equipment designers. Finally, those roles that are not clearly associated with participation but still classify the entrepreneurs as engagers are retailers, and other service providers. This classification assists the researchers in developing their understanding of the lifestyle entrepreneurs' identity through this added dimension.

To frame this understanding and interpretation, the first part of the analysis draws on the distinction between growth aspirations and the impact of these on lifestyles, as highlighted from many of the current working definitions of lifestyle entrepreneurship highlighted previously.

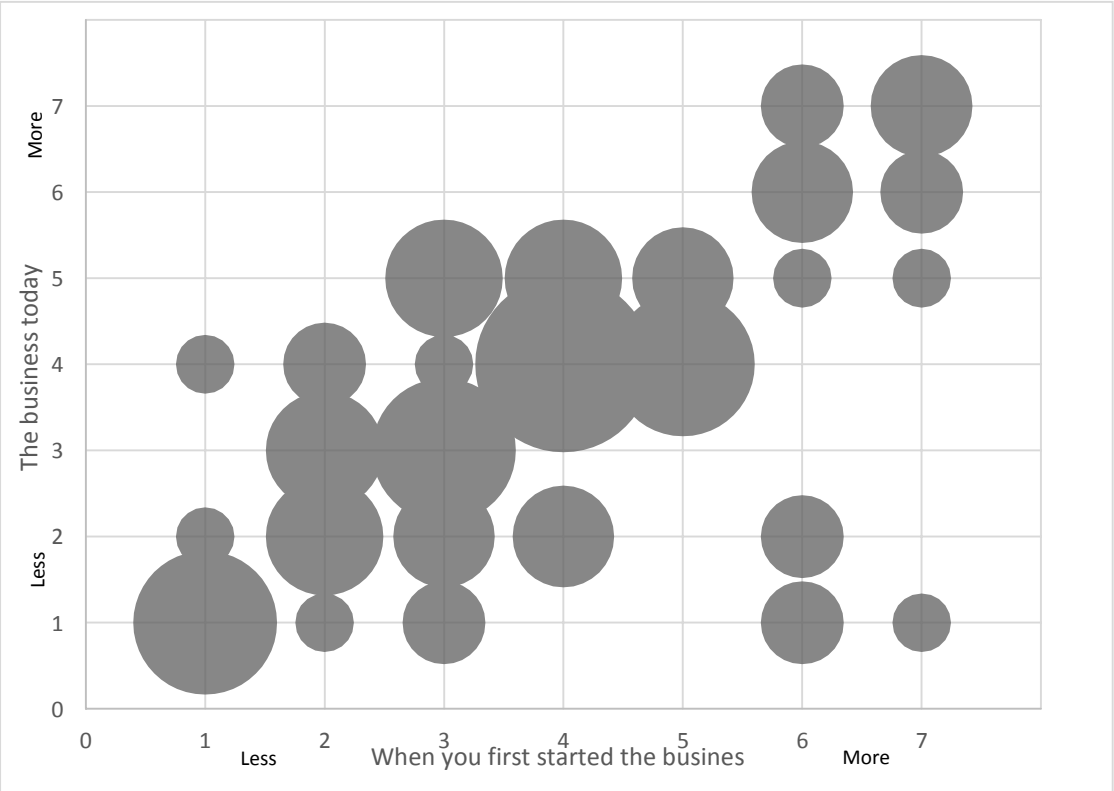

Figure 2: ***Is the growth of your business more or less important than the lifestyle it allows you to lead?*** *(Frequency of respondents to the question is represented in the size of each bubble graphic) (n=77)*

The comparison of the issue of growth and lifestyle through the two questions highlighted in Figure 2 above indicates how the entrepreneur viewed growth and lifestyle when they first set up the business, and again at the time of completing the questionnaire. Participants could then be split into four categories based on this information. The participants who are positioned at the extremities of the results are of particular interest, as they represent what may be described as Weber's 'ideal types'; those individuals who demonstrate 'what the object being studied would be like in its most rational form' (Benton and Craib 2011: 81). Consequently the top and bottom 10% of respondents would be selected to examine in more detail, but currently this examination falls outside the realms of this paper. As a method of examination, this has been used in studies for a similar purpose, such as Nabi, Walmsley, Liñán, Akhtar, and Neame's (2018) study of entrepreneurial intention. For the purpose of this study however, the figure provides the first phase of framing the lifestyle entrepreneur with the lifestyle sports context. As the sample size was relatively small we were unable to find statistically significant results for cross-tabulations based on the two groups. We acknowledge that this could usefully be an area for future research, albeit with larger sample sizes.

Growth over lifestyle

Entrepreneurs who feature in the top right quadrant of Figure 2 scored growth as more important than lifestyle at both the beginning and the current phase of the business. If definitions of lifestyle entrepreneurship are used such as Kuratko and Hodgetts' (2001), who view that 'neither large scales nor profits are deemed important beyond providing a sufficient and comfortable living for the entrepreneur' (2001: 362), the researcher could conclude that

these entrepreneurs are not lifestyle entrepreneurs; they confirm that growth of the business is more important than the lifestyle it allows them to lead. However, when asked to explain their choices, there were clear and recurrent themes of growth aligning and complimenting lifestyle; "My satisfaction comes from the success of my business so growth in the right way will allow for me to improve my lifestyle" (#50, Q74). Other respondents in this group gave equally aligning responses; "Growth leads to financial success which delivers independence" (#19, Q74).

While Al-Dajani's (2009) research indicated that the relationship between growth and success can be seen as highly one-dimensional; 'You balance your life with other things than work but are relegated to paying-the-rent success' (Al-Dajani 2009: 7), other studies have supported the above notion that lifestyle and growth can support one another. Lewis' (2008) concluded in her study that 'Growth in SMEs should also not be confused with development or progress' (2008: 67). Success therefore emerges as a theme which does not appear to have been addressed within the lifestyle entrepreneurship research to date, apart from Lewis' (2008) notion that the lifestyle entrepreneur who factors growth as part of a wider body of goals may be referred to as the 'freestyle' lifestyle entrepreneur.

This research demonstrates that success can take many forms, and that the lifestyle sport entrepreneurs have a diverse interpretation of what success means to them. What consistently emerges from the discussions however is that success is derived from being able to provide a clear balance between their participation with the sport, and the needs and demands of the other aspects of their lives. "*What drives me is to earn enough money to do the things I love to do really*" (Ed).

In the traditional sense, some participants aligned success with the inability to manage lifestyle; "*we made a choice to move down here really because we were- our other business was really successful but I just found it was completely doing my head in, it was just all about business - And we weren't taking time to have any lifestyle time. No. So moving down here for us was a lifestyle change, it was to do less, to earn less money and to spend more time enjoying ourselves*" (Ed). Success was derived from having a successful business and having flexibility to participate in their chosen sport.

Moreover, it demonstrates the ways in which the identity of the entrepreneur can be restricted by the issue of growth, but actually it needs to be opened and reconsidered in order to capture all entrepreneurs who identify themselves as operating with lifestyle in mind. Once of the considerations of the literature review was that the ways in which lifestyle entrepreneur participants were identified in previous studies was not given adequate consideration, and these findings suggest that a broader approach to understanding who lifestyle entrepreneurs are needs to be adopted. It therefore also highlighted to the researchers that entrepreneurs should not be rejected from the lifestyle entrepreneurship study at this stage, as clearly there are high levels of lifestyle motivation that appear to manifest themselves through an alternate attitude towards growth.

Lifestyle over growth

For participants who feature in the bottom left quadrant of Figure 2, growth was originally, and was at the point of questionnaire completion, less important than lifestyle. Taking the views of lifestyle entrepreneurship currently within the literature as discussed, these entrepreneurs represent the existing interpretation of the lifestyle entrepreneur, referred to by Marchant and

Mottiar (2011) as the 'Purist' lifestyle entrepreneur. This is exemplified by some of these individuals who were asked to explain the reasons for their choices; "*Its never been about the money*" (sic) (#28, Q74) and "*Money doesn't always lead to happiness*" (#57, Q74). It is clear here that these participants held a direct link between growth and financial gain, and that that financial gain was and is simply not important to these individuals.

There is also focus on how the currently held view of the lifestyle entrepreneur is exemplified through Peters et al's. (2009) interpretation of the lifestyle entrepreneur highlighting a specific point at which growth meets quality of life; "*I am happy with how it is*" (#62, Q74). Others exemplified the more of the connotations associated with the lifestyle entrepreneur from previous studies, such as Lewis (2008); "*I value my health, family and enjoyment of life over financial growth…I have no need to grow an empire!*" (#71, Q74). There is also evidence of some of these entrepreneurs conforming to the definitions that lifestyle entrepreneurs can be hobbyists, explaining their focus on lifestyle over growth by "*Other income*" (#49, Q74).

Identity as sports people

The first part of this section will be concerned with discussing how lifestyle entrepreneurs view their sport, and what the implications of this are for definitions of lifestyle entrepreneurship. It is apparent from several previous lifestyle entrepreneurship studies that the context in which the entrepreneurial endeavour is based affects the way in which the business operates (for example Bredvold and Skålén 2016). Those studies that have used lifestyle sports as a context have limited their discussions on how this impacts the entrepreneur's motivations and intentions. This section will then go on to discuss the implications of how these motivations and intentions affect the individual, and how the individual uses this understanding to influence their businesses.

The data highlight the confusion surrounding lifestyle sports' classification as a sport. Thus, whether lifestyle sports can definitively be classified as sports continues to be unclear. For some, it is not a sport at all; "*I don't actually see it as a sport but hey all words*" (QR10). Others actively seem to reject the notion that their business activity can be classified as a sport; one questionnaire participant indicated that their business was not related to sport, however on describing the business activity this was described as "*relaxed, sociable cycling holidays"* (#5, Q10). This furthers the discussion on self-identification, as this group of entrepreneurs vary in how they self-identify.

For others throughout the interviews, this theme was explored further, with some respondents offering an alternative to the idea that the 'sport' can have many levels; "*To me it's not a sport at all, to a lot of people it is a sport um- but I'm not really interested in that sporting element, particularly the sporting element is a commercialisation and it sells product*" (Ed). This confirms Rinehart's (2002) research on extreme and alternative sports that 'many of these participants…don't consider their activity a 'sport'' (2002: 511), and confirms the premise that these sports or activities have many ways in which they can be identified with, normally from a competitive or non-competitive aspect. It is down to the individual to decide how they identify with the activity.

For some of the entrepreneurs such as Ed above, they situate themselves within a particular section of the sport and this culture. Although throughout all of the interviews the theme of specialism and specific skills were apparent, those individuals who sought distinction in the part of the whole they were associated with were also more explicit in how their specialty

affected their business. For example, some of the business owners see how technical knowledge separates the authentic participants from the others;

"*Where you've got the proper surfers sat at home and watching the weather knowing where the next surfs going to hit, looking at what the wind direction is going to be and what banks are working when and that's the difference*" (Dennis).

Identity as business people

One way of establishing how the entrepreneurs identify themselves as business people is to reflect on their previous employment. Jack and Anderson (2002) identified within their embeddedness research that 'previous employment was not necessarily related to their own venture' (2002: 475), and that this does not align with Storey's (1994) interpretation of entrepreneurs often going on to work in a similar industry. They do go on to demonstrate however that previous employment had provided entrepreneurs with ancillary business skills that were transferrable. Jack and Anderson (2002) do not go on to discuss beyond this, however the data gathered here provides for a more in-depth explanation for the influences which add weight to the characteristics if the lifestyle entrepreneur, reflecting more accurately the complexity underlying the relationship between lifestyle and business.

71% of the lifestyle entrepreneurs who answered the question indicated that past employment experience had an influence on them when starting their own business, for example, thus adding to the emerging picture of identity formation as lifestyle entrepreneurs. For some of the entrepreneurs there were clearly identified transferrable business skills which were the driving influence. For example, "*I had years of experience in this field*" (#19, Q67), "*learnt the sector gathered qualifications*" (#54, Q67), "*Valuable experience and skills gained enabled me to start my own business*" (#56, Q67). These align with Jack and Anderson's (2002) findings, and support the view that the business start-up of the lifestyle entrepreneur can be aligned closely with experience. However, the data provided far clearer evidence of social influences, such as independence; "*I thought I might like working for myself*" (#16), "*I was a Designer, constantly designing branding and doing marketing for other businesses. Finally I get to do that for my own business for me and not for someone else*" (#50), "*Helped me learn that I value my independence and doing things in a way I believe in*" (#71). These social values aligned closely with entrepreneurial characteristics of Kuratko and Hodgetts' (2001) study; '*Lifestyle ventures appear to have independence, autonomy, and control as their primary driving forces'* (2001: 362), and add weight to the discussion of the 'becoming' of a lifestyle entrepreneur.

As discussed in the literature review, a number of commonly held beliefs about lifestyle entrepreneurs were displayed. As Deakins and Freel (2003) viewed that there was a distinction between 'lifestyle businesses' and 'entrepreneurial firms', indicating that the motives behind a lifestyle-focussed business could not be entrepreneurial, and were more associated with the push factors of redundancy and lack of employment opportunity of the individual. Some of the research findings supported this; Andrew highlighted how he was not given the opportunities through employment to work in the physical role he wanted, and Ed found that he was limited to sitting at a computer while recovering from a serious accident. While these appear to be 'push' factors for both participants, they both also strongly exhibit both entrepreneurial qualities that pulled them into their entrepreneurial roles, and definitive lifestyle choices. Ed identified a clear gap in the market for a local brand was able to use his technical skills to successfully start the business. The difficulties in distinguishing between push and pull factors

when it comes to business start-up and how the two often work in tandem has also been identified by Nabi, Walmsley, Liñán, Akhtar, and Neame (2018).

Discussion

Reflecting on Shaw and Williams' (2004) study of lifestyle entrepreneurs in Cornwall, Holland and Martin (2015) highlight that 'they embody a new breed of purposeful migrants to whom work and life are blurred' (2015: 25). This is supported in some of the findings of this study; Ian explains how the lifestyle sport can lead the identity creation, and so develops the 'blurred' identity;

it's an investment in yourself and actually if you do get that and you kind of become quite passionate about the sport, then yeah I mean it really does begin to take over so the decisions of where you live, you know everything- what you eat, what you drive, um who you go out with (Ian)

This moves the discussion of the lifestyle entrepreneur on from its initial definitions of individuals who sacrifice successful work at the expense of successful lifestyles, and supports the more recent definition suggested by Lewis (2008) that success should be investigated beyond the currently examined limits of growth and profitability. Further to this for some of the entrepreneurs, the two identities of business person and sports person have a complimentary influence, with some similarity here to Jones, Jones, Williams-Burnett and Ratten's (2017:222) study of sport coaches' 'entrepreneurial career by occupation'. For example, John proposes that "*the fact that I was a fairly decent surfer- promoted the surfboards to an extent – ok – 'cos people would come to me because I was a fairly decent em, shaper, and surfer as well*" (John). This identification of the lifestyle entrepreneur is as a sports person by their customers provides a novel approach to understanding who these entrepreneurs are as business people, and joins the two identities in a positive manner through the clear association of the two identities – John as the successful surfer, and therefore the accomplished board shaper. This is most clearly seen in the Engagers, with another example being Olly, who often has customers asking about the sea and wind conditions, even though the official service he offers is retail and repairs. The notion that the entrepreneurs go on to capitalise on this emergence of authenticity was identified by Tregar (2005) in their work into creative industry lifestyle entrepreneurs. Tregar (2005) found that their entrepreneurs both actively rejected business principles as a means to retain their identity as a lifestyle focussed individual, and also develop a niche approach to their business. The current research builds on this notion to identify synergy which is formed.

These observations of identity crossover particularly in the Engager group identify new streams of success and values which help shape both the internal and external identity of the lifestyle entrepreneur, and the relationships between the entrepreneur and the community that they serve. This is supported in McKeever et al's (2015) points on situatedness, where 'relationship between entrepreneurs and communities influences entrepreneurial practices and outcomes' (2015: 50).

In addressing the ways in which work and life co-exist for the entrepreneur, the research also identified a number of different ways in which lifestyle entrepreneurs can identify themselves, through the modes of work and life. For some of the entrepreneurs, work and life were seen through the traditionalised lens of the balance; "*three years into the company I wouldn't turn down work, so I was probably working 80:20, you know 80 per cent work, 20 percent play"*

(Andrew). This is at odds with the interpretation of Ian above; there is a clearer distinction between working and 'playing' the role of the business person, and their role within their lifestyle sports participation.

Some of the entrepreneurs expanded this idea further, to established roles that they fulfilled as being clear and distinct. As an Enabler, Lawrence saw himself as having three identities; a dad, a business man, and an athlete. Within this group, flexibility is used frequently as a term to describe how they manage the co-existence of these roles. This was one of the most clearly defining features between the Engager and Enabler groups; as an Enabler, Lawrence clearly exemplified how being 'successful' in business allowed him to be successful in his sport endeavours. This was supported by another Enabler, Sarah, who saw the support systems she put in place for her business allowed her to paraglide. Sarah's story evidences how careful consideration was required in order for her to construct the idealised identity she has today;

I wanted to compete in world cups and I'd once went to my head teacher and I said look there's a world cup [inaudible] and I said look but I need to take a week off teaching can I do it and he said yes well done getting into it fantastic. … the third time he said look [name] you can't keep on taking time off school – hmm – either you're a teacher or a paraglide pilot, so I said I'm going to give up teaching (Sarah).

The ways in which the lifestyle sport drives the individual's work and life goals is clear from many of the interviews. The feeling that the sport 'takes over' as the priority, whether that be gradually or suddenly, begins to distinguish the identity of the lifestyle sports entrepreneur. More in-depth than just to say 'wanting' to make a living out of a hobby, for some of the entrepreneurs, a crux point came in their lives as Sarah evidences above. The understanding of the integration of the sport, work and life is therefore critical for the research, and makes it distinct in its approach to trying to understand the 'becoming' of the lifestyle entrepreneur. Fundamentally what separates a lot of these entrepreneurs from 'regular' entrepreneurs or even other lifestyle entrepreneurs is the motivation and transformation of life goals.

Conclusions

This study offers a more nuanced insight into the identity of the lifestyle entrepreneur, and how this identity is constructed in lifestyle sports. While a number of studies of lifestyle entrepreneurs exist, a focus within the context of lifestyle sports is very limited. Furthermore, many of the existing studies offer only a limited perspective of lifestyle entrepreneurs, focussing on what Maclure (2009) more generally describes as surface appearances. Consequently, this study's contributions are as follows: Firstly, the findings offer a more refined understanding of how lifestyle entrepreneurs can be identified with practical implications for future research. Given the complexity of the concept (e.g. Jones, Jones, Williams-Burnett and Ratten 2017) we would encourage future research in this area to be very clear on how samples of lifestyle entrepreneurs are identified; but many studies of lifestyle entrepreneurs provide very limited discussion of who they regard as being a lifestyle entrepreneur. Secondly, based on this more nuanced appreciation of the complexities underlying the notion of lifestyle entrepreneurship as they apply to lifestyle sport we recognise that interpretations of growth are key to broadening the understanding of who may fall within the broader category of lifestyle entrepreneurs. While current definitions use profit maximisation for this, it is clear from the analysis of our data that there are other aspects that are meaningful to lifestyle entrepreneurs in this context affecting how they identify as lifestyle

entrepreneurs (or not). While in some instances lifestyle entrepreneurs can conform to current definitions of the lifestyle entrepreneur, there is an emerging theme here unique to the lifestyle sports context which marries the business person identification and sports person identification through new ways, resulting in alternative views of identity that have to be carefully managed and negotiated. Finally, the researchers recognise that the findings corroborate Al-Dajani's (2009) conclusion of the need to consider the growth potential of lifestyle enterprises based on their motivations and growth potential.

The researchers recognise that there are limitations to the study. Despite drawing in part on a survey and being able to gain results from 80 lifestyle entrepreneurs in lifestyle sports, to our knowledge the largest of its kind of this type of entrepreneur, we can only very tentatively make claims as to statistical generalisability. This however comes with the territory of lifestyle entrepreneurship where definitions vary and where therefore being able to come up with a robust sampling frame has proven to be challenging. In fact, one of the outcomes of the study is that by providing a more in-depth analysis of characteristics of lifestyle entrepreneurs future studies may draw on these in creating their own, more credible, sampling frames. With regard to the qualitative aspect of the study, again, the sample size is small though in line with similar studies in this area. Moreover, based on the notion of saturation, in terms of novel themes emerging from the analysis the potential returns on collecting more data were deemed to be marginal when off-set again resources required to do so. In fact, rather than seeking statistical generalisability the study sought to identify a wide variety of lifestyle entrepreneurs within lifestyle sports thereby documenting their diversity. It is therefore the recommendation of the researchers that further research needs to be conducted in this area based on these findings; however the barriers to data collection should be noted. If suitable sample sizes could be achieved, further investigations based on sub-variables such as age or income would provide further potential areas of exploration. The completed research does however concur with some of the pre-existing literature that lifestyle entrepreneurship is a valid and yet regularly misunderstood form of entrepreneurship, and provides a gateway to further work on understanding and interpreting the phenomenon.

Notes: The questionnaire questions can be provided on request to the lead author – lwallis@marjon.ac.uk.

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