Gender related differences in snow sports as a potential of alpine destinations

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Introduction
- Problem Statement, Research Questions

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Introduction

Challenging Factors of Alpine Destinations:

• Increasing competition, climate change, unreliable snowfall etc.
• Adaptation of products/services to the requirements of target groups in order to differentiate.

Women are decision makers:

• Women exert influence on the whole decision-making process within the buying cluster “family”.
• It is assumed that women are an interesting target group for the snow sport industry.

Analysis of gender-related differences with reference to the perception/evaluation of snow sports is crucial in order to react with appropriate measures.

Source: Boon, 1984; Hall, 2012
Research Aim & Questions

The present study sets out to **identify gender related differences** in **snow sports** aiming to derive **specific measures** and offers which could be **incorporated** by alpine destinations.

- Are there gender-related differences in perceiving and practicing snow sports regarding the snow sport biography of women?
- What are gender-related expectations with regard to snow sports and which aspects do women prioritize?
- How could an alpine ski destination meet these expectations?
Theoretical Background

- Consumer Behavior
- Women & Leisure Activities
- Motivation / Attribute Preferences
- Sport Behavior

Literature Approach, own illustration
Literature Review

- Most research has been undertaken with regard to examining gender related differences in sports and vacation preferences in general as well as in skiing constraints.

- Motivational differences between men and women in snow sports are little discussed in academic research and dated.

- Based on the identified research gap, this study investigates motivation factors and attribute preferences of women participating in snow sport activities.

- Object: Specific alpine ski destination in Switzerland.
Methodology

Data Collection Methods, own illustration

Literature Review

Demand side
- Qualitative
  - Semi-structured Interviews
- Quantitative
  - Online Survey

Supply side
- Best Practice Analysis
- Expert Interviews
Findings I
Snow Sport Development and Profile of Skiers

- There is a **growing amount** of participants in outdoor sports, respectively snow sports. **Reasons**: Increasing possibilities, mega-trends: health, fitness and body awareness.

- For the majority (69%) traditional **skiing** is their **main sport activity**.

- Survey participants are **6-10 times on the slopes** (30%), **36-45 years of age** (28%) and mainly in **company** of friends and colleagues (54%).
Findings II
Snow Sport Biography

- 48% of the respondents started their snow sport career **before they turned five**. Share of women starting after the **age of 25** is larger then the share of men.

- **Main reason** for starting snow sports: **parents (68%)**. Share of women who learned to ski due to and with their **partner** is higher then the share of men.

- **Main reason to stop**: accident, injuries, health or family issues. Females majorly are afraid of **speed and falling** (injury).
Findings III - Motivational Factors

- Experience of nature
- Motion
- Sun & Weather
- Fun
- Health
- Social contacts
- Family
- Vicinity to ski area
- Entertainment
- Flexibility
- Thrill

Total
Male
Female

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Findings III - Motivational Factors

- «Family» is a stronger motive for women than for men but social contacts are of equal importance for both men and women.

- Women are more interested in cosy atmospheres to socialize, men indicated they prefer events like après-ski for coming together.

- Crowded slopes (66%), increasing prices (51%) and weather conditions (48%) are main reasons why people do not participate in snow sports.

- Only 3% of the respondents indicated velocity as a deterrent for practicing snow sports; the share of females is larger.
Findings IV - Attribute Preference

- Condition of slopes
- Thoughtfulness / Rules
- Equipment
- No waiting times
- Accessibility
- Weather / snow conditions
- Gastronomy
- Fun / Friends / Emotions
- Infrastructure & Security
- Cost / performance ratio

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40% Cost / performance ratio

Total
Male
Female

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# Findings IV
## Attribute Preference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ski Area</strong></td>
<td>- Relation of price and performance. No gender related differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Journey / Arrival</strong></td>
<td>- Parking options / easy accessibility to ski lifts and slopes. Accessibility is more important for females than for males.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Facilities designed to reduce hassle including carrying of equipment are of greater concern to women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- All attributes connected to the journey and arrival, are more important to female respondents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>- The maintenance of lifts / the condition of slopes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- These safety attributes are more important for women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entertainment</strong></td>
<td>- Rated very low. Slightly more important for men than for women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
<td>- Functionality, style/fashion and safety are vital aspects for females. These aspects are more important to women, brands are more important for men.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings V
Destination Choice

- **Prime reasons** why people have chosen the specific ski area: *vicinity to residence* (76%) and *relation of price and performance* (44%).

- For women the *relation to family* is a stronger reason than the *variety* in the *destination* and the *attractiveness* of slopes.
Conclusion

• **There are gender-related differences** in perceiving and practicing snow sports. However, the differences are mostly **not significant**.

• **Main motivations**: enjoyment, relaxation, experience, socializing with family, emotions, landscape and motion/fitness/health.

• **Attributes**: thoughtfulness on the slopes, easy and quick accessibility to lifts and safety regarding slopes and equipment.
Recommendations & Limitations

• Packages and measures that cover a range of female specific attributes have been recommended to the specific destination.

• Attributes are not prioritized in the same way by all women.

• Offers or measures should not offend other target groups. Thus, they should not all been labelled „female“.

• Study confirms results from previous research and contributes new aspects with respect to attribute preferences in snow sports. Solely single sections could either be confirmed or expanded.

• The snow sport industry gets an idea, what they should emphasize when addressing the female clientele.
Thank you very much for your attention.

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References