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Empowerment and women in adventure tourism : a negotiated journey

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Abstract

Women's participation in adventure tourism is growing, yet few studies have explored this group of tourists. This conceptual paper seeks to extend our understanding of female adventure tourists by examining the empowering journey women can take through constraint negotiation to enjoy the benefits of adventure tourism. Using content analysis to review the literature on women's adventure experiences in tourism and recreation settings reveals prominent themes that have been consolidated to propose constraint, negotiation and benefit categories. A conceptual model is presented that illustrates the opportunities for women's empowerment within these categories and examines the interrelationships and interdependency between them. The model shows that constraints, negotiations and benefits can be experienced simultaneously, at different points in a woman's adventure tourism journey and used as a vehicle for empowerment. Women will also re-evaluate these categories before, during and after their adventure tourism experience. Therefore, the categories are not fixed and evolve each time a woman participates in adventure tourism throughout her life. Suggestions are made for further study in this under-researched area.

Key words: Women, adventure tourism, constraints, negotiation, benefits, empowerment

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore adventure tourism as a vehicle to empower women. The World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 2008, 2010) define empowerment as a critical aspect of gender equality where men and women can take control over their lives, gain skills, have their skills and knowledge recognised, enjoy the same opportunities, increase self-confidence and develop self-reliance. This paper will explore women's empowerment by examining the constraints women can encounter in adventure tourism and the sense of empowerment they may gain from negotiating these constraints. While empowerment is a benefit of adventure tourism in its own right, empowerment can also be gained incidentally through experiencing other benefits of adventure tourism. Therefore, this paper will also examine the broader benefits of adventure tourism for women. Constraints, negotiation and benefits have specifically been selected as studies on women's experience of tourism and adventure recreation have found they provide a way of understanding women's empowerment (see Heimtun & Jordan, 2011; Little & Wilson, 2005). For this reason, it can be assumed that studying these within an adventure tourism context will equally help us to understand how women can gain empowerment through adventure tourism. Additionally, constraints negotiation and benefits can be experienced before, during and after the adventure tourism experience. Therefore, this paper will also examine the constraints a woman may negotiate and the benefits they may gain during each stage of their adventure tourism journey and how these may empower women.

Adventure tourism includes a broad range of activities, often provided by a commercial operator, which involves close interaction with the natural environment away from the participant's home and contains elements of perceived and real risk (Buckley, 2007; Ewert, 2000; Hall, 1992; Weber 2001). Adventure tourism may involve 'soft' activities, such as backpacking, hiking, cycling or flat-water canoeing, or 'hard' activities, such as climbing and mountaineering, white-water rafting, wilderness backpacking and sky-diving (Ewert & Jamieson, 2003; Williams & Soutar, 2005). While some definitions also include safaris, camping, birdwatching, eco-tourism and volunteer tourism as 'soft' forms of adventure tourism (Adventure Travel Trade Association [ATTA], 2014; Ewert & Jamieson, 2003), for the purpose of this paper, only women's experiences of physical activities in remote or

natural settings will be analysed. The exception to this is the inclusion of backpacking, as this form of soft adventure tourism often includes participation in physical activities, such as trekking, climbing and diving.

Firstly, this paper will review literature on how women access and engage in adventure tourism. Specifically, the constraints women can encounter, the negotiation strategies they may use, and the benefits they may gain, respectively. Using content analysis key themes of constraints, negotiation strategies and benefits of adventure tourism will be identified and consolidated to create categories that recognise the opportunities for women's empowerment. These categories will attempt to provide an all-encompassing picture of women's experiences of adventure tourism. However, they are broad categories and it should not be forgotten that women's experience of these would differ in different adventure tourism settings, as some constraints and negotiation strategies available could be specific to an adventure activity and setting. As female adventure tourists have received little academic interest to date, this paper will largely review literature from the subject areas of tourism and adventure recreation. In contrast, women's leisure constraints and constraint negotiation have been well documented. However, as the purpose of this paper is to focus on women in adventure tourism, only literature from the fields of adventure recreation and tourism will be drawn upon.

Secondly, a conceptual model will be developed that incorporates the proposed categories to exemplify a woman's negotiated journey to the empowering benefits of adventure tourism. Past research on women's adventure have traditionally focused on constraints, negotiation or benefits independently of one another. This paper responds to the need for their integration and presents a model that illustrates the interrelationships and interdependency between them, and the opportunities that permeate throughout a women's adventure tourism journey for empowerment. As this model has emerged from reviewing the literature on women's experiences of tourism and adventure recreation, research is needed to test the model and its applicability within an adventure tourism context. Therefore it is hoped that this model will be a useful tool for others when conceptualising their own research within this area. Finally, the concluding comments offer suggestions for further research.

Methodology

Using the keywords constraint, negotiation and benefit, the literature search initially focused on research articles that included these keywords in relation to women's experiences of adventure tourism. However, this produced a narrow set of data (10 articles) and the search criteria was broadened to include these keywords in relation to women's experience of adventure activities in recreation settings. This produced a larger set of data and 30 of the most cited research articles were selected. Aiming to create a balance between the voices of female tourists and female recreationalists within the data, research articles that did not include the keywords, but focused on women's general experience of tourism and adventure tourism, were also analysed in the hope that they included some reference to women's constraints negotiation and benefits of adventurous forms of tourism. Inadvertently, the women in the studies reviewed all reside in Western countries, specifically the United Kingdom, Sweden, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.
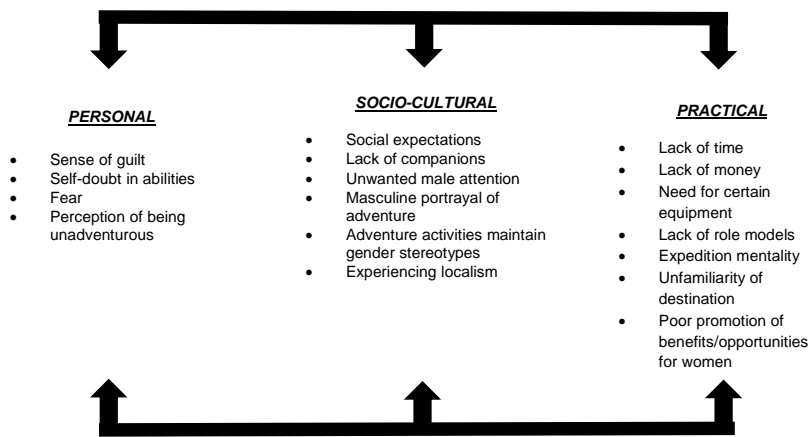
The research articles were then reviewed using content analysis, defined by Krippendorff (2013, p.10) as 'the systematic reading of a body of texts, images, and symbolic

matter'. A qualitative interpretive approach to content analysis was adopted allowing for categories to be created through the analysis of data (research articles), rather than a quantitative approach where frequencies are counted within predetermined categories (Dey, 1993). The process involved reading, annotating and assigning codes to the data. The three phases of coding proposed by Strauss (1987) and Corbin & Strauss (2008) were used to interpret the data. First, open coding was used to search for reoccurring words, themes and concepts. Second, the relationships between these open codes were identified through a process of axial coding. This involved an inductive thinking process of identifying and relating categories and subcategories under the three umbrella categories of constraint, negotiation and benefit. Finally, selective coding was used, whereby each constraint, negotiation and benefit category and subcategory was examined, integrated and refined. Attention was then given to the relationship and process between the constraint, negotiation and benefit categories and subcategories. This led to the development of the conceptual model, which, according to Ryan and Bernard (2000, p.784), is an important part of qualitative analysis, allowing for theories to be 'laid out' in the form of flow charts that 'communicate ideas visually to others'.

Women's constraints to adventure tourism

Constraints that may limit women's participation in adventure tourism have received some academic interest (e.g. Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Harris & Wilson, 2007). In contrast, women's constraints are well documented in adventure recreation and tourism literature (e.g. Little, 2002a, 2002b; Wilson & Little, 2005). Some of these studies have chosen to broadly categorise women's constraints into personal, socio-cultural and practical constraints (see Little, 2002a; Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Little, 2012), rather than adopting Crawford and Godbey's (1987) intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraint categories respectively. This paper will adopt the same approach, believing the categories to be clearer and more self-explanatory than Crawford and Godbey's (1987) earlier conceptualisation of leisure constraint categories. Studies of women's constraints to adventure tourism, tourism and adventure recreation are consolidated under the three constraint categories of personal, socio-cultural and practical constraints, and sub-categories within each category are identified based on prominent constraints illustrated in the literature (Figure 1)*.* The following discussion will show that a number of constraints across all three categories can be experienced simultaneously and many are considered to be interconnected as they can inform and influence one another. In addition, women can encounter constraints at different stages in their adventure tourism journey. Pre-travel constraints can influence a woman's decision to travel but may not prevent travel. Once the pre-travel constraints have been negotiated, women are often faced with new constraints when participating in adventure tourism which can greatly influence this experience. Therefore, each constraint will be discussed based on its relationship with other constraints and those that are encountered by women before and during the adventure tourism experience.

Figure 1: Types of constraints for women in adventure tourism

PERSONAL

- Sense of guilt
- Self-doubt in abilities
- Fear
- Perception of being unadventurous

SOCIO-CULTURAL

- Social expectations
- Lack of companions
- Unwanted male attention
- Masculine portrayal of adventure
- Adventure activities maintain gender stereotypes
- Experiencing localism

PRACTICAL

- Lack of time
- Lack of money
- Need for certain equipment
- Lack of role models
- Expedition mentality
- Unfamiliarity of destination
- Poor promotion of benefits/opportunities for women

Personal constraints

Women's personal constraints are based on their self-perceptions, beliefs and attitudes (Wilson & Little, 2005). While it is argued that personal constraints are the most powerful of all constraints, as they influence the motivation to act and steer an individual's decision to participate (Crawford, Jackson & Godbey, 1991), fewer personal constraints have been cited by women than socio-cultural and practical constraints. Four key sub-categories of personal constraints have emerged from the literature: a sense of guilt, self-doubt, fear and the perception of being unadventurous.

A *sense of guilt*, in terms of their commitment to others, has been expressed by many women (Harris & Wilson, 2007; Little, 2002a; Warren, 1996). When planning their personal adventures, the thought of leaving their children and husbands at home can lead to deep feelings of guilt. This sense of guilt can make women question their ethic of care and reconsider their adventure tourism plans and aspirations, instead placing the needs of others first. A woman's ethic of care, as defined by Gilligan (1982) in her seminal book *In a Different Voice,* bases woman's morality on caring for others. The opposition between selfishness (wanting to participate in adventure tourism) and responsibility (ethic of care) 'complicates for women the issues of choice, leaving them suspended between an ideal of selflessness and the truth of their own agency and needs' (p.138). For some women, guided by the perceptions of others, they can see no way of taking control and pursuing their adventure tourism aspirations without seeming morally wrong.

Self-doubt in their athletic capabilities, their ability to develop competent skills within the activity, their knowledge of the natural environment and their ability to operate in remote settings are also prominent constraints for women (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Hudson, 2000; Little, 2002a; Warren, 1996; Williams & Lattey, 1994; Wilson & Little, 2005). Initially, these feelings of self-doubt can hinder a woman from pursuing adventure tourism when making her holiday decision. Self-doubt can also greatly influence a

woman's experience of adventure tourism during participation, by preventing her from participating in certain activities or from participating at a level that challenges her abilities.

These feelings of self-doubt can be interwoven with a sense of *fear.* Women can be fearful of the physical demands and dangerous nature of the adventure activity, which can make them question their existing doubts in their abilities. Women may also fear being lonely or being in a minority as a woman when planning and during the adventure experience (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Cobel, Selin & Erickson, 2003; Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Jordan & Gibson, 2005; Wilson & Little, 2005). If unfamiliar with the destination they are visiting, women may have concerns for their safety regarding host male attitudes and differing cultural values, which may cause women to be cautious when choosing certain destinations or restrict their movements to the main tourism spheres while in the destination (Myers & Hannam, 2008; Little & Wilson, 2005; Wilson & Little, 2008). These fears can make women feel vulnerable, self-conscious and the subject of 'gaze' and 'surveillance' by fellow travellers, tourism workers, the host community and men, as found in Jordan & Gibson's (2005, p.200-202) study of American and British female travellers. While these fears are not unfounded, Wilson and Little (2008) argue that women's fear of male violence and harassment in tourism settings is disproportionate to the actual experience of them. They argue that fear is socially and culturally taught to women and women learn not to go to places alone, to fear strangers and the night, and to stay in or around the safety of their home (Wilson and Little, 2008). Consequently, women perceive and experience fear in public spaces, which can be heightened when travelling abroad. As such, it is argued that public and tourist landscapes are constructed as 'masculinised' and built for the movement and enjoyment of men (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000). Travel literature does little to dissuade this fear and often reinforces the message that solo travel for women is full of challenge, risk and harassment, by providing advice for female travellers on how they should behave and places they should avoid when abroad (Wilson & Little, 2008). This simply reminds women of their vulnerability when travelling alone and can reduce the level of participation in, and enjoyment of, adventure tourism and travelling.

Finally, women's *perception of being unadventurous* has been identified as a personal constraint to women's participation in adventure tourism. Studies have found that women from Australia, New Zealand, America and the United Kingdom do not perceive themselves to be adventurous as their perceptions of adventure are not matched to the media's portrayal of adventure (Little, 2002b; Little & Wilson, 2005; Warren, 1996). Women's difficulty in reconciling their experiences with the terms 'adventure' or 'adventurer', compounded with their existing self-doubts and fears, can cause women to withdraw from the adventure activity or space, believing it to be inaccessible and masculine (Elsrud, 2005; Little & Wilson, 2005).

Socio-cultural constraints

Social-cultural constraints can be encountered by women before and during their adventure tourism experience. This category of constraints has a powerful influence over the other two constraint categories and can influence how women perceive themselves, their attitudes to adventure, their decision to participate and their experience of adventure. The following discussion will now explore these themes.

Social expectations define a woman's role and can be significant barriers to participation. Women have cited that compared to men, it is expected that women should place household duties and family commitments before personal adventure desires and consequently this reduces the available time and energy women have to pursue adventure (Bialeschki & Henderson, 2000; Diley & Scraton, 2010; Henderson, Bedini, Hecht & Schuler, 2006; Little, 2002a; Shaw, 1994; Warren, 1996; Wilson & Little, 2005). This ethic of care in placing the needs of others first and neglecting women's own adventure needs, induces a woman's personal sense of guilt and supports the notion that family commitment and family structures constrain women's recreation and tourism experiences (Gilligan, 1982; Henderson et al., 2006; Little, 2002a; Shaw, 1994; Warren, 1996; Wilson & Little, 2005). Therefore, women's ethic of care can be seen as a personal and a socio-cultural constraint. It is worth noting that women are not innately more caring than men, but women are more likely than men to be socialised in, participate in, and to value care-giving (Day, 2000; Gilligan, 1982). Social expectations can make negotiating travel plans with family, friends and colleagues extremely challenging, particularly if family, friends and colleagues consider it unsafe for women to travel alone, to visit the chosen destination or to participate in the chosen adventure activity (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Jordan & Gibson, 2005; Wilson & Little, 2005; 2008). Subjected to others' belief that they are acting irresponsibly, which can compound personal fears, women can find it difficult to justify the importance of travel to themselves and to others to be a constraining factor when planning adventure tourism.

The *lack of companions* and not knowing anyone that participates in the chosen activity can also be a significant deterrent for women (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Little, 2002a; Williams & Lattey, 1994; Wilson & Little, 2005). This is true not only from a social perspective, but particularly if the activity requires a companion, such as climbing. The lack of a companion can heighten women's safety fears, their anxiety of being lonely and self-doubts in their abilities. During the adventure tourism experience, Australian women have cited receiving *unwanted male attention* and harassment, while travelling, to constrain their travel plans, particularly for those travelling alone and without male companions (Wilson & Little, 2005, 2008). This potentially reinforces women's existing personal safety fears. The women in these studies reported being regarded as sexually 'available' and groped, fondled, verbally abused, followed and subjected to sexual acts, such as masturbation. Within a recreation context Bialeschki and Henderson (1993, p. 39) believe that 'a subtle kind of harassment may occur' where women are made to feel inferior if participating in unfamiliar settings with men who excel. In Canada, within the sport of skydiving negative attitudes towards female competency and sexist behaviours and practices, including the ritual of convincing female skydivers to remove their tops, have been reported by women and have made the women feel uncomfortable and sexualised (Laurendeau & Sharara, 2008). This does little to encourage women in adventure and reinforces women's personal sense of vulnerability, self-doubt and their perception that adventure is masculine and unwelcoming.

The media's *masculine portrayal of adventure*, showing images of men mountaineering or skiing in avalanches, and the outdoors to be a scary, uncomfortable and intimidating place, can greatly influence people's perceptions of adventure activities (Little, 2002b; Little & Wilson, 2005; Warren, 1996). This portrayal reinforces adventure to be a masculine domain and does not match women's perceptions and experiences of adventure (Little, 2002b; Little & Wilson, 2005). Adventure film festivals are popular with those that participate in adventure tourism. However, Frohlick (2005) observed at Banff Film Festival,

Canada, that men predominated as cultural producers, representing the majority of filmmakers, speakers and subjects of the films, whereas women were situated as spectators, featuring only peripherally in the screened films as less significant 'others'. As such, some women are unable to relate to adventure films and the masculine portrayal of adventure, which may deter women from pursing adventure tourism. Within the sport of snowboarding, media coverage and kudos is given to the injuries of male snowboarders, which is framed as being masculine, to prove dedication and toughness (Thorpe, 2005). By contrast, although women are very much part of the snowboarding culture, magazines ignore female risk takers and injuries, thus reinforcing the notion that male snowboarders take more risks and are more adventurous than women.

The adventure tourism activity itself can also be a constraint. Men and women are often channelled into certain types of *activities that maintain gender stereotypes* (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Shaw, 1994). Although an outdoor adventure setting can provide the opportunity to eradicate gender inequalities and redefine gender roles (men cooking and women lighting stoves and pitching tents), in reality it can also encourage stereotypical task delegation (e.g. men carrying heavier packs and equipment), which may constrain women in fully experiencing the adventure activity (Warren, 1996). Finally, unique to American and Australian female surf tourists, *experiencing localism* through territorialism and in some cases bullying from local surfers was reported to be the most prevalent socio-cultural factor during their adventure tourism experience (Fendt & Wilson, 2012). It was felt that this negative behaviour towards non-local surfers further exasperated the feeling of being a minority as a woman in this masculine arena.

Practical constraints

Practical constraints can also be encountered before and during the adventure tourism experience. Yet from the studies reviewed, women have only reported encountering practical constraints when planning their adventure tourism experience. One of the most widely cited practical constraint of adventure participation among women is a *lack of time* due to employment or commitments to family and friends (Bialeschki & Henderson, 2000; Dilley & Scraton, 2010; Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Henderson, et al., 2006; Hudson, 2000; Little, 2002a; Shaw, 1994; Warren, 1996; Wilson & Little, 2005). A *lack of money* due to the cost of equipment to participate in adventure activities and travelling to adventure tourism destinations, as well as women's lower earning power compared to men, have also been recorded as prominent practical constraints in women's adventure participation (Bialeschki & Henderson, 2000; Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Hudson, 2000; Shaw, 1994; Warren, 1996; Wilson & Little, 2005).The *need for certain equipment,* which can be expensive and may require certain skills, can also act as a substantial barrier to participation (Little, 2002a; Warren, 1996).

A *lack of role models* is also considered to reinforce women's perception that adventure is an inaccessible, masculine domain, which can dissuade women from considering adventure activities – including adventure tourism (Warren, 1996). Women may look to different forms of adventure media, including films, magazines and holiday brochures to find role models. However, as previously discussed, women are underrepresented in adventure media, reflecting an untruth that their participation in adventure is remarkable, rather than the norm (Stoddart, 2010). Women are also misrepresented in adventure media with attention often being given to their physical appearance, home lives and relationships, rather than their athletic ability and accomplishments (Rak, 2007; Vodden-McKay & Schell,

2010). This misrepresentation can impact negatively on women's social acceptance into the adventure community and can generate feelings of disempowerment amongst women (Vodden-McKay & Schell, 2010). Therefore, this constraint is strongly influenced by the socio-cultural 'masculine portrayal of adventure'. In addition, there are significantly fewer female guides than male guides. Specific to mountaineering, Logan (2006) reported that in Argentina operators are often unwilling to put accredited female guides in positions of authority over men who do not have the credentials to be the principle guide. Female guides that are employed by mountaineering operators are generally employed as supervisors and assistants in the cook tents at basecamp. Within the UK, Mountain Training, who provide mountain leadership, instruction and coaching awards, reported that only 19% of their award holders are women (Mountain Training, 2015, personal communication). This absence of female guides provides women with even less opportunity to have inspirational female role models.

The logistics of independently organising an adventure holiday are considered to be particularly challenging for some women (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Hudson, 2000). An *expedition mentality* can emerge as some women consider that participation requires too much effort and that it would be too time consuming to travel to the destination and to learn the activity competently, as found in Hudson's (2000) study of UK skiers. These factors contribute towards reduced appeal to participate (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Hudson, 2000). *Unfamiliarity of the destination*, its language, culture and geography, is also felt by Australian and American women to be a constraint when planning their adventure tourism experience (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Wilson & Little, 2005; 2008). Not knowing what to expect at the destination can heighten a woman's personal fears, vulnerability and self-doubt and can act as a significant barrier to adventure tourism. Previous studies have found that adventure tourism providers neglect gender recognition and women's voices within their literature and fail to promote the features of their products that enable women to overcome their main constraining factors (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Hudson, 2000; McKercher & Davidson, 1994). This *poor promotion of the benefits and opportunities* that adventure tourism provides for women does little to encourage them to pursue this form of tourism and it can contribute to a decrease in their participation (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Hudson, 2000; McKercher & Davidson, 1994).

Despite these challenges, women are using adventure tourism as a space where they can resist, rather than submit to constraints. Negotiation as a strategy to overcome constraints is a form of resistance in which women can become active, self-enabling participants who challenge traditional gendered discourse (Harris & Wilson, 2007; Jordan & Gibson, 2005). Consequently, women can experience adventure tourism spaces and activities as a source of empowerment.

Negotiation strategies for women in adventure tourism

Attention will now be given to the negotiation strategies women may use throughout their lives to ensure varying levels of participation in adventure. The negotiation strategies used by women are comprehensive and complex and an attempt has been made to categorise these (see Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Jordan & Gibson, 2005; Laurendeau & Sharara, 2008; Little, 2000, 2002a). These categories provide useful insights into the range of negotiation strategies employed by women in both adventure and tourism settings. However, like constraints, they are based on individual studies and an all-encompassing analysis of the full range of negotiation strategies reported by women in adventure tourism and adventure

recreation literature would provide deeper insights, which this paper seeks to do. From a thematic analysis of the strategies reported by women, three key negotiation categories have been identified and sub-categorised based on prominent themes (Figure 2). As women can encounter a number of constraints simultaneously, before and during their adventure tourism experience, likewise they can also use a range of strategies to negotiate these constraints at any one time and at different points in their adventure tourism journey. For some women, this process of constraint negotiation can lead to feelings of empowerment, which will be explored in the following discussion.

Figure 2: Types of negotiation strategies for women in adventure tourism
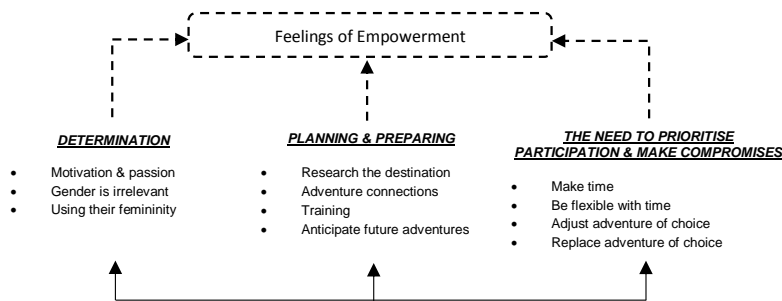
Determination

For some women, the strength of *motivation and passion* for adventure tourism is strong enough to act as a negotiation strategy in itself. According to Fendt and Wilson (2012), American and Australian female surf tourists were able to overcome their challenges in accessing this form of adventure tourism by maintaining a positive attitude about the benefits which surf tourism provides. Likewise, British and American women who are determined to pursue their travelling desires have reported resisting personal and socio-cultural constraints, and in doing so empowering themselves through their travels (Jordan & Gibson, 2005). These two studies show that the challenges the women encountered when accessing adventure tourism were embraced and seen as exciting and empowering. They enhanced the women's adventure tourism experiences and encouraged their self-confidence and to develop as individuals. Without these challenges, their adventure experience was of less value.

For other women who are devoted to adventure, constraints are negotiated by taking the view that *gender is irrelevant.* In Laurendeau and Sharara's (2008) study of Canadian female skydivers and snowboarders, most of the women recognise that they are marginalised within these sports, but rather than submitting to this, they found that they could empower themselves and negotiate gender discrimination by discarding gender and seeing themselves first as skydivers and snowboarders with abilities equal to men. In contrast some of the female snowboarders ignore gender and their femininity by choosing to wear the baggy clothing style that dominates snowboarding. This diverts attention from their sexuality, as they prefer to be mistaken for men, and this creates anonymity that allows them

to just snowboard without the attention they may get if their femininity was more obvious (Laurendeau & Sharara, 2008). Contrary to this, other female skydivers within this study reported *using their femininity* to negotiate their way through the male-dominated world of skydiving. These women recognise they are treated differently, and rather than challenging this, they take advantage of the extra attention and guidance in the sport they receive for being attractive. However, this negotiation strategy is contentious for some women who believe that emphasising a woman's femininity and sexualising her image undermines the efforts of women trying to transform these perceptions (Laurendeau & Sharara, 2008).

Planning and preparing

Planning and preparing is a common strategy articulated by women to negotiate constraints. Prior to and during the adventure tourism experience British, Australian and American women have reported *researching the destination* to negotiate various personal constraints and to alleviate any doubts they may have in their lack of familiarity with the destination and the adventure activity. Transport, accommodation and tour arrangements are made, and the environmental conditions and locations the activities will take place in are researched (Coble et al., 2003; Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Myers & Hannam, 2008). Spaces identified as being male domains, including bars, pubs and activities, can be avoided for fear of feeling vulnerable and receiving disapproval, innuendos, teasing and even violence or sexual harassment (Myers & Hannam, 2008). However, while this negotiation technique may give women confidence and empowerment from the knowledge they have gained, and encourage them to continue travelling, some women can become resentful for feeling they have to constantly gauge the tourist landscape (Wilson & Little, 2008).

Another strategy women use to overcome constraints is to develop *adventure connections.* Concerns regarding safety or loneliness when travelling can be overcome by developing friendships with likeminded adventurers. This ensures an enjoyable experience and gives women power and control through safety in numbers (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Myers & Hannam, 2008). The need for companions and doubts in one's abilities when participating in certain adventure activities and in certain locations, can also be negotiated by connecting with fellow adventurers through groups and clubs or by joining a packaged adventure holiday. Connecting with female-only groups is often sought by women, especially for those who see the adventure activity as a journey of self-discovery, to overcome self-doubts, and for those who perceive mixed-gender groups to be competitive, goal driven environments, prevailed by men (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Nolan & Priest, 1993).

Training prior to the adventure experience to develop knowledge, skills and fitness helps women negotiate their personal fears and develop greater awareness of their capabilities and boundaries. In turn this helps women make critical decisions in the planning and participation of their adventure experience and provides a sense of achievement and mastery which enhances their adventure experience and can lead to feelings of empowerment (Coble et al, 2003; Fendt & Wilson, 2012). Finally, for some Australian women who have not participated in adventure for some time, but are committed to the benefits of adventure, planning and preparing are used to *anticipate future adventures* (Little, 2000, 2002a). This lack of participation is seen as being a temporary state, as while they raise their children, work full time or recover from injury, they continue to plan future adventures and set goals. This enables women to maintain an emotional connection with adventure and maintain their adventure identity (Little, 2000, 2002a).

Prioritising participation and making compromises

Many women consider adventure an important aspect of their life, and as such, *making time* in their life and prioritising adventure participation is a key negotiation strategy (Elsrud, 1998; Little, 2000, 2002a). The time dedicated to adventure is not only used for the adventure activity itself, but also for the planning and organising of the adventure experience, learning new skills and training for participation, therefore exemplifying an act of empowerment. Women have described making time for adventure by managing their time, reducing their work hours and domestic chores, or taking employment that provides adventure through the job. For young Swedish female travellers, backpacking can be viewed as providing women with their last opportunity to travel before becoming wives or mothers, and subsequently some women make time to prioritise this form of adventure (Elsrud, 1998). For other women, making time and prioritising adventure is difficult and instead they have to compromise on the time spent participating in adventure, the level of challenge or the activity itself. *Being flexible with time* dedicated to adventure by extending or shortening time, or altering the frequency of participation, can be a useful negotiation technique for women in ensuring continuing participation (Little, 2000, 2002a). Other women may choose to *adjust the adventure of choice,* particularly those with children or dependents, or those who have lost some of their ability due to lack of practice, or if their motivations for participation have changed (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Little, 2000, 2002a). Rather than permanently ceasing their participation in their chosen adventure activity, many women will alter the level of challenge or location of the activity to reflect this new phase in their adventure life, or adjust their preferred form of adventure tourism to involve their children, partner or friends. In contrast, for other women who are experiencing circumstances in their lives that are preventing participation, such as injury, re-location or having a family, the only means of negotiation is to *replace their adventure of choice* for alternative forms of adventure (Little, 2000, 2002a). This substitution could be temporary, - with an expectation to return to their preferred adventure activity in the future - or long-term, accepting that the replacement activity will form part of a new phase in their adventure lives.

The aforementioned studies show how important adventure is to women. By taking control and creatively negotiating constraints to ensure adventure in their lives, women are actively empowering themselves. This suggests that women's resistance to constraints is driven by their desire and commitment to adventure tourism and the expected benefits they will gain from participation, which this paper will now explore.

Benefits of adventure tourism for women

The benefits of adventure tourism are largely experienced during participation, however, this paper has shown that women may also experience the unexpected benefit of gaining empowerment from negotiating constraints when planning and preparing for their adventure tourism experience. This sense of empowerment can continue to be felt during the adventure activity itself, as it permeates through the other benefits they may gain from participation. Few studies have specifically focused on the benefits women gain from adventure in both tourism and recreation settings (e.g. McKercher & Davidson, 1994; Myers, 2010; Whittington, Mack, Budwill & McKenney, 2011). However, insights can be drawn from studies that have researched women's general experience of adventure in these settings.

Five comprehensive categories with sub-categories are proposed based on the key benefits expressed by women within this literature (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Types of benefits for women in adventure tourism

Types of Benefits for Women in Adventure Tourism
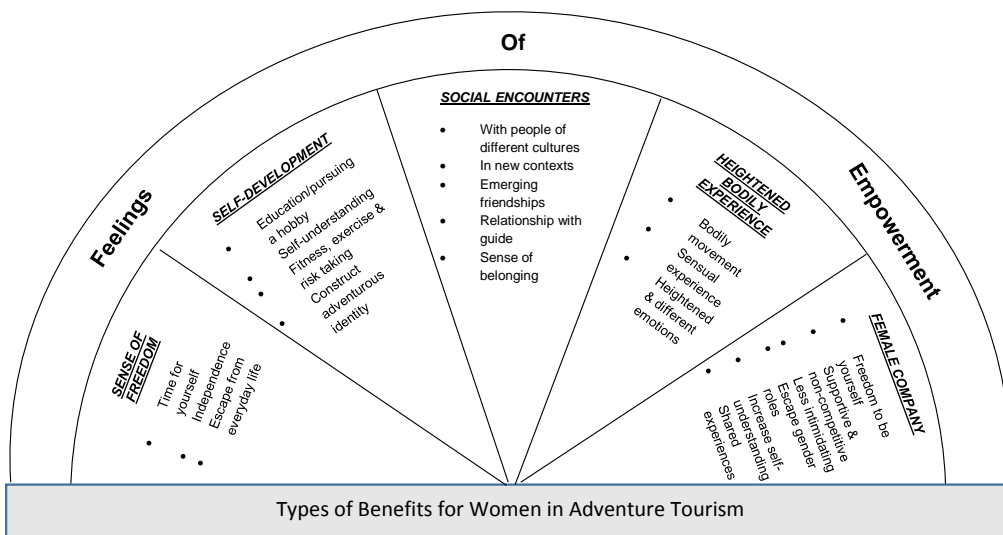
The profound sense of freedom that adventure provides is a central benefit to women. The opportunity to have *time for yourself* and to be free of distractions is of particular importance to women (Boniface, 2006; Elsrud, 1998; Harris & Wilson, 2007; Henderson, 1996; Jordan & Gibson, 2005; McKercher & Davidson, 1994; Mitten, 1992). A sense of *independence* that adventure provides and the opportunity to be spontaneous, whilst also being responsible for their own decisions, is also of value to women and can help increase self-confidence and empowerment. When reflecting on their travel experiences, Northern European female backpackers reported feeling less burdened by stereotypical femininity and they appreciate the ability to *escape from everyday life* and its materialism, strengthening them on their return (Elsrud, 2005). As such, this sense of freedom is also valuable in terms of its benefits to women's mental health.

Self-development

Some of the most important benefits of travel for women is the opportunity for *education* and to *pursue a hobby*, when skills can be developed and goals chased (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Jordan & Gibson, 2005; Pennington-Gray & Kerstetter, 2001). In addition, many women have reflected on an increase in their *self-understanding,* particularly their pride, strength and confidence from independent and adventure travel, which have been central to their feelings of self-empowerment (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Harris & Wilson, 2007; Jordan & Gibson, 2005). *Fitness, exercise* and *risk taking* opportunities that adventure tourism provides, which challenge, increase confidence and empower women, have also been described as being key to their holiday experience (McKercher & Davidson, 1994; Myers, 2010). By overcoming fears and participating in adventurous activities whilst on holiday,

women are able to *construct their own adventurous identity*, particularly if doing so alongside their male counterparts (Elsrud, 2001; Myers, 2010). Independent travel and learning to cope on their own is also used by women as a means of developing their adventure identity, leading to feelings of liberation, self-reliance and empowerment (Harris & Wilson, 2007; Jordan & Gibson, 2005; Myers & Hannam, 2008).

Social encounters

The social benefits of adventure are widely considered to be an important factor in continued participation. Social interactions, such as meeting other people (particularly when travelling alone) and interacting with *people of different cultures* and *in new contexts*, are considered to be key ingredients of a good holiday experience for Australian women (Harris & Wilson, 2007; Small, 2007). These social interactions can help women to develop their social abilities and learn how to relate to others, as well as establishing friendships. *Meeting like-minded people* and forming friendships through adventure are highly valued by women. Many women value the shared and supported experience that participation in adventure activities and adventure travel can provide, sometimes considering the social aspect of adventure experiences to be more important than other aspects of the experience, such as the physical challenge (Boniface, 2006; Elsrud, 1998; Hudson, 2000; Kiewa, 2001).

The *relationship with a guide* is often critical to the success of an organised adventure tourism holiday. Australian women have spoken of their nurturing ability, their encouraging comments, their ability to provide a non-threatening learning environment and the positive rapport they develop with them to be important factors of a successful adventure tourism trip (McKercher & Davidson, 1994). A final theme of social interaction, as noted by British female climbers, is the feeling of being different from other 'normal' and 'ordinary' women who do not share their adventure recreation interests (Boniface, 2006; Dilley & Scraton, 2010). Through this, a *sense of belonging* to a high-risk sporting subculture emerges where women feel they 'fit in' and are accepted, providing them with an empowering sense of belonging.

Heightened bodily experience

Heightened bodily senses and the physical and emotional experiences of travel have also been noted as key benefits from the adventure experiences of women (Elsrud, 1998; Myers, 2010; Small, 2007). To Small (2007, p. 88) the body is at the core of tourism and 'no holiday experience can be understood without reference to the body, since it is through the body that the holiday is experienced'. The extraordinary physical, emotional and sensual experiences that situate the body in the holiday can illuminate the everyday experiences of the body at home (Small, 2007). For example, learning about one's self through participating in physical activities that are not available at home, feeling safe in an enclosed holiday location or on an organised tour when time can be spent developing independence, or relaxing the body and resisting the feminine discourse to be looking after others (Small, 2007). Consequently the holiday provides an opportunity for the body to comply or resist gendered discourse (Small, 2007). Four embodiment themes are commonly cited.

Firstly, women recollect their adventure experiences through *bodily movement*. Demands on the body, such as the ache during long bicycle rides and bus journeys, are remembered positively, and add value to the travelling experience (Elsrud, 1998). British

female climbers have reported feelings of happiness with their bodies, not in terms of how they looked, but what their body could do (Dilley & Scraton, 2010). These women felt strong, fit and physically active from climbing and valued their bodies as part of their climbing identity and competency. From these accounts, bodily movements through physical adventure activities provide opportunities for women to feel liberated and gain control over their bodies (Small, 2007). A second theme is the *sensual experience*, with women reflecting on the visual sight, but also the sounds (the crisp sound of snow), smells (salt water, animals, flowers and market place), taste (food and drink) and touch (weather and comfort of accommodation), which enables women to put their experiences into context and feel connected with the activity and the environment they are in (Elsrud, 1998; Small, 2007). Adventure activities that allow women to experience the pristine natural environment activates and heightens their bodily senses (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Hornibrook, Brinkert, Parry, Seimens, Mitten & Priest*,* 1997; Mitten, 1992; Myers, 2010). Simultaneously, women can experience *heightened and different emotions* through adventure, as it is considered to be exciting and something beyond everyday life at home (Small, 2007). Expressions of joy, a sense of achievement, a sense of newness as well as relaxation and contentment have been described as positive emotions experienced by female travellers, which led to inner feelings of heightened happiness and empowerment (Small, 2007).
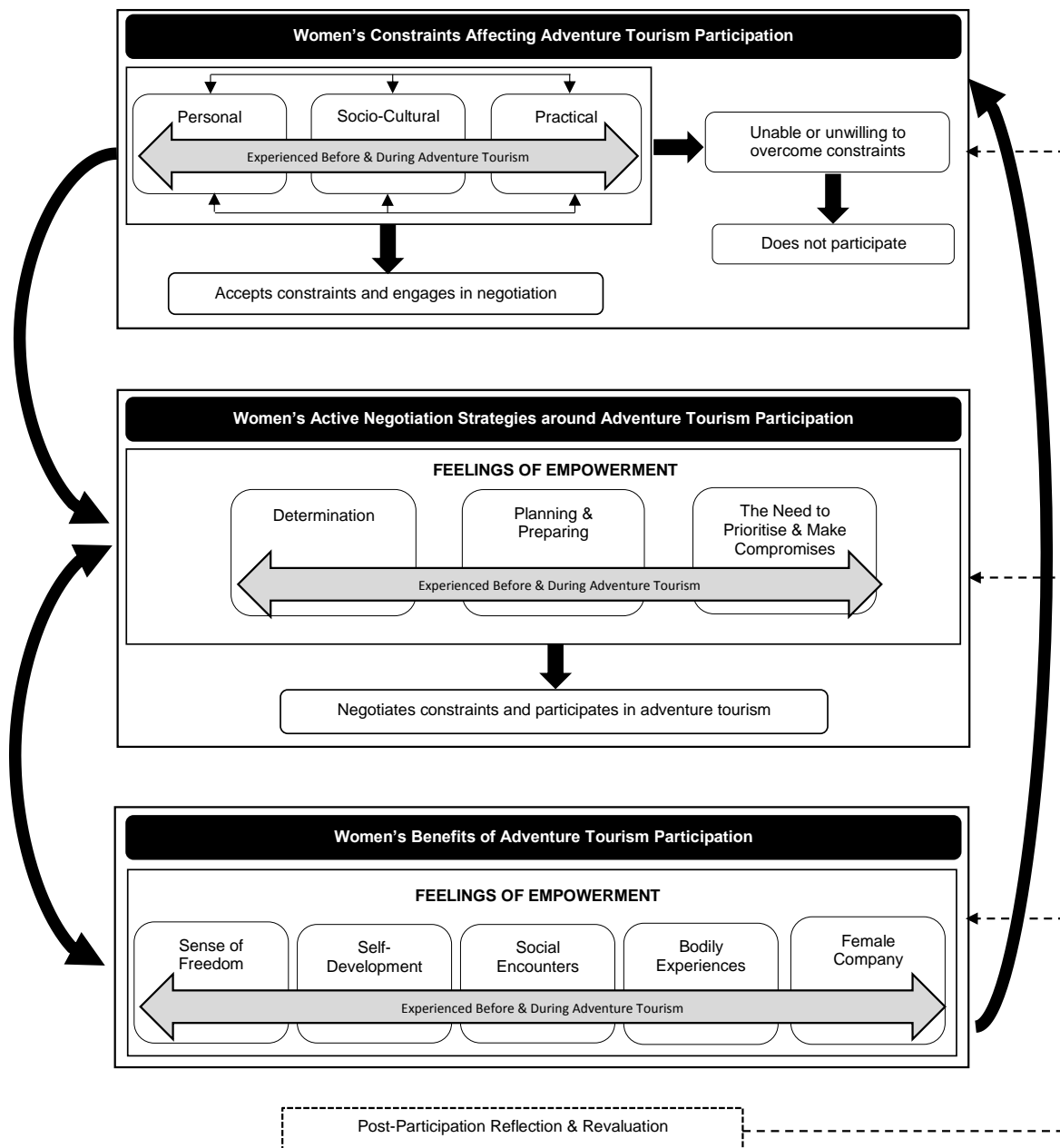
Female company

The benefits of all-female adventure recreation experiences have been studied extensively by scholars (see Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Hornibrook et al., 1997; McDermott, 2004; Mitten, 1992; Nolan & Priest, 1993; Whittington et al., 2011). Women have reported preferring all-female adventure recreation groups as they provide women with the *freedom to be themselves*, to be able to express their feelings in a *supportive and non-competitive environment* where they can work on their fears and safety issues and focus on developing their skills (Hornibrook et al., 1997; Mitten, 1992; Stoddart, 2010; Whittington et al., 2011). These groups are considered to be *less intimidating* than mixed-groups, particularly when participating in an activity for the first time. Women enjoy the perceived sense of equality within all-female groups and are able to *escape* imposed *gender roles* (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Hornibrook et al., 1997; McDermott, 2004; Mitten, 1992; Whittington et al., 2011). This allows women to participate more fully in the experience and to *increase* their *self-understanding,* particularly their confidence, self-esteem, self-belief and independence, which can lead to feelings of empowerment (Mitten, 1992; Whittington et al., 2011). Another prominent theme for these women is the importance of *shared experiences,* in terms of the sense of community, meeting likeminded people and the friendships that arise from participation in all-female groups (Hornibrook et al., 1997; McDermott, 2004; Mitten, 1992; Whittington et al., 2011). Women discover how enjoyable and powerful it feels to be part of an all-female group, resulting in a desire to participate again (Mitten, 1992; Whittington et al., 2011). Choosing to do an all-female adventure experience in a historically masculine practice, points to a gender resistance (McDermott, 2004). 'Women's individual and collective actions and their overt independence challenges traditional concepts of what constitutes women's behaviours and abilities' (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2000, p.104) and 'challenges women's perceptions of themselves' (p.106). While a women-only approach to adventure recreation can empower women physically and socially, paradoxically, Humberstone and Pedersen (2000) argue it can also contribute to the reproduction of dichotomised gendered ways of thinking if used as the main or only strategy for change.

Conceptual model

By reviewing the literature, this paper has found that past research on women's adventure has traditionally focused on either constraints, negotiation or benefits independently of one another, with the exception of Little's (2000, 2002a) and Fendt and Wilson's (2012) work, which examined together the constraints and negotiation strategies of women participating in adventure recreation and adventure tourism respectively. By contrast, this paper recognises each of these as important interrelated elements of a woman's journey in adventure tourism. A conceptual model is presented to illustrate this journey and the relationships and processes between constraints, negotiation and benefits (Figure 4). Earlier conceptualisations of women's experiences of adventure in both tourism and recreation are combined to exemplify the model. By bringing together these studies, integrative categories of constraints, negotiations and benefits are proposed to enhance our understanding of female adventure tourists. The sub-categories within each constraint, negotiation and benefit category (Figure 1, 2 & 3) are not presented in an order based on their level of importance. Nevertheless it is clear that women place more importance on certain categories. For instance, women have reported more socio-cultural constraints than personal constraints, more negotiation strategies based on determination than other negotiation categories, and fewer benefits associated with a sense of freedom than other benefit categories. Some benefit sub-categories may also appear to be similar, however it is the different context within which these themes were discussed that differentiate them sufficiently to be considered separately in different benefit categories. 'Escapism', 'time for yourself' and 'freedom to be yourself', for example, are placed in both 'female company' and 'sense of freedom' benefit categories. Similarly, 'self-understanding' is placed in both 'self-development' and 'female company' categories. These benefits have been reported by women travelling by themselves and in mixed-groups of adventure tourism and recreation, but also in the context of all-female groups. The presence of other women in a non-competitive and supportive environment where they can fully escape gender roles and discover how enjoyable and powerful it feels to be part of an all-female group enhances these benefits. Therefore it is important they are recognised in both benefit categories.

Figure 4: Conceptual model: a negotiated journey

Women's Constraints Affecting Adventure Tourism Participation

Personal | Socio-Cultural | Practical

Experienced Before & During Adventure Tourism

Unable or unwilling to overcome constraints

Does not participate

Accepts constraints and engages in negotiation

Women's Active Negotiation Strategies around Adventure Tourism Participation

FEELINGS OF EMPOWERMENT

Determination | Planning & Preparing | The Need to Prioritise & Make Compromises

Experienced Before & During Adventure Tourism

Negotiates constraints and participates in adventure tourism

Women's Benefits of Adventure Tourism Participation

FEELINGS OF EMPOWERMENT

Sense of Freedom | Self-Development | Social Encounters | Bodily Experiences | Female Company

Experienced Before & During Adventure Tourism

Post-Participation Reflection & Revaluation

The model reveals that a woman's journey to adventure tourism is not a linear process, but a multidimensional one. Women not only encounter constraints before they travel, but at different stages of their adventure tourism experience. These constraints have been broadly categorised into personal, socio-cultural and practical constraints, yet each category should not be considered in isolation. Each constraint category informs and influences the other, producing a series of interconnected constraints that women can encounter simultaneously. For example, a lack of time due to the social expectation of placing family needs before personal adventure tourism aspirations, and the consequent sense of guilt can make women question their ethic of care and prevent them from pursuing adventure tourism. This ethic of care is only a problem when a sense of caring is unequally distributed, and despite the movement towards greater levels of male participation in housework and childcare, studies continue to document women being and/or feeling responsible for the majority of these duties. Similarly, if family and friends believe it to be unsafe to travel alone, visit a certain destination or participate in a particular adventure activity, this can cause or contribute to a woman's personal fears and self-doubt, which can be exacerbated if they are unable to find a travel companion. Consequently this can deter women from travelling independently and may entice them to travel with an organised adventure tour operator instead. While women's personal constraints are embedded and thus mirror their socio-cultural constraints, socio-cultural constraints are also strongly interconnected with the practical constraints women may encounter when planning for adventure tourism. For example, the media's masculine portrayal of adventure and the poor promotion of the benefits and opportunities of adventure tourism for women does little to inspire women to participate in adventure tourism. Instead this can inadvertently strengthen women's perception that they are unadventurous or that adventure tourism is a masculine domain. This suggests that if adventure tourism literature featured women participating in a range of adventure activities and highlighted the services they offer women - particularly those that can help women overcome prominent constraints - this may remove, or at the very least, help women to negotiate these constraints. While women can encounter a number of barriers accessing adventure tourism, they can also emerge during the adventure tourism experience. In particular, fear or receiving unwanted attention can reduce or limit the adventure tourism experience. For some women, constraints act as a barrier to participation and they are either unable or unwilling to overcome them. Consequently they will exit the journey and abstain from adventure tourism. For others, who are committed to the benefits of adventure tourism, constraints are challenged and resisted and they enter a process of negotiation.

Like constraints, this process of negotiation can take place when planning and preparing and/or during the adventure tourism experience. For some women, their passion for adventure and their determination to participate is a strong enough negotiation strategy in itself. For others, they may need to engage in more challenging strategies, such as intensive planning and preparation, prioritising time for adventure tourism or making compromises on their preferred form of adventure tourism. This can lead to varying levels of participation, in terms of the type of activity they choose to participate in, the level of challenge faced, the time spent participating in the activity and the people they participate with. Despite the challenges of negotiating constraints, women may encounter unexpected benefits during this stage of their journey. Placed in this situation women can discover how resourceful and capable they are, as they seek to overcome constraints by engaging in a range of

negotiation strategies. In doing so, women can gain a deep sense of achievement and empowerment, enhancing their adventure tourism journey and making it a more meaningful experience. Once constraints have been successfully negotiated, women will continue on their journey and experience the benefits of participating in adventure tourism.

As previously discussed, women can begin to experience the benefits of adventure tourism earlier in their journey by gaining empowerment when negotiating constraints. Still, the majority of benefits, including the expected benefits that initially drew them to adventure tourism, are experienced during participation. Adventure tourism can provide women with an embodied experience where they can be free of responsibilities and concentrate on developing skills, gaining experience, forming close friendships through shared experiences, feeling a sense of belonging and developing an adventure identity. Opportunities may also be available for women to participate in all-female adventure tourism where they can escape imposed gender roles in a non-competitive environment and increase their confidence and self-belief with other like-minded women. Whilst five broad benefit categories have been proposed, what permeates through these categories is the sense of empowerment women can gain from their adventure tourism experience. This sense of empowerment is palpable through much of the journey, suggesting that adventure tourism can be used as an act of empowerment by women, which can lead to a strong desire to participate again.

After experiencing the benefits of adventure tourism and feeling empowered by the experience, women may reflect on their negotiated journey and begin to view differently the constraints they previously overcame. Some constraints may no longer be considered as a barrier and are rejected the next time a woman pursues adventure tourism. Other constraints may be considered less of a barrier, making them easier to negotiate next time. Therefore, constraint, negotiation and benefit categories are not fixed and can change each time a woman engages with adventure tourism throughout their lifetime.

Existing research has not specifically compared the different stages of a woman's life-course against her experience of adventure tourism. Understanding how life-course stages are related to women's constraints to adventure tourism, the negotiation strategies they may use and the benefits they gain from adventure tourism may provide a better understanding of the preferences of women across the life-course and how they seek and engage in adventure tourism. In return this would provide insights for the management and marketing of adventure tourism. While the life-course has not received specific attention in adventure tourism research, the literature reviewed in this paper suggests that women's participation in adventure decreases and changes with age. In particular a woman's life-course stage has been strongly linked to her personal and socio-cultural constraints. Women in their 20s and 30s want to experience adventure tourism before they are expected to settle down, using this time to make decisions about their future and to experiment with or develop their adventure identity (Elsrud, 1998, 2005; Gibson, Berdychevsky & Bell, 2012). Some women in their 30s who do not have a family or are not married, choose to participate in adventure tourism because their friends are having families and entering the next stage of the life-course (Gibson et al., 2012). The role and responsibility of being a mother, partner or wife heavily influences women's access to and time spent participating in adventure tourism (Harris & Wilson, 2007; Little, 2000, 2002a; Wilson & Little, 2005). During this stage a woman may cease, replace or adjust her preferred type of adventure tourism (Fendt & Wilson, 2012; Little, 2000, 2002a). However, as the children become older and more

independent they may recommence their adventure tourism activity of choice. Equally, other women in this middle stage of their life-course may continue participating in their preferred adventure tourism activity, feeling that they are entitled to their own leisure time and see it as a temporary escape from family obligations (Gibson et al., 2012; Little, 2000, 2002a). Nevertheless, for some of these women a sense of guilt due to the ethic of care means they never fully escape (Gibson et al., 2012). During the middle stages of the life-course women are also more likely to have a senior and demanding job that can make it harder to get away for long periods of time. Women within this stage are also often constrained by others, who may perceive adventure tourism to be an acceptable activity when you are young, but not in your 30s, 40s or 50s (Gibson et al., 2012). In contrast, some women in this middle stage, particularly if their children are older, resist these social perceptions and use adventure tourism to fulfil their goals, participate in certain adventure activities and visit particular destinations before they are too old (Gibson et al., 2012). While it is clear that there are distinct changes in the constraints encountered by women at different stages of the life-course, some constraints can be constant throughout, such as self-doubt, fear and lack of companions. It is unknown if the negotiation strategies used by women and the benefits sought and experienced during adventure tourism differs with age or life-course stage. However, research has found that women specifically chose to participate in all-female holidays throughout the life-course (Berdychevsky, Gibson and Bell, 2013; Gibson et al, 2012) as they are considered to provide women with 'a unique social dynamic not found in other types of tourist experiences' (Gibson et al., 2012, p. 43). All-female holidays provide an egalitarian space, absent of sexual tension, where women can feel less self-conscious and guarded, allowing them to enjoy themselves and gain empowerment. In particular, these women gained empowerment by reaching goals, broadening the self, feeling in charge and becoming mature travellers.

These findings suggest that a woman's negotiated journey is a cyclical process, comprising interdependent elements. Women engage with each of these elements simultaneously and will constantly revaluate constraints, negotiation strategies and benefits during the adventure tourism journey and during subsequent adventure tourism journeys throughout their lives. Therefore a women's journey to adventure tourism is not a static, linear process, but a process of constant negotiation, reflection and revaluation throughout their lives. This paper has identified ways of categorising adventure tourism constraints, negotiation and benefits, and highlighted the interrelationships and interdependences between these. By adopting an integrated non-linear approach, rather than examining these separately, insights are gained into the opportunities for women's empowerment through adventure tourism. However, this model has emerged from reviewing literature on women's experience of adventure tourism, adventure recreation and tourism more broadly, therefore research is needed to test the model and its applicability within an adventure tourism context.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, much of the previous work on women's access to adventure and their experiences of adventure has been the focus of recreation research. Less emphasis has been placed on women's experience of adventure within a tourism setting, how they negotiate their constraints in accessing and experiencing adventure tourism and the benefits they gain from their experience, including empowerment. The conceptual model presented in

this paper attempts to extend our understanding of female adventure tourists by contributing to the small, but growing, research available on female adventure tourists and their adventure tourism experiences. Literature on women's access to, and the benefits of, adventure recreation and tourism was examined and applied specifically to female adventure tourists. Generally, the constraints women encountered, the negotiation strategies used and the benefits gained were similar in both adventure recreation and adventure tourism settings. This reaffirms the inextricable relationship between these two forms of adventure and supports the common practice of drawing on recreation literature to guide the development of adventure tourism theory and understanding. However, because adventure tourism requires an individual to travel, often to an unknown destination, some differences were detected in how women may negotiate constraints. These include negotiating the lack of a travel companion, their unfamiliarity of the destination and their personal fears and self-doubts by developing adventure connections prior to departure or choosing to travel with an adventure tour operator.

The conceptual model introduces new all-encompassing constraint, negotiation and benefit categories and sub-categories and examines the interconnected and interdependent nature of these and how they can influence a woman's experience of adventure tourism. While this model raises awareness of the challenges women face when pursuing their adventure tourism aspirations, it also highlights how enabling this journey can be. Through the process of negotiation, women can discover how independent, strong and resourceful they are. This process can be seen by some women as an act of empowerment, which can add unexpected value and meaning to their adventure tourism experience. This sense of achievement and empowerment continues to be felt through the benefits gained during participation, particularly in terms of self-development and when participating in all-female groups.

Rather than presenting definitive answers supported by empirical research, this paper has presented a model that can be used as a useful tool by others to conceptualise their research within this area. The constraint, negotiation and benefit categories presented in the conceptual model have been developed through a qualitative content analysis of adventure tourism, tourism and adventure recreation literature. Therefore research is needed to see if these categories exist, if they are suitable and what the interrelationships are between them. In addition, this model is useful for adventure tourism providers. Commercial adventure tourism holidays are particularly appealing to women as they negotiate many of their constraints. By appreciating the negotiated journey a woman can encounter in her pursuit to participate in adventure tourism, appropriate opportunities can be designed by adventure tourism providers that meets the needs of this growing market. While some constraints are socially constructed and therefore difficult for the industry to influence, others can be alleviated by the industry (Wilson and Little, 2005). For example the presence and representation of women in their literature and how they promote the opportunities and benefits of adventure tourism to women may help women to negotiate certain pre-travel constraints.

As women constitute nearly half of all international adventure tourists (ATTA, 2014), further research is needed to understand this significant market. It would be useful to know if women seek commercial female-only adventure tourism experiences, if they would prefer a female guide, and if they are deterred by the lack of either of these opportunities.

Consideration of how women are promoted in adventure tourism literature would also be of academic interest, as this could stimulate motivation to participate in commercial adventure holidays, or conversely, provide a barrier to participation if women are underrepresented or misrepresented in such promotional literature. Similarly, adventure tour operators' understanding of their female clients and how they recognise their needs within their marketing, product development and guiding would be of academic interest. Research into the constraints to women's participation and their experience of adventure tourism across a spectrum of life stages is worthy of study. Similarly research could focus on a comparison of the expected and experienced benefits of adventure tourism for women. Many of the studies reviewed in this paper have alluded to the benefits of adventure tourism being experienced not only before and during, but also after participation through bringing about positive changes in women's everyday lives. Further research is needed to explore the long-term benefits of adventure tourism. In doing so we can deepen our understanding of a woman's adventure tourism journey.

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