

A Conceptual Framework of Motivations for Participating in High Risk Adventure Travel Activities

Alan Ewert, Ph.D.
Indiana University

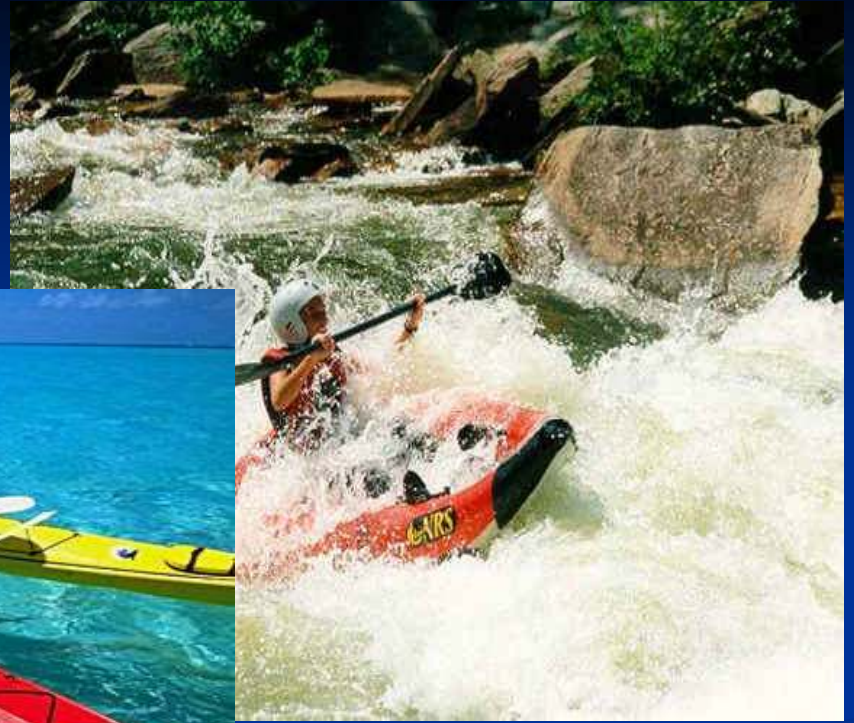


Genesis and Definitions of Adventure Education

Etymology: 13th - 14th Century
Latin – *adventurus* (*about to arrive*)
Middle English – *aventure* (*chance, risk*)

Adventure Travel

An experience or activity, usually recreational in nature, that contains a travel component and a significant interaction with the natural environment and local culture, in which the traveler is exposed to danger and risk and where the outcome is uncertain, but influenced by the skills of the participant or circumstance.





“Because it is there.”

~GEORGE LEIGH MALLORY

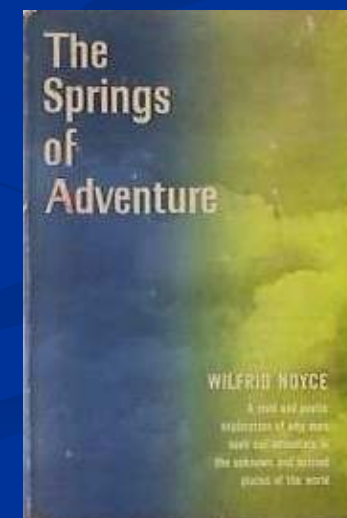
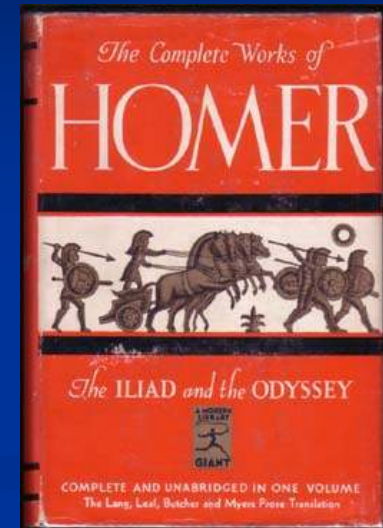




**The remains of George Leigh-Mallory,
discovered on May 1, 1999 at approximately 8,230 m.**

What do we know from a conceptual framework?

- *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* – The archetypal adventure traveler
- Noyce's *Springs of Adventure* – adventure and risk taking is genetically imprinted on the human species
- Innate need for competence through exploration



What do we know about variables that influence adventure motivation

- Expectancy Theory (e.g., Atkinson, 1964)
- Self Efficacy (Bandura, 1977)
- Gender (Kiewa, 2001; Little, 2002)
- Multi-phasic properties of motivation, e.g., motivational matching (Ewert, 1993)
- Levels of experience (Celsi, Rose & Leigh, 1993)
- Seeking a balance of chaos and order (Lyng, 2003)

Previous Analysis & Findings on Adventure Recreation Motivations

- McIntyre (1992)
- Sung et al., (1997)
- Todd, Anderson, Young, & Anderson, (2002)
- Gilbertson & Ewert (2002)

Sought After Benefits From Adventure Travel (Sung, et al., 1997)

- **Experience** (e.g., discovery, sense of personal growth, educational opportunities)
- **Activity** (e.g., fun, excitement, travel opportunities)
- **Environment** (e.g., improved understanding of the environment, “return to nature”)
- **Other** (e.g., physical fitness, mental stimulation)

Previous Analysis & Findings on Adventure Recreation Motivations

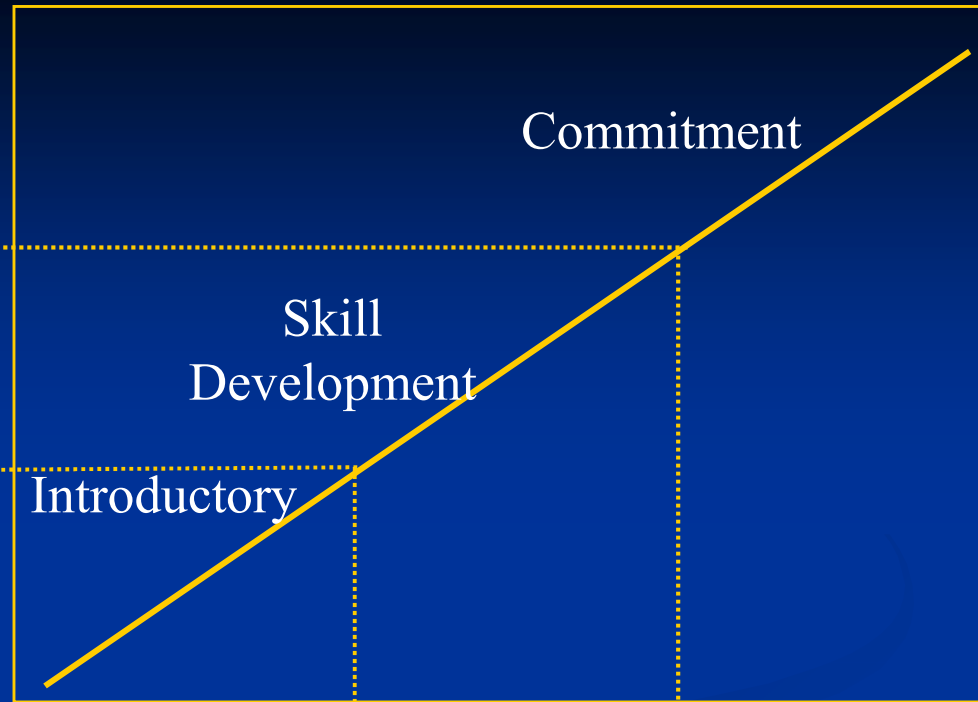
- McIntyre (1992)
- Sung et al., (1997)
- Todd, Anderson, Young, & Anderson, (2002)
- Gilbertson & Ewert (2002)
- Ewert & Hollenhorst (1989)

- Solo adventures
- Small groups of experienced adventurers

- Friends
- Mentors
- Advanced courses

- Vicarious
- Structured
- Programs
- Classes

Self ↑
 ↓ SOCIAL ORIENTATION
 ↓ LOCUS OF CONTROL
 Others



LOW ← HIGH

Perceived

Real

TYPE OF RISK

Extrinsic

Intrinsic

MOTIVATION FACTORS

**Adventure Model
 (Ewert & Hollenhorst, 1989)**

- Socializing
- Excitement
- Image
- Novelty

- Skill development
- Career
- Status
- Friendship

- Awareness of self
- Sense of control
- Self-efficacy
- Challenge/ risk-taking

[back](#)

Purpose

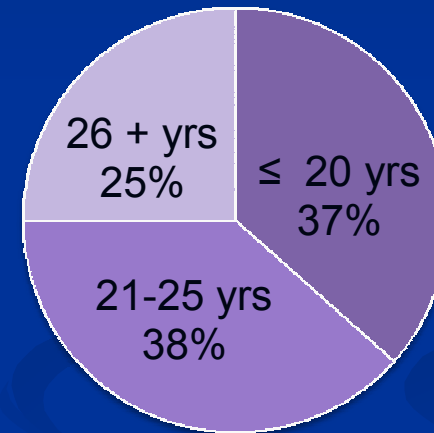
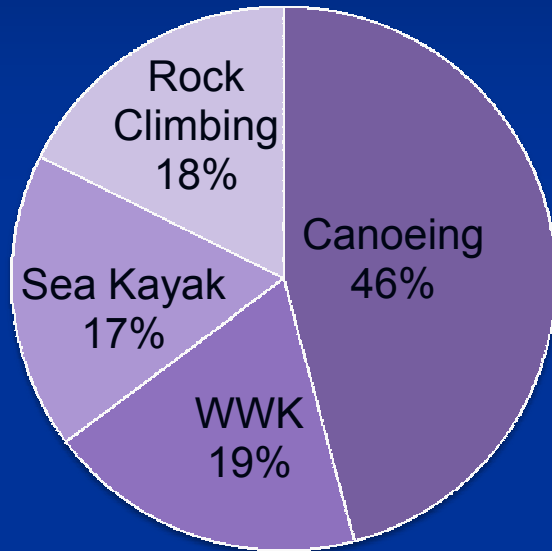
- From a broad perspective we wanted to enhance our understanding of participation in adventure activities primarily as a function of level of experience, activity, and sex.

RQ₁: What is the underlying motivation structure of participants who engage in adventure recreation?

RQ₂: Do motivations vary as a result of levels of experience, activity type, and sex?

Sample

- 227 participants from Outdoor Program
- Diverse Backgrounds
- 38% Female
- Age (13-60 years old)



Motivation Measures

■ Instrumentation

- Adventure Recreation Model instrument (Ewert & Hollenhorst, 1989)
- 100-point Likert-type scale (24 items)

Not important Very Important

I rock climb to face the risk and danger. _____ / _____

Experience Measures (EUH)

		Mean	SD	Range
Frequency	# times per year	32.6/11 ^a	48.8	0 – 300
Years	# yrs doing activity)	6.8	7.2	0 – 50
Places	# of places visited	6.0	7.5	0 – 78
Skill Level	The highest level of skills	3.2	1.3	1 – 6
Skill Rating	Low to expert	2.2	2.7	1 – 5
Experience Level	Low to expert	2.7	1.1	1 – 5

Notes. ^a Denotes Mean/Median

Participation Motives

Motive (Scale Item)	Mean	Motive (Scale Item)	Mean
1. For a close interaction with natural environment	72.70	15. I enjoy associating with other... (e.g. "climbers")	53.47
2. To be physically/ emotionally challenged	68.00	16. I enjoy pushing myself to the edge	50.13
3. To do something outside my normal routine	67.06	17. For spiritual development	49.79
4. To test myself	66.37	18. To be in control and make decisions	42.97
5. To develop my skills	65.93	19. For self-expression	41.82
6. For the friendship	65.07	20. To face risk and danger	37.74
7. For the sense of accomplishment	64.04	21. Because I am good at it	36.33
8. To experience a change from normal life	63.30	22. To use my equipment	32.08
9. To have a close interaction with others	62.07	23. To be known as a...	27.12
10. To reach a variety of goals I have for myself	61.25	24. To show others I can...	25.89
11. To satisfy personal needs	59.52		
12. To be part of a group or team	58.91		
13. It makes me feel good about myself	57.34		
14. For the exhilaration	55.75		

Experience Measures – Correlations

	Years	Freq	Exp Level	Skill Rating	High Skill Level	Places
Years	1	.136*	.611**	.467**	.418**	.347**
Frequency			.396**	.402**	.318**	.321**
Exp Level				.765**	.674**	.444**
Skill Rate					.665**	.502**
High Skill Level						.430**

*p≤.05; **p≤.01

Factor Analysis Results

(PFA, Varimax Rotation)

Factor	Eigen value	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1 Challenge/ Achievement	5.93	24.7	24.7
2 Personal Fulfillment	2.83	11.8	36.5
3 Social	2.39	9.9	46.4
4 Image	1.65	6.9	53.3

Factor 1 - Challenge/ Achievement

For the exhilaration	.740
To face risk and danger	.675
To test myself/abilities	.659
I enjoy pushing myself to the edge	.657
For the sense of accomplishment	.584
To be physically and emotionally challenged	.472

Factor 2 - Personal Fulfillment

To satisfy personal needs	.654
It makes me feel good about myself	.563
For the close interaction with a natural environment	.554
For spiritual development	.532
It allows me to reach a variety of goals I have	.528
For self-expression	.524

Factor 3 - Social

To have a close interaction with others	.856
To be part of a group or team	.792
For the friendship(s)	.753

Factor 4 - Image

To show others that I can [whitewater kayak]	.825
To be known as a [whitewater kayaker]	.759
Because I am good at it	.481
To use my equipment	.440
To be in control and make decisions	.427

Role of Experience

Factor	Low (n=110)	High (n=117)	F	<i>p</i>
Challenge	55.8	61.2	2.9	.090
Personal Fulfillment	53.4	64.6	21.9	.000
Social	56.8	65.5	7.1	.008
Image	30.8	36.1	4.1	.043

Role of Activity Type

Factor	Canoe (n=104)	WW Kayak (n=43)	Sea Kayak (n=40)	Rock Climb (n=40)
Challenge	53.2 ^a	61.3 ^b	56.3 ^c	65.0 ^{bd}
Personal Fulfillment	57.3	58.6	63.3	56.7
Social	67.4 ^a	60.5	54.7 ^b	62.0
Image	29.9 ^b	39.8 ^a	32.2	31.9 ^b

Notes. a ≠ b; b ≠ c; c ≠ d; p < .05

Role of Gender

Factor	Male (n=140)	Female (n=87)	F	<i>p</i>
Challenge	59.5	58.5	.13	.72
Personal Fulfillment	58.3	59.7	.30	.58
Social	57.6	64.7	4.6	.03
Image	35.1	31.7	1.7	.19

Interview Results

- 8 Participants: 5F 3M; 19-51 years of age; All paddlers; beginner -- expert
- Support for the four factors
 - Strong social orientation (esp. re: initial entry); Sense of community
 - Challenge – a driving force
 - Personal Fulfillment
 - Image less important
- Evolving motives over time

Discussion/Implications

- Findings do make some intuitive sense and are consistent with observations from personal adventures
- Experience = results differ for highly experienced compared to little/no experience on subscale items regarding importance of challenge, image, and social factors

How can we apply this to the adventure travel field?

- The problem of “multi-collinearity” among activity participants
- Understanding what motivates our participants to act/not act.
- The difference between instructor motives and participant motives.
- Are motives intrinsically held or emergent, contingent on social context, media input, gestalt of the long-term experience?
- Can we assume that motivations are synonymous with benefits?
 - Do participants consciously weigh perceived risks and benefits?
- Can programs actually accommodate differing motives for participation or are they locked into a standard offering?

Other Issues

- The question of risk and danger

Phases in Risk Recreation (Robinson, 1992)

Phase 1: Attraction



Phase 2: Cognitive Appraisal



Phase 3: Decision-Making

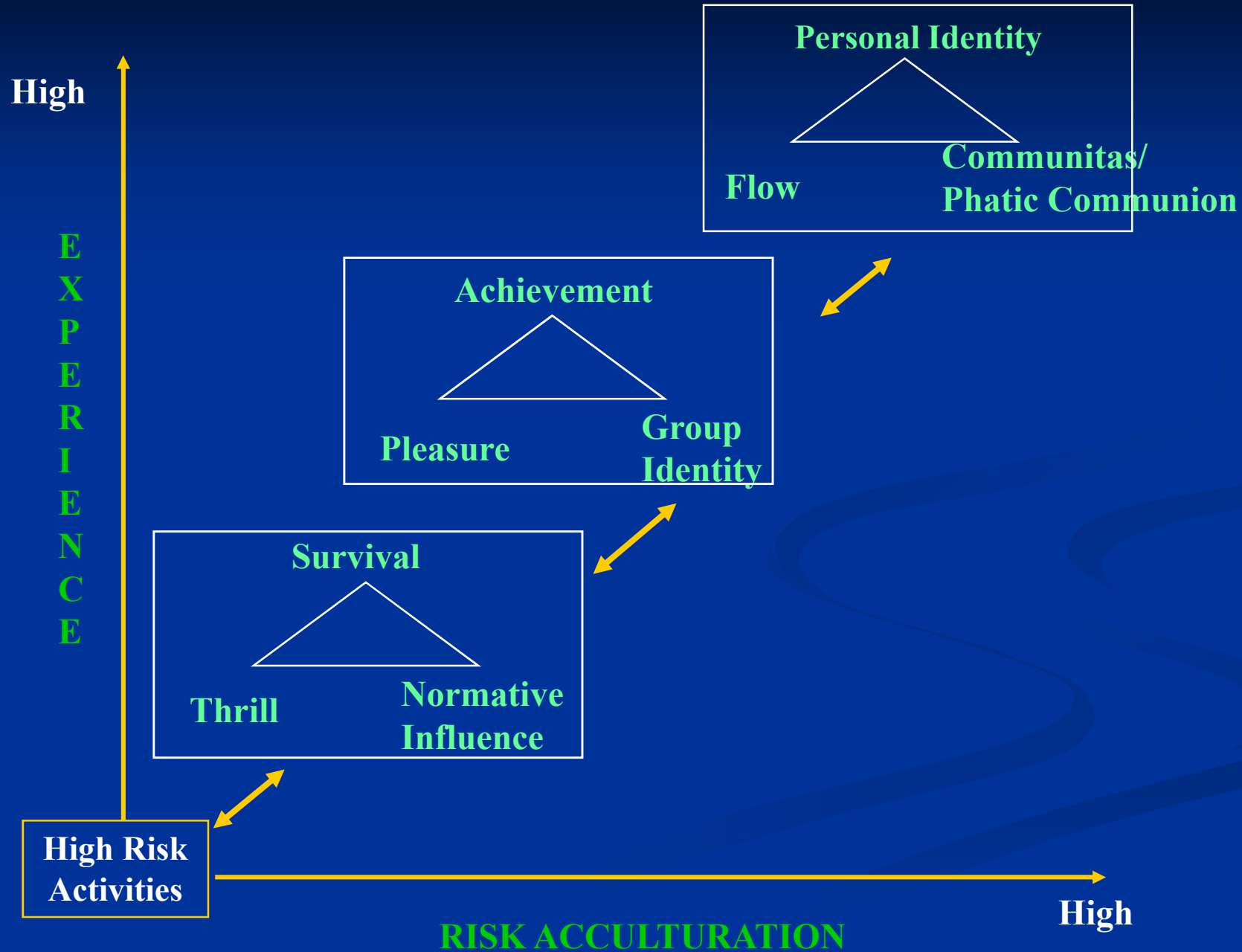


Phase 4: Experiences



Phase 5: Reflective Appraisal

Evolution of Motives for High-Risk Consumption in Relation to Risk Acculturation and Experience (Celsi, Rose, & Leigh, 1993)



Other Issues

- The question of risk and danger
- How do we characterize these activities

Adventure Travel: Hard and Soft Activities

Hard Adventure*

Rock and Mountain Climbing (7.4m)
Snorkeling/SCUBA Diving (12.4m)
Caving (5.7m)
Whitewater Boating (14.8m)
Wilderness Backpacking (8.0m)

Soft Adventure*

Camping (64.7m)
Biking (27.2m)
Flat-Water Canoeing (22.5)
Photo Safaris
Day-Hiking

* Data based on Muller & Cleaver, 2000, US Residents.

Other Issues

- The question of risk and danger
- How do we characterize these activities
- What are the participation rates and how should they be measured?

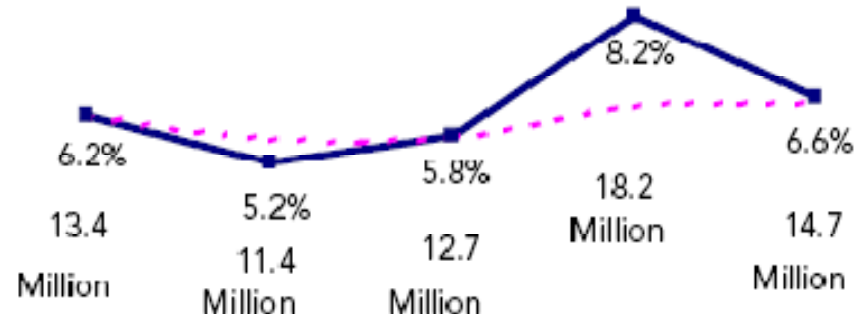
Participation Rates of Adventure Activities in New Zealand in 2006

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Occasions (000s)</u>
Kayaking/Canoeing	341
Mountain Biking	195
Scuba/Snorkelling	193
Mountain Climbing	105
Bush Walk	908

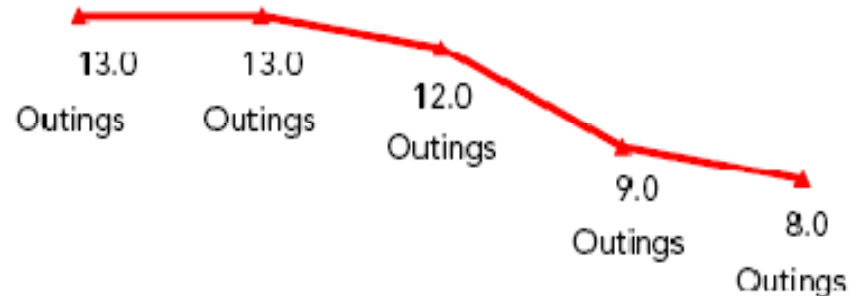
Data from Ministry of Tourism. Series B3, April, 2008

Fly Fishing (All Data Taken From the Outdoor Recreation Participation Study™ Outdoor Industry Foundation, N = 4000)

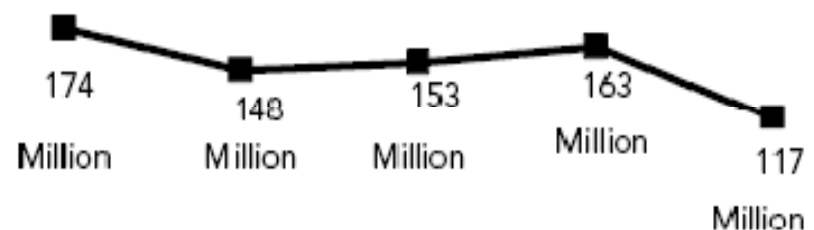
Number & Percentage of Participants



Average Number of Outings



Total Number of Outings



1998

1999

2000

2001

2002

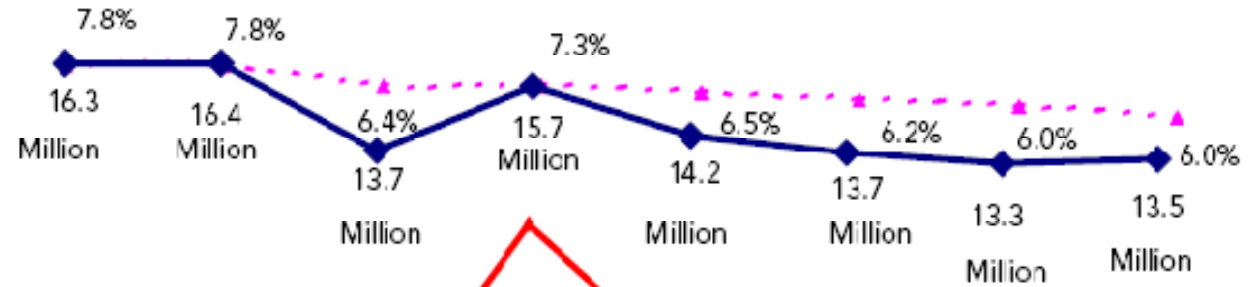
2003

2004

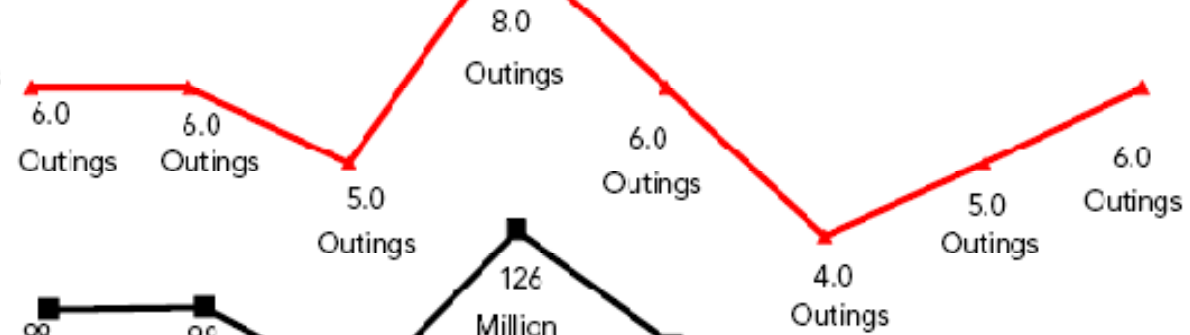
2005

Backpacking

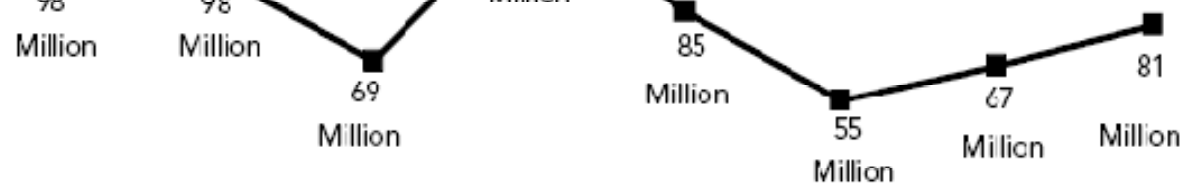
Number & Percentage of Participants



Average Number of Outings



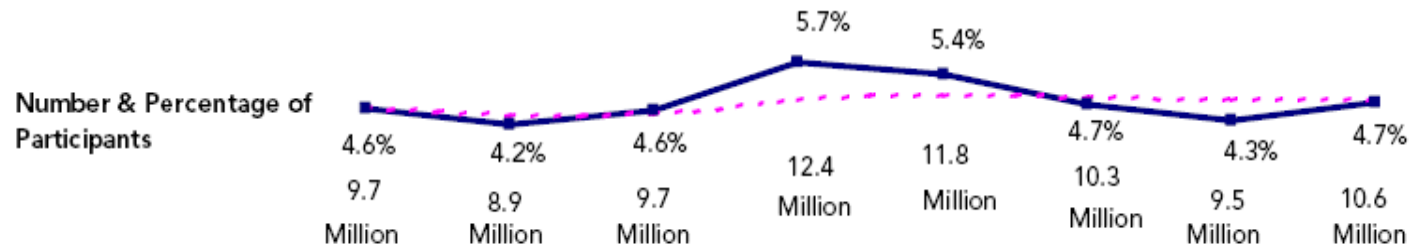
Total Number of Outings



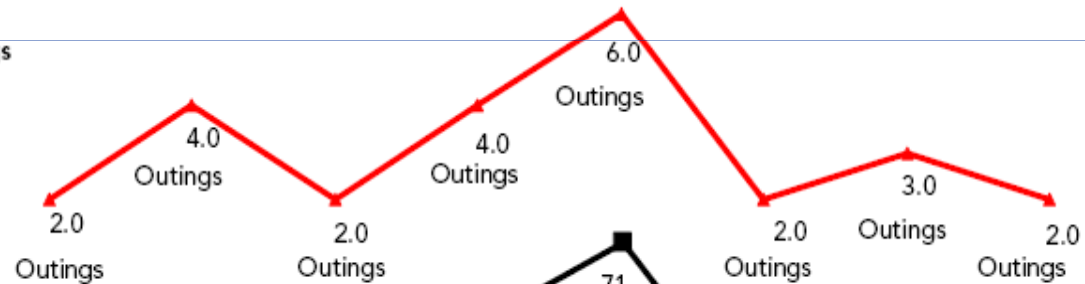
..... Rolling Trend Average

1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005

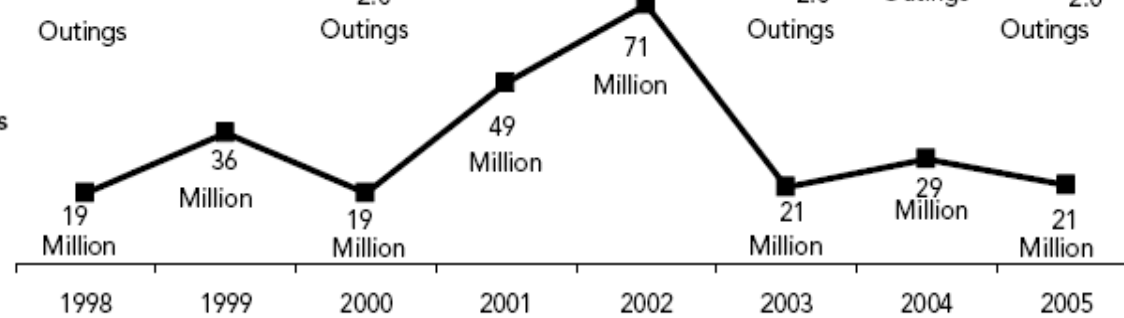
Rafting



Average Number of Outings



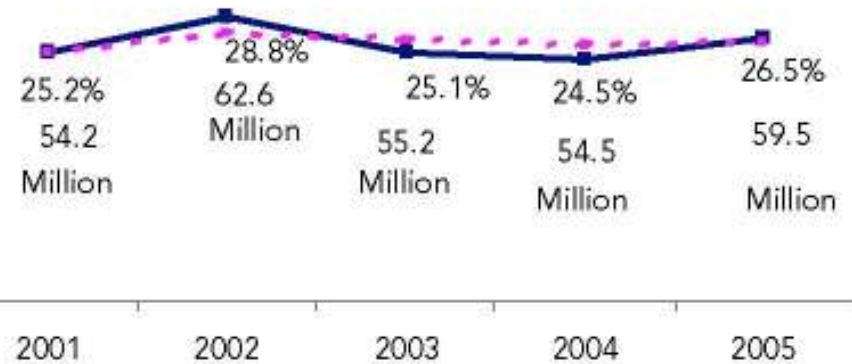
Total Number of Outings



..... Rolling Trend Average

Adventure/Sports Travel

Number & Percentage of
Adventure/Sport Travelers



..... Rolling Trend Average

Implications for the Adventure and Tourism Industry

- Technology will continue to replace skill and knowledge development
- Greater activity breath but reduced depth
- Growing demand for facilitated access
- How difficult is this activity to learn? How risky is it? How much time do I need to spend on this activity? How much will it cost?
- Absolute numbers will remain level although with aging, number of trips and types of trips may change.