Exploring definitions of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship using a case study of Local Surfers in the South West of England

by Emily Beaumont

There is a growing body of literature focusing on Lifestyle Entrepreneurship (Buttner and Moore, 1997; Ateljevic and Doorne, 2000; Henderson, 2002; Tregear, 2005; Cusumano, 2005; Marcketti *et al*, 2006; Cederholm and Hultman, 2010) and a developing academic interest in Lifestyle Entrepreneurship in Lifestyle Sports (Shaw and Williams, 2004 and Marchant and Mottiar, 2011). This paper intends to further the study of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship in Lifestyle Sports by using a case study of Local Surfers within a community in the South West of England to explore definitions of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship. Formed through Weber's ideal types, the Local Surfer views surfing as a lifestyle and identifies strongly with their local waters (Beaumont, 2011) sometimes leading to situations of localism (Beaumont and Brown, 2014) towards those they consider to be 'outsiders' venturing in to their local waters. They are often self- employed and this study explores their relationship with work/leisure against definitions of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship.

Defining Lifestyle Entrepreneurship

A number of academics have attempted to define Lifestyle Entrepreneurship or Lifestyle Business, each emphasising a number of different elements, leading to the term being described as 'fuzzy' by Markusen (2003). Thomas *et al* (2011:965) offers a general definition; 'a business that is operated in a manner that incorporates non-financial factors'. More specific definitions add detail to these 'non-financial factors'. Deakins and Freel (2006) and Heelas and Morris (1992) focus on the maintenance or shaping of lifestyle while

Marcketti *et al* (2006) and Buttner and Moore (1997) focus on life quality and a pursuit to self fulfilment. Kaplan (2003:7) also identifies maintenance of lifestyle but adds 'Lifestyle entrepreneurs have developed an enterprise that fits their individual circumstances and style of life. Their basic intention is to earn an income for themselves and their families.' (Kaplan, 2003: 7). Although not the primary concern in this study, other definitions emphasise the 'survival' rather than 'growth' element of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship (Morrison et al. 1999; Ateljevic and Doorne 2000; Morrison 2001; Shaw & Williams 2004; Tregear, 2005). This study is concerned primarily with the non-financial factors of 'lifestyle' and how they intertwine with the business.

The case study- Methods

Data presented in this paper is taken from a larger qualitative ethnographic study conducted in 2008-09 in a village in the South West of England. This village had its "own" beach break and a visible group of Local Surfers who surfed it regularly. The ethnography augmented participant observation with documentary data and formal interviews. Participant observations were made both at key community events and whilst being immersed within the community. Observations were documented after the event or situation being observed had taken place. Documentary data took a number of forms but included minutes from key community meetings, websites to which participants had contributed, and photographs of key community events. A total of 29 participants were involved in this study. Of this 29, 19 participants were directly observed during participant observation. Subsequently, 16 participants were interviewed in either individual or group formats.

The case study- Results and Discussion

In this study there were a number of surfer who bought their Local Surfing lifestyle into their business. For example Phil, a photographer and Local Surfer, utilised his interest in surfing by taking photographs for surf magazines and books such as The Stormrider Guide (Fitzjones and Rainger, 1992). Similarly Andy, a Local Surfer and surf filmmaker, has produced many successful surf films. Finally Michael, a relatively young Local Surfer, works in the surf retail industry as a supplier of surf clothing and equipment and prior to this his father Simon, set up a wetsuit company. This aligns closely with the definition of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship put forward by Shaw and Williams (2004) who noted Lifestyle Entrepreneurs were in a professionally organised business practice but within a particular lifestyle or cultural framework. In the case of both this study and that of Shaw and Williams (2004) the particular lifestyle was that of the Local Surfer.

There was also evidence of Local Surfers having a professionally organised business practice that supported a particular lifestyle, but did not sit within a particular lifestyle. In an interview Wes and Ruth, a married couple both described as Local Surfers, they highlighted Local Surfers in the community who ran their own businesses in sign making, building and equine retail all which gave them the flexibility to pursue the lifestyle of the Local Surfer (Wes and Ruth Deacon, 02/11/09). Another Local Surfer, Karl a scaffolder, commented that where he had set up his scaffolding during one job had given him a great view of the bay and "you can see it coming in" (Surf Competition Meeting, 11/11/08). Although these examples do not wholly align with Shaw and Williams (2004) concept of the Lifestyle Entrepreneur who is in a professionally organised business practice within a particular lifestlye, the above suggests a Lifestyle Entrepreneur can be in a professionally organised business practice that can be *within* or *supports* a particular lifestyle.

To explore this proposed definition of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship further, Parker (1976) argues that people's leisure activities are conditioned by the way they work, with

work having a tendency to spill over into leisure (Parker, 1976). The series of interviews he conducted with bank clerks, child care officers and youth employment revealed a relationship between work and leisure which could be categorised as; the extension pattern, the neutrality pattern and the opposition pattern (Parker, 1976). In the extension pattern, work extends into leisure with no clear dividing line existing between the two (Parker, 1976). Haralambos and Holborn (1991) associate the extension pattern with high-level autonomy jobs such as business (and also medicine and teaching). However what is exhibited in this study is an extension pattern where leisure extends into work, contrary to the extension pattern put forward by Parker (1976) a point that is discussed shortly. The Local Surfer Lifestyle Entrepreneurs have a professionally organised business practice *within* a particular lifestyle or cultural framework. For Phil, Andy, Michael and Simon, their Local Surfing lifestyle is central to their work. The neutrality pattern contains a clear distinction between work and leisure. The occupation provides a large amount of leisure time which becomes the central life interest over work. This pattern is associated with jobs with medium to low levels of autonomy such as semiskilled manual workers (Haralambos and Holborn, 1991) such as the sign maker, builder, scaffolder and retailer found in this study. These Lifestyle Entrepreneurs were in a professionally organised business practice that supported a particular lifestyle. Finally, the opposition pattern, where work and leisure are sharply distinguished with leisure forming the central life interest and a feeling hostility towards work was not evidenced within this study.

Interestingly Haralambos and Holborn (1991) note that many sociologists now believe that increasingly rather than work influencing leisure, leisure influences work. They cite the work of Goldthorpe and Lockwood (1968,1969 cited in Haralambos and Holborn, 1991) who discovered that many affluent workers selected and defined their work in terms of non-work concerns, and also the work of Joffre Dumazedier (1967, also cited in Haralambos

and Holborn, 1991) who noted that young people consider the hours they will have to work in terms of their leisure requirements. Although many of the Local Surfers could not be described as affluent or even young it is visible that many of them have selected and defined their work to incorporate the non-financial factors of maintaining or shaping of a particular lifestyle, aligning with the definitions of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship put forward by Deakins and Freel (2006), and Heelas and Morris (1992).

Conclusions

This study explored definitions of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship through the use of a case study of Local Surfers in the South West of England. Results showed that Lifestyle Entrepreneurship was prevalent among the Local Surfers in this study in two forms. One where the Local Surfer was in a professionally organised business practice *within* the Local Surfing lifestyle, the other where the Local Surfer was in a professionally organised business practice that *supported* the Local Surfing lifestyle. Further explorations using Parkers (1976) extension and neutrality pattern showed that those Local Surfers that exhibited an extension pattern were in a professionally organised business practice *within* the Local Surfing lifestyle and those Local Surfers with a Neutrality pattern were in a professionally organised business practice that *supported* the Local Surfing lifestyle. However contrary to Parker's (1976) extension pattern where work extends in to Leisure, this study found that for Local Surfers Leisure extended into work with many of them selecting and defining their work to incorporate the non-financial factors of maintaining or shaping of a particular lifestyle.

References List

Ateljevic, I. and S. Doorne (2000). "'Staying within the fence': Lifestyle Entrepreneurship in Tourism." Journal of Sustainable Tourism 8(5): 378-392.

Beaumont, E. (2011) The Local Surfer: Issues of Identity and Community within South East Cornwall. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Exeter, UK.

Beaumont, E. and Brown, D. (2014) 'Once a Local Surfer, Always a Local Surfer': Local Surfing Careers in a Southwest English Village. *Leisure Sciences*. 1-19.

Buttner, E. H., & Moore, D. P. (1997). Women's organizational exodus to entrepreneurship: Self-reported motivations and correlates with success. *Journal of Small Business Management*, *35*(1), 34-46.

Cederholm, E and Hultman, J. (2010) The Value of Intimacy – Negotiating Commercial Relationships in Lifestyle Entrepreneurship. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 10(1): 16–32.

Cusumano, M. (2005) Software in Ireland: A Balance of Entrepreneurship and...Lifestyle Management? Communications Of The ACM, 48(10): 25-27.

Deakins, D. & Freel, M. (2006). *Entrepreneurship and small firms*, 4th ed. Berkshire: McGraw Hill.

Fitzjones, O., & Rainger, T. (1992). *The stormrider guide: Europe*. London, England: Low Pressure Publishing.

Haralambos, M., & Holborn, M. (1991). *Sociology- Themes and Perspectives*. London: Collins Educational.

Heelas, P. & Morris, P. (1992) *The values of the enterprise culture*. London: Routledge.

Henderson, J. (2002). Building the rural economy with high-growth entrepreneurs. *Economic Review*. 87(3), 45-70.

Kaplan, J (2003) *Patterns of entrepreneurship*. London: John Wiley & Sons.

Marchant, B., and Mottiar, Z. (2011) Understanding Lifestyle Tourism Entrepreneurs and Digging Beneath the Issue of Profits: Profiling Surf Tourism Lifestyle Entrepreneurs in Ireland. *Tourism Planning and Development*. 8(2)11:171-183.

Marcketti, S., Niehm, L., and Fuloria, R. (2006) An Exploratory Study of Lifestyle Entrepreneurship and Its Relationship to Life Quality. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 34(3): 241-259.

Markusen, A. (2003). Fuzzy concepts, scanty evidence, policy distance: the case for rigour and policy relevance in critical regional studies. *Regional Studies*. 37(6 and 7): 701-717.

Moore, D. P., & Buttner, E. H. (1997). Women entrepreneurs: Moving beyond the glass ceiling. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Morrison, A. and R. Teixeira (2004). Small business performance: a tourism sector focus. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*. 11(2):166-173.

Morrison, A. (2006). A contextualization of entrepreneurship. *International journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*. 12(4):192-209.

Parker, S. (1976) *The Sociology of Leisure*. London: George Allen and Unwin

Shaw, G. and Williams, A.M. (2004). From lifestyle consumption to lifestyle production: changing patterns of tourism entrepreneurship. In Thomas, R. (ed.), *Small Firms in Tourism: International Perspectives*, pp.99-114. Oxford: Elsevier.

Thomas, R. (2004). *International perspectives on small firms in tourism: A synthesis. Small Firms in Tourism: International Studies*. Oxford: Elsevier.

Thomas, R., Shaw, G. and Page, S. (2011) Understanding small firms in tourism: A perspective on research trends and challenges. *Tourism Management*, 32: 963-976.

Tregear A. (2005), Lifestyle, growth, or community involvement? The balance of goals of UK artisan food producers. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*. 17: 1-15.