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Jorge Rojo Ramos

Physical Activity for Education, Performance and Health (PAEPH),
Facultad de Ciencias del Deporte, Universidad de Extremadura, 10003, Cáceres, España
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6542-7828>

Juan Carlos Guevara Pérez

Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Zaragoza, 50005 Zaragoza, Spain
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1215-7916>

Santiago Gómez Paniagua

Universidad de Extremadura
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1623-0316>

Carmen Galán Arroyo

Promoting a Healthy Society [PHeSo], Research Group,
Faculty of Sport Sciences, University of Extremadura, 1003 Cáceres, Spain
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8750-0267>

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Jorge Rojo Ramos

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1003 Cáceres, Spain

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8750-0267>

Abstract:

Adventure tourism has experienced significant growth in recent years and offers benefits to both rural communities and environmental conservation. Therefore, this study aims to characterize the profile, estimated expenditure, perception of economic impact, and satisfaction of adventure tourists visiting Valle del Jerte in Extremadura, Spain, for canyoning activities. Possible differences generated by the gender of tourists on these issues were analyzed. The sample included 673 tourists who practiced canyoning in Valle del Jerte. Statistical tests were used to analyze gender differences in variables such as means of transport used, intention to spend, type of expenditure, and need for public investment. Significant differences were found in the gender of the participants, with men having the highest expenditures. These findings are relevant for public and private organizations as well as for the local community, as they allow them to offer more adequate services to tourists who carry out these activities and attract more visitors.

Keywords:

Adventure sport, canyoning, economic impact, gender, nature

Resumen:

El turismo de aventura ha experimentado un gran crecimiento en los últimos años y ofrece beneficios tanto para las comunidades rurales como para la conservación del entorno, por lo que este trabajo tiene como objetivo caracterizar el perfil, el gasto estimado, la percepción del impacto económico y la satisfacción de los turistas de aventura que visitan el Valle del Jerte en Extremadura, España, para realizar actividades de barranquismo. Se analizan las posibles diferencias generadas por el género del turista en estas cuestiones. La muestra incluyó a 673 turistas que practicaron barranquismo en el Valle del Jerte. Se utilizaron pruebas estadísticas para analizar las diferencias de género en variables como el medio de transporte utilizado, la intención de gasto, el tipo de gasto y la necesidad de inversión pública. Se encontraron diferencias significativas referidas al género de los participantes, siendo los hombres los que más gastos tienen. Estos hallazgos son relevantes para organizaciones públicas y privadas, así como para la comunidad local, ya que les permite ofrecer servicios más adecuados a los turistas que realizan estas actividades y atraer a más visitantes.

Palabras claves:

Deporte de aventura, barranquismo, impacto económico, género, naturaleza

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1. Introduction

Within framework of the current social and economic evolution, in which the experience economy is already a reality, new types of tourism are emerging under the current experiential demand. Tourists are looking for sensations and emotions, which is why the tourism sector is diversifying its offer to adapt to this desire. This is how active tourism appears, a modality belonging to a larger field, nature tourism, which is booming today due to the increase in tourists interested in the activities that make it up. Among these activities, canyoning stands out as a unique multi-sensory experience that incorporates the sounds of water and sensations of freedom, freshness and revitalization.

However, this boom requires a look at the profile of the sportsperson, their perceptions of the services received and the repercussions of the activity on the environment in which it takes place. In this respect, most studies try to approach active tourism experiences in a general way, considering a heterogeneous offer that integrates different types of activities.

In this sense, the present study focuses on one activity in particular, canyoning, considering that it involves a combination of hiking, abseiling, swimming and rock scrambling, which makes it unique within adventure tourism.

Originally, physical fitness activities (especially those requiring high physical fitness and involving some kind of physical risk) were largely performed by males, relegating women to the background for a long period of time. Fortunately, these trends have been changing, increasing the rate of women who are physically active in all types of physical activity. This evolution makes it interesting to study physical activity trends from a gender-based perspective. In view of the above, this study aimed to explore the estimated expenditure, perceptions towards the impact of their activity and satisfaction with the contracted service among sports tourists who visited Valle del Jerte (Spain) to carry out kayaking activities. Similarly, is intended to examine any variations these variables may exhibit depending on the visitors' gender.

2. Literature review

Canyoning and gender approach

Canyoning was highlighted as a unique experience, to be repeated and remembered. Very positive points included the multisensory relationship with the water sounds and the sensations of freedom, freshness, and revitalization.

Canyoning involves a combination of hiking, abseiling, swimming and rock scrambling by which participants follow the course of streams, over waterfalls and other natural obstacles through deep, narrow, water-filled slots between sheer rock walls, canyons (Hardiman & Burgin, 2011a). Such landforms offer a unique experience of natural beauty and excitement to visitors, who traverse the canyons using a combination of bushwalking, abseiling, swimming, and rock scrambling (Hardiman & Burgin, 2011b).

Looking at socio-demographic profiles, an Australian study notes that canyoners are typically male, in their 30s, educated, and their preference is to canyoneer in small groups with friends and family (Hardiman & Burgin, 2011a; Ramos et al., 2022). On the island of Madeira, the profile of canyoners is that of young tourists, more men than women, less active, travelling by cruise ship, and with an em-

phasis on the challenges and natural barriers provided by the abrupt and unpredictable characteristics of the canyons (hedonism) (Soares & Nunes, 2020). In the Spanish context and more specifically in Extremadura, adventure tourists tend to be Spanish, single, with university studies, with a permanent employment contract, with children at home and with an average age of 40 years (Rojo-Ramos et al., 2021).

If we focus on the gender variable, for 2022, the Spanish Mountaineering and Climbing Federation presents a census of 289,605 licenses, of which 65% (185,961) are men and 36% (103,914) are women (Consejo Superior de Deportes, 2023). On the other hand, the survey on Sports Habits in Spain conducted in 2022 (Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte, 2022) found that of the people who practiced mountain sports, 32% were women and 29% were men, with the majority being female. The contrast of these data shows that more men practice mountain sports in a federated way, but it is women who practice it freely, so it is a more feminized sport than the others. Compared to the data from the survey conducted in 2015, the number of women practicing this sport increases by 0.4 points, denoting a rise in the sport practice of this modality.

On the other hand, the gender criterion is a determining factor when analyzing a specific market, as the purchase decision will differ from the moment they are attracted by different products and services (Wantono & McKercher, 2020). In this regard, some studies indicate that men spend more money on adventure tourism activities than women (Fredman, 2008; Sato et al., 2014), other studies claim the opposite (Wicker et al., 2012), as there are studies in which the level of spending is gender neutral (Barquet et al., 2011).

In this respect, few studies consider a gendered approach to sector-specific segmentation, such as canyoning within the adventure tourism industry.

Socio-economic impact of adventure sports

The growth of rural tourism has the potential to improve community well-being due to its favorable impact on income production, developing strong synergies with local industries leading to long-term sustainable development (Giannakis, 2014). In inland Spain, the population of a considerable number of rural areas is in decline. Faced with this problem, various institutions have launched initiatives to enhance the territorial heritage (natural and cultural) of these areas and, based on a minimum economic diversification, to help reverse these depopulation processes and promote local development as a whole (Morenas & Luis del Campo, 2019; Moscoso-Sánchez & Moyano-Estrada, 2006; Narsarre-Sarmiento et al., 2012; Ruiz-Pulpón & Cañizares Ruiz, 2020). Adventure sports, and canyoning in particular, have played an important role in this development process in Spain and abroad, directly impacting the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (González-Morcillo et al., 2022).

On the other hand, many studies analyse the economic impact of this type of activity, as can be seen in a recent systematic literature review (Lukoseviciute et al., 2022). In this regard, some studies highlight the positive socio-economic impact of adventure sports on the regions where they are developed (Bento et al., 2016; Duglio & Beltramo, 2017), and others highlight the contributions of adventure activities in the generation of employment (Drakakis et al., 2021; Niebles-Nuñez et al., 2023).

However, at the environmental level, the results do not appear to be as satisfactory, with negative impacts being observed in some regions (FEDME, 2011; Rice et al., 2020). This situation is because the impact of adventure activities is correlated to the volume of activities offered in a given location, as these activities take place in places that are not suitable for mass tourism due to their isolation and their peculiar natural or cultural heritage (Steynberg & Grundling, 2005). Therefore, considering the importance of the tourism industry in the Spanish environment, an assessment of the economic impact of adventure activities is a matter of timing for its stakeholders.

User perception of canyoning services

The search for a high degree of visitor satisfaction, especially in the case of outdoor recreational activities, has been considered a crucial objective for managers offering this type of leisure services (Herrick & McDonald, 1992; Madruga-Vicente et al., 2019), as this satisfaction has been highly correlated with the tourist's intention to revisit the place (Ismail et al., 2016; Mur Sangrá et al., 2020).

In this sense, the satisfaction of the adventure sportsperson has been observed in different contexts. In Europe, there are studies that reflect positive values in the satisfaction of tourists visiting the Azores, with 71% considering the intention to return to the destination (Ponte et al., 2019). This fact has been analyzed in the same environment by specific studies on the perceptions of tourists who experienced canyoning (Soares & Nunes, 2020), and on the quality of the canyoning offer in the region (Correia et al., 2022). The opposite is the case in Germany, where users of mountain activities experienced a very low level of satisfaction mainly due to fear (Faullant et al., 2011).

In the Americas, users of activities offered by a nature park in the United States perceive that they do not negatively impact the environment and are compatible with other activities (Kyle et al., 2004), while in a recent study, users give low ratings to adventure activities in Peru (Cordova-Buiza et al., 2022).

In Asia, a study describes users' perceptions of Thai outdoor activities offered by the local community, which educates on how to reduce environmental impact (Sangpikul, 2020). On the other hand, gender is a mediator of satisfaction levels expressed by rural tourists in India (Kumar, 2019), while the satisfaction levels perceived by adventure tourists do not differ when analyzing the gender of participants in Malaysia (Yap et al., 2018) and Indonesia (Rohman, 2020).

In this sense, an assessment of the perceptions of the users of adventure activities in a Spanish region is of paramount importance when segmenting the tourism offer to ensure its sustainability.

3. Methods

Desing

A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out (Montero & León, 2007), focusing on different groups that traveled to the Valle del Jerte for canyoning activities.

Participants

The sample consisted of 673 participants who practiced the sport of canyoning in the Valle del Jerte accompanied by professional guides through services offered by local active tourism companies.

Participants were selected using simple random sampling. Of the total sample, 348 (51.7%) were men and 325 (48.3%) were women.

Instruments

Socio-demographic questionnaire and profile of the sportsperson: A questionnaire was drawn up with 10 socio-demographic questions (sex, age, height, weight, nationality, autonomous community of residence, marital status, professional situation, level of studies and type of home of residence) and 6 questions relating to the profile of the sportsperson practicing canyoning in the Valle del Jerte (type of accommodation chosen for the trip, accompanying sportspersons, means of transport used to the Valle del Jerte, planning of the trip according to advertising, number of accompanying persons and number of overnight stays) (Jiménez-Naranjo et al., 2017).

Expenditure estimation questionnaire: This questionnaire consisted of two scales. The first scale consisted of five questions relating to the estimated amount they would spend or had spent on the trip, accommodation, transport, canyoning and breakfast, lunch and dinner. The second scale was composed of an initial question "Could you specify approximately how much you have spent in the Valle del Jerte on the following items?" The user had to report on a scale with the following ranges: "from 0 to 14 euros", "from 15 to 29 euros", "from 30 to 44 euros", "from 45 to 59 euros", "from 60 to 74 euros", "from 75 to 89 euros", "from 90 to 104 euros", the money spent on press, active tourism sports activities, bars and restaurants, souvenirs and souvenirs, museums/visits, sports equipment and others (Jiménez-Naranjo et al., 2017).

Questionnaire on the perception of the impact of canyoning in the Valle del Jerte. The questionnaire consisted of a Likert-type scale (1-5) with 1 totally disagree, 2 disagree, 3 indifferent, 4 agree, 5 totally agree. The scale evaluated the opinion of the athletes on the impact of canyoning in the Valle del Jerte and consisted of 9 items (Jiménez-Naranjo et al., 2017).

Questionnaire of satisfaction with the activity and the service received. This questionnaire consisted of two questions relating to the user's satisfaction with the service provided by the adventure sports and active tourism company with which they had practiced canyoning and whether they would return to the Valle del Jerte to do the same or another adventure sports activity (Jiménez Naranjo et al., 2017).

Procedure

To access the sample, active tourism companies in the Valle del Jerte (Extremadura, Spain) were asked to collaborate. Those that agreed to participate in the study were visited by a member of the research team to inform them of the procedure and the method of sample selection. The procedure to be followed was as follows: From each group of participants who had done the canyoning activity with the collaborating companies and who decided to collaborate in the study, a draw was carried out employing which the users had to draw a paper from a drum. The user on whose paper the X symbol was drawn had to complete the survey once he/she had accepted the informed consent. To access the survey, they were given a QR code that they had to scan with their mobile device, and they would go directly to the form created with the Google Forms tool. As a reward, all group members were given a reusable metal bottle donated by the SOPRODEVAJE Rural Development Group

as a collaboration in the study. The average time to complete the form was 12 minutes. All data were collected and processed anonymously.

It was decided to use an e-questionnaire for all the advantages it offers (Anderson & Kanuka, 2003) since all responses were collected in the same database automatically regardless of the company with which the survey was conducted and it also facilitated a higher response rate since it was considered easy for participants to access the URL via a QR code.

As inclusion criteria, participants had to be of legal age, have done the canyoning activity through a partner active tourism company and have a mobile phone to access the questionnaire.

Statistical Analysis

First, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to explore the distribution of the data and to observe whether the assumption of normality was met. This assumption was not met, so it was decided to use non-parametric statistical tests. Pearson's chi-square test was used to analyze the differences between the item "Would you return to the Valle del Jerte to do the same or other sporting activities in nature?" and the variables included in the sociodemographic questionnaire and the profile of the sports person according to sex. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to analyze the differences between the item "Was satisfaction with the service provided (canyoning)?" and the variables in the questionnaire on estimation of expenditure and perception of the impact of canyoning in the Valle del Jerte according to sex. Continuous variables are presented as median and interquartile range and categorical variables are presented as number and percentages. The significance level was set at $p < .05$.

4. Results

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characterization of the sample according to sex. There seemed to be differences between sexes in the variables "marital status", "professional situation", "level of studies" and "BMI". The profile of the canyoning athlete is Spanish, from an autonomous community other than Extremadura, single, employed with a permanent contract, with a university education, living with his partner but without children, with a mean age of 33.86 years and a mean body mass index of 26.93.

TABLE 1
Characterization of the sample (N = 673)

Variable	Categories	N	%	
Gender	Male	348	51.7	
	Female	325	48.3	
Frequencies				
Variable	Total	Men	Women	
Nationality	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	p*
Spanish	657 (97.6)	336 (96.6)	321 (98.8)	.059
Foreigner	16 (2.4)	12 (3.4)	4 (1.2)	

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Autonomous Community	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	p*
Extremadura	113 (16.8)	59 (17)	54 (16.6)	.907
Other Autonomous Community or foreigner	560 (83.2)	289 (83)	271 (83.4)	
Marital Status	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	p*
Single	438 (65.1)	226 (64.9)	212 (65.2)	.005*
Married	205 (30.5)	108 (31)	97 (29.8)	
Widowed	2 (0.3)	2 (0.6)	-	
Separated	7 (1)	7 (2)	-	
Divorced	21 (3.1)	5 (1.4)	16 (4.9)	
Occupational Status	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	p*
Employer, professional or self-employed who employs others	56 (8.3)	50 (14.4)	6 (1.8)	<.001*
Employer, professional or self-employed not employing others	52 (7.7)	34 (9.8)	18 (5.5)	
Employed with permanent contract	310 (46.1)	162 (46.6)	148 (45.5)	
Employed with temporary contract	122 (18.1)	57 (16.4)	65 (20)	
Unemployed	133 (19.8)	45 (12.9)	88 (27.1)	
Level of education	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	p*
Primary education or less	-	-	-	.035*
Secondary education	121 (18)	73 (21)	48 (14.8)	
High school	112 (16.6)	63 (18.1)	49 (15.1)	
University education	440 (65.4)	212 (60.9)	228 (70.2)	
Type of household	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	p*
Single-parent household with one child	28 (4.2)	17 (4.9)	11 (3.4)	.584
Single-parent household with more than one child	49 (7.3)	26 (7.5)	23 (7.1)	
Couple without children living together at home	217 (32.2)	111 (31.9)	106 (32.6)	
Couple with children living at home	177 (26.3)	84 (24.1)	93 (28.6)	
Live alone without children	110 (16.3)	63 (18.1)	47 (14.5)	
Live with a relative	91 (13.5)	47 (13.5)	44 (13.5)	
Share a flat	1 (0.1)	-	1 (0.3)	
Variable	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	p*
Age	33.86 (8.51)	34.11 (8.83)	33.59 (8.15)	.806
IMC	26.93 (3.42)	26.54 (3.6)	27.36 (3.16)	<.001*

Nota: Chi-Square and Mann-Whitney U test p-values *p is significant <.05. M = Mean value; SD = Standard Deviation; N = Number; % = Percentage.

Table 2 presents the descriptions of the variables used to evaluate the type of accommodation chosen for the trip, the type and number of companions, the means of transport used to travel to the Valle del Jerte, the advertising that influenced the choice of destination, and the number of overnight stays. The profile of the canyoning sportsperson does not spend the night in the Valle del Jerte or if they do, they stay predominantly in hotels or apart-hotels for an average of 2.35 nights. The practice of canyoning is usually accompanied by family members (accompanied by an average of 3.35 people) and the means of transport chosen to travel to the destination is their own or rented car.

Canyoning athletes do not usually plan their trip through any advertising, however, the main means of advertising is the channel that comes through family or friends. Statistically significant differences were only found according to sex in the variable “means of transport used to reach the Valle del Jerte”, it seems that women tend to choose car-sharing with driver’s payment more than men.

TABLE 2

Profile of the athlete (canyoner)

Variable	Frequencies			p*
	Total N (%)	Men N (%)	Women N (%)	
Type of accommodation chosen during the trip				
Not staying overnight	279 (41.5)	131 (37.6)	148 (45.5)	
Hotel or aparthotel	145 (21.5)	84 (24.1)	61 (18.8)	
Caravan or camper parked on public roads	20 (5.7)	16 (4.9)	36 (5.3)	
Shelter	7 (2)	3 (0.9)	10 (1.5)	
Full rented accommodation	12 (1.8)	6 (1.7)	6 (1.8)	
Room in a private house	4 (0.6)	0 (0)	4 (1.2)	.052
Rural house	97 (14.4)	55 (15.8)	42 (12.9)	
Camping	52 (7.7)	30 (8.6)	22 (6.8)	
Owned home	8 (1.2)	3 (0.9)	5 (1.5)	
Friend’s or company’s family home	5 (0.7)	2 (0.6)	3 (0.9)	
Exchanged houses	3 (0.4)	3 (0.9)	0 (9)	
Other accommodation outside the market	22 (3.3)	7 (2)	15 (4.6)	
Came canyoning accompanied by				
Family	375 (55.7)	200 (57.5)	175 (53.8)	
Friends	297 (44.1)	147 (42.2)	150 (46.2)	.384
I have come alone	1 (0.1)	1 (0.3)	-	
Transport used to travel to the Valle del Jerte				
Own or rented car	440 (65.4)	214 (61.5)	226 (69.5)	
Shared car with paid driver	233 (34.6)	99 (30.5)	134 (38.5)	
Bus	-	-	-	.028*
Train	-	-	-	
Non-motorised land transport	-	-	-	
Have you planned your trip to the Valle del Jerte for canyoning as a result of any advertisement?				
No	370 (55)	185 (53.2)	185 (56.9)	
Press	1 (0.1)	1 (0.3)	-	
Radio	-	-	-	
Television	3 (0.4)	2 (0.6)	1 (0.3)	.812
Social Networks	45 (6.7)	23 (6.6)	22 (6.8)	
Friends/relatives	217 (32.2)	118 (33.9)	99 (30.5)	
Others	37 (5.5)	19 (5.5)	18 (5.5)	
Variable				
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	p*
How many people did you come canyoning with (not including yourself)?	3.31 (2.61)	3.41 (2.78)	3.20 (2.41)	.077
How many nights are you going to spend in the Valle del Jerte?	2.35 (1.23)	2.27 (1.02)	2.45 (1.44)	.524

Nota: Chi-Square and Mann-Whitney U test p-values *p is significant <.05. M = Mean value; SD = Standard Deviation; N = Number; % = Percentage.

Table 3 presents the descriptives and differences of the first expenditure estimation scale. Men estimate spending more money than women. Statistically significant gender differences were found for the items “how much do you estimate you spent (in euros) in the Valle del Jerte during your stay?” and “how much did you spend in euros on transport (return trip)?”

TABLE 3

Estimated expenditure

Variable	Sex		p*
	Female	Male	
	M (SD)	M (SD)	
How much do you expect to spend (in euros) in the Valle del Jerte during your stay?	153.38 (207.15)	195.85 (234.67)	.016*
Could you specify how much you have spent (in euros) approximately on accommodation including your companions?	119.20 (170.72)	119.34 (136.02)	.129
How much did you spend in euros on transport (return trip)?	54.72 (87.48)	55.58 (67.78)	.020*
How much did you spend on canyoning activities in the Valle del Jerte?	38.11 (85.40)	39.33 (67.86)	.168
How much do you estimate you will spend (in euros) on breakfast/lunch/dinner during your stay?	73.83 (100.43)	77.08 (94.24)	.964

Mann-Whitney U-test p-values. *p is significant < .05. M = Mean value; SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 4 shows the descriptives and frequencies of the second expenditure estimation scale. As in the previous scale, male canyoningers spent more than female canyoningers on the items or services listed. Statistically significant gender differences were found in the variable “bars and restaurants” ($p < .001$).

TABLE 4

Estimated expenditure II

Variable	Sex		p*
	Women	Men	
	M (SD)	M (SD)	
Could you specify approximately how much you have spent in the Valle del Jerte on the following items?			
Press	1.03 (0.19)	1.03 (0.23)	.714
Active tourism sports activities	2.02 (1.65)	2.34 (1.96)	.084
Bars and restaurants	2.46 (1.47)	3.05 (1.89)	<.001*
Souvenirs and souvenirs	1.17 (0.46)	1.27 (0.72)	.199
Museums/visits	1.14 (0.40)	1.24 (0.73)	.174
Sports equipment	1.18 (0.53)	1.24 (0.63)	.377
Others	1.36 (0.93)	1.46 (1.11)	.204

Nota: Mann-Whitney U-test p-values. *p is significant < .05. M = Mean value; SD = Standard Deviation. Each score obtained is based on a Likert scale (1-7): 1 “From 0-14 euros”, 2 “from 15 to 29 euros”, 3 “from 30 to 44 euros”, 4 “from 45 to 59 euros”, 5 “from 60 to 74 euros”, 6 “from 75 to 89 euros”, 7 “from 90 to 104 euros”.

Table 5 shows the descriptions and differences of the scale designed to evaluate the perception of the sportsperson regarding the repercussion of canyoning in the Valle del Jerte. There is a predominant perception in both sexes that canyoning represents an element of pride and satisfaction for the Valle del Jerte. Men only scored higher than women on the variable "increases recognition and promotion of the destination". In the rest of the items, women scored higher than men. However, statistically significant gender differences were only found in the item "public spending is necessary for the development of this type of sport".

TABLE 5
Perception of the impact of canyoning in the Valle del Jerte

Variable	Sex		p*
	Women	Men	
Increases recognition and promotion of the destination	3.61 (1.56)	3.65 (1.61)	.383
Represents an element of pride and satisfaction for Valle del Jerte	3.78 (1.57)	3.66 (1.61)	.289
Generates a traffic and safety problem	2.17 (1.15)	2.17 (1.13)	.852
Disrupts the usual rhythm and disrupts other activities	2.21 (1.14)	2.10 (1.09)	.214
Causes an increase in the number of overnight stays	3.37 (1.56)	3.33 (1.54)	.654
Increases employment	3.67 (1.53)	3.62 (1.59)	.923
Economic losses due to the fact that the investment is greater than the benefits obtained	1.94 (1.09)	1.88 (1.03)	.558
Economic benefits are concentrated in a few companies and individuals	2.43 (1.16)	2.39 (1.16)	.637
Public expenditure is necessary for the development of this type of sport	3.46 (1.45)	3.22 (1.48)	.025*

Nota: Mann-Whitney U-test p-values. *p is significant <.05. M = Mean value; SD = Standard Deviation. Each score obtained is based on a Likert scale (1-5): 1 "Strongly disagree", 2 "Disagree", 3 "Indifferent", 4 "Agree", 5 "Strongly agree".

Finally, the satisfaction of the sportsperson who had done canyoning with a local company in the Valle del Jerte was evaluated. Almost all of the sample would return to the Valle del Jerte to do the same or other outdoor sports activities and were very satisfied with the service provided (Mmujeres=9.85 and Mhombres=9.76). Statistically significant differences were found according to sex in the first variable.

TABLE 6
Satisfaction with the contracted kayak service

Variable	Sex		p*
	Women	Men	
Would you return to the Valle del Jerte to do the same or other sporting activities in nature?	M (SD)	M (SD)	
Yes	324 (99.7)	341 (98)	.042*
No	1 (0.3)	7 (2)	

.../...

.../...

Variable	M (SD)	M (SD)	p*
Was the satisfaction with the service provided (canyoning)?	9.85 (0.51)	9.76 (0.65)	.056

Nota: Chi-Square (item 1) and Mann-Whitney U test (item 2) p-values *p is significant <.05. M = Mean value; SD = Standard Deviation; N = Number; % = Percentage.

5. Discussion

The profile of the canyoning athlete is Spanish, from an autonomous community other than Extremadura, single, employed with a permanent contract, with a university education, living with a partner but without children, with an average age of 33.86 years, which is very similar to the profiles observed in other studies (Albayrak, 2022; Hardiman & Burgin, 2011a; Soares & Nunes, 2020). However, these studies used a different sample design than that used in this study; therefore, this comparison should be treated with caution. The practice of canyoning is usually accompanied by family members (accompanied by an average of 3.35 people), which also coincides with the behavior observed in previous studies (Albayrak, 2022). The profile of the canyoning athlete does not spend the night in the Valle del Jerte or if they do, they stay predominantly in hotels or apart-hotels for an average of 2.35 nights. In contrast, another study conducted in the same location found that those who come for adventure tourism have a shorter stay and return home the same day (Agorreta-Lumbreras et al., 2020).

In terms of gender, statistically significant gender differences were found when considering the means of transport used, the transport expenditure in euros (round trip) and the overall estimate of expenditure during the stay in the Valle del Jerte, which provides a natural segmentation of the market when considering expenditure by gender (Wantono & McKercher, 2020). In this case, male canyoningers have spent more than female canyoningers (Fredman, 2008; Sato et al., 2014), with statistically significant differences by sex in the variable "bars and restaurants" ($p < .001$), and when considering that public spending is necessary for the development of this type of sport.

As has been observed in other contexts (Ismail et al., 2016; Ponte et al., 2019), almost the entire sample would return to the Valle del Jerte to carry out the same or other sports activities in nature and are very satisfied with the service provided (Mwomen=9.85 and Mmen=9.76). Other studies found similar results, in which most of the attendees would return to the locality where the activity has taken place, blaming it on the fact that these activities are small, where the treatment is close, and the participants take it very much into account (Zhou & Kaplanidou, 2018).

Finally, there is a predominance in the perception of both sexes that canyoning represents an element of pride and satisfaction for the Valle del Jerte. This fact confirms the social impact of the activity as an element of pride and satisfaction for the destination (Jiménez-Naranjo et al., 2017). In general terms, the study provides a glimpse of some management coordinates based on the socio-economic impact of the activity. By analyzing the variables included in the study, private or public organizations and the local population have a reference point for adapting the services offered to include this adventure activity.

A limitation has been to consider domestic tourism, which opens the possibility of studies that consider international tourism. Also, the sample was not randomized before participating in the re-

search, therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution. Future studies could also consider the contrast with other socio-demographic variables, and with environmental variables. Similarly, it would be convenient to randomize the sample in order to extract conclusive findings. The possible grouping of tourism services in the same region could also be assessed, to develop models that allow the establishment of economies of scale that add competitiveness concerning the services offered in other regions.

6. Conclusions

The present study has allowed us to characterize the profile, estimated expenditure, perceived impact and satisfaction of adventure tourists visiting the Valle del Jerte for canyoning activities. Tourists' overnight stay seems to depend on the type of activity planned and the place where it is carried out. Canyoning shows that it predominantly attracts domestic tourists aged 33.86 years on average, with job stability and university education, who live with their partner but without children. Tourists' overnight stay seems to depend on the type of activity planned and the place where it is carried out. In the case of the Valle del Jerte, an average of 2.35 nights in hotels or aparthotel. In terms of gender, men spent more than women, especially in bars and restaurants, being this a fundamental part of adventure tourism. Almost all of those surveyed would return to the Valle del Jerte to carry out the same or other sports activities in nature and are very satisfied with the service provided, highlighting the perception for both sexes that canyoning represents an element of pride and satisfaction for the Valle del Jerte.

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8. Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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