






Abstract

Risk and safety in Nature and Adventure Sports: risks perceived by rafting guides

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Nature and Adventure Sports (NAS) activities are empirically linked to real risks. However, risk in NAS activities is still an under-explored topic scientifically. The aim of this study was to identify the risk factors that are perceived by guides in the rafting activity. A questionnaire was to 39 rafting guides from Iberia and Latin America, with a mean age and standard deviation of 37.49 ± 12.16 , respectively. The participants were invited to share their perceptions of risk during their engagement in the digital survey for the Rafting activity, conducted between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020. They were asked to "*as a rafting guide identify 10 risk factors that you consider relevant when practicing this sport*". Data analysis and processing were performed using N-Vivo 10 software. To organise and subsequently analyse the risks identified by the guides, a "tree" was created based on two pillars: human factors and environmental factors. The human factors were subdivided into physiological, operational, emotional and psychological, cognitive, group behaviour, and means of rescue. The environmental factors were subdivided into the geomorphological and meteorological dimensions, fauna and flora.

The guides, with 76.3% of the propositions, and environmental factors, with 23.7% of the propositions identified human factors. The most prominent risk factor perceived was the human factor, especially within the "operational" dimension, leading to the conclusion that the highest perception of risk lies in factors under human control. The results of this research will offer the scientific community and stakeholders in rafting activities valuable insights into guides' risk perceptions and will facilitate formulating strategies to mitigate these risks.

Keywords: rafting, danger, risk, nature and adventure sports