

Abstract

Title: Experience and risk sensation in ski touring

Objectives: Main goal of this thesis is the analysis of experience and risk sensation of people practicing ski touring. To discover how athletes perceive these conditions and fears during the given activity, how does it influence their behavior and what are they doing to minimize the risks.

Methods: All the data presented in the empirical part of this thesis were collected through semi-structured interview and a questionnaire with closed questions. There were 44 participants in the study between the age of 20 and 51. The data obtained through an online questionnaire were evaluated using Microsoft Office Excel 2010. The outcome values were entered into a clear table and further used for a more detailed analysis. The interviews were recorded using a tape recorder. The audio recordings were transcribed into a text version. After that the document was evaluated and rephrased into a more comprehensible form and divided into categories using coding method, which helped simplify the text manipulation.

Results: The results of our work show that ski touring is a very emotional activity. Ski tourists experience many emotional, aesthetic and socially cultural experiences. Furthermore, the respondents also experience the state of optimum flow, which becomes one of their motivations. Most respondents are fully aware of the flow and try to experience it repeatedly. The most common way to re-experience the state of flow is to perform an activity that is gratifying and during which one has to overcome oneself. Respondents perceive ski touring as a risky activity. The greatest danger is seen in the avalanches and in the movement in a mountain terrain. Still, most respondents perceive risk and adventure positively. Protective gear is used equally by all respondents. The most common is the avalanche set use by 75% of respondents. On the other hand, more than half of respondents do

not use a protective helmet and avalanche airbag. More than 80% of the respondents are aware of the importance of the preparation before ski touring trip. They most often use avalanche forecast, weather forecast, and map. They devote the same effort, if necessary, to testing snow profile and stability of the snow.

Conclusion: During ski touring respondents experience the state of optimal flow, which they realize and try to achieve repeatedly. Ski touring is perceived as a risky sport. The respondents are primarily protected by basic avalanche set and by a thorough preparation of a ski touring trip.

Keywords: experience, flow, risk, danger, ski touring