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ANALYSIS OF KEY FACTORS, FREQUENT CONCEPTS AND MAIN SKILLS INVOLVED IN PRACTICING WATER ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

Aim. The image of courage as an important attribute, a defining feature for the teacher and coach involved in water activities. The purpose of this study was to identify the main limiting factors in the didactic process of transmitting theoretical information and the formation of practical skills and the use of custom means to achieve the proposed objectives.

Methods. This paper was attended by 41 novice students practicing water activities. They rated it with a questionnaire with fourteen questions. The subjects participating in this study are the clients of the Ovidius University of Constanta. Previously, subjects were involved in practical activities in water activities and attended twenty hours of theoretical courses in the same field. Subjects were instructed before starting to take the questionnaire.

Results. At the first observation we see a polarization between courage and fear, so the distribution of responses shows a strong polarization: those with a lot of courage (level 1) and those dominated by caution/fear (level 5) represent almost the entire sample. This reflects an inverse proportional relationship between courage and fear, influenced by self-esteem and the perception of risks involved in the aquatic environment. High caution in water activities (level 5 - 50.5%). In the context of aquatic activities, this result indicates a clear tendency for participants to ask questions and seek clarification before engaging in risky activity. This could reflect an awareness of the hazards associated with water, such as drowning risks, strong currents or lack of experience in the aquatic environment.

Conclusions. Courage is perceived as a combination of personal traits (self-confidence, self-control, ambition), acquired skills (education, training, previous experiences) and external factors (guidance, favorable context). The most frequently mentioned feature is self-confidence, followed by self-control and practical training, suggesting that the balance between preparation and mental attitude is the key to developing courage. Criticism affects performance most (48.78%) but is less associated with desire to give up (7.32%) or intense fear (14.63%). It is the biggest trigger of fear (31.71%) and significantly influences the desire to abandon (17.04%).

Keywords: Courage, preparation, external factors.

Introduction

In the period before the start of university studies, clients begin to focus on the objectives set for the future period of training and professional, since they are called to take their first career decision. Career choice is the most demanding development task for teenagers and young people, as it establishes a fundamental basis for psychological well-being (Savickas, 2015). The complexity of situations faced by a client in the first part of university studies also includes a series of decision-making processes that result in important choices in the future career. Knowing and possessing the skills required to transmit the information needed to practice water sports and all water activities, contributes to the internal structure of future specialists and a higher level of self-esteem. A collective of specialists examined how self-esteem during university studies influenced the characteristics of the professional career ten years later, showing that a high level of self-esteem predicts permanent employment, a good salary and a high level of work involvement and satisfaction in the workplace and a low level of exhaustion (Salmela-Aro & Nurmi, 2007). Several studies have highlighted the centrality of this task and its contribution to the positive development of young people (Fusco et al., 2019; Porfeli et al., 2011). What we found was that fear actually constrains progress when you're doing water tasks. We have constantly used the means of positive psychology, which aims to promote positive well-being for the whole group by stimulating effective functioning. Given the above, according to (Jacobsen, 2010), positive psychology is a means of intervention that has objectives that concatenate with many aspects encountered in the process of career counseling. Clarifying all aspects of future activity is conditioned by integrating career development with positive psychology implies that individuals can be guided during career development to achieve maximum fulfillment in the future. In a recent article on career development, (Wehmeyer et.al., 2019), claimed that the promotion of positive career resources, such as career adaptability (Hirschi, 2012), assumes a preventive goal that contributes to the positive growth of individuals and the social system. Clarifying future tasks and removing all aspects that are less clear or may negatively influence the transfer of knowledge from the trainer to the client is particularly important. Systematizing the contribution of positive psychology "is a fertile source of innovative career counseling approaches, such as identifying strengths and promoting positive feelings and positive

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orientations towards the future" (Robertson, 2018). Overall, the results suggested that in adolescents, higher levels of career adaptability may favor higher levels of overall self-efficacy and that higher levels of self-esteem may induce higher levels of life satisfaction (Marcionetti & Rossier, 2007). We agree that fear or courage can influence the learning of sports practiced under less common conditions, such as activities on the water. The results of the studies showed that both self-esteem and proactive personality positively predicted in the workplace the future and adaptability. In support of the hypothesized moderate mediation model, for individuals with a higher level of proactive personality, the indirect effects of self-esteem on future self-employment and career adaptation through career exploration were stronger (Cai et al., 2015). Ability to develop mental calm despite attempts. The experience of fighting with the attainment of a goal and persisting in one's efforts can develop the uniformity of temperament, mental calm and the ability to control his mental and emotional perspective in difficult moments. Efforts to raise students' self-esteem have not been shown to improve school performance and may sometimes be counterproductive. Performance in the workplace in adults is sometimes related to self-esteem, although the correlations vary greatly, and the direction of causality has not been established. Occupational success can increase self-esteem rather than vice versa. Alternatively, self-esteem can only be useful in certain work contexts. In general, laboratory studies have failed to find that self-esteem causes good pregnancy performance, with the important exception that high self-esteem facilitates persistence after failure (Baumeister et al., 2003). Increasing attention or the ability to be fully present and aware of what it does, increases the ability to persevere. We pay special attention to ensuring safer equipment for all participants in water activities for recreational purposes, but in the educational process. Also of great importance is given to exclude any possibility of injuries by training the clients participating in the practical training process every time. Teachers and instructors in water sports and all water activities are confronted with a number of factors that may influence the acquisition of knowledge passed on within schools and university courses. One of the factors mentioned in the questionnaire was the fear or the participants involved in water activities. Fear, especially from drowning or injury, can slow down or disable the learning process of a new sport (Cartoni, Minganti & Zelli, 2005; Reuter & Short, 2005; Ivarsson, 2008). Environmental factors and equipment can also influence the risk or extent of injury in a hazardous situation (Lundgren, Brorsson & Osvalder, 2011). Fear is sometimes the reason for the dispersion of attention and mistakes in the execution of certain technical elements (Cartoni et al., 2005). Several studies have shown the relationship between courage and different indicators of well-being, such as psychological and subjective well-being in adolescents (Toner et al., 2012) and adults (Leontopoulou & Triliva, 2012; Santisi et al., 2020). From the perspective of those who are involved in the transmission of practical and theoretical knowledge, fear is observed primarily due to strong wind, waves, open water surfaces or changes in weather conditions, fog, rain showers. We have found that the sources of fear are different, but most often occur because of the proximity of water surfaces with unknown characteristics. The problem is fear that becomes an obstacle during the learning process, interfering with participants' expectations and ultimately leading to failure and frustration due to unfulfilled ambition (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). The trainer must develop a customized strategy that materializes in an appropriate teaching mode, including techniques to avoid fear. Another important feature is courage, which can have a positive influence on learning sports in the aquatic environment. Customer courage helps to acquire the basic techniques of water sports, regardless of the potential obstacles and psychological barriers encountered during the teaching process. The study showed the connection between self-confidence and courage. Traditionally, courage was investigated as a recognition and a trial (Pury & Starkey, 2010). This feature helps participants resolve new and unexpected situations (Konter & Ng, 2012). The studies generated (Norton & Weiss, 2009) an operational definition of courage as a behavior characterized by persistence of effort, despite fear of warning. A certain amount of controlled fear that does not interfere with the learning process could help the trainer who is aware of the importance of this emotion and possesses the theoretical knowledge necessary to use this resource that is difficult to observe and involves a complex experience in the teaching process. The correlation between courage and self-esteem is present in many works, so self-esteem is conceptualized as an affective evaluation of (or feeling about) self (Betz & Klein, 1996; Chen, Gully & Eden, 2004). Using means from positive psychology can enrich career development and provide a fruitful focus on well-being (Robertson, 2018). Self-esteem has a positive effect on life and career outcomes, such as working conditions (Kuster, Orth & Meier, 2013). In a representative work (Magnano et al., 2019) they highlighted the significant relationship between the measure of courage and flowering in a sample of students, pointing out that courage results in behavior that motivates him to cope with transition situations, overcome his fears and thus contribute to the perception of a meaningful life. Fear is usually perceived by the clients who constituted the group that participated in this study as a negative feeling and a potential danger. In the course pursued by the trainer are included several components of the personality of the clients. Thus, character is the set of mental and moral qualities distinguishing each individual who determines the pattern of their individual behaviors (Wehmeyer et al., 2019). The link between character and integrity is often assumed and a 'good' person is expected to have a high integrity that is demonstrated by honoring commitments (Maree & Ebersöhn, 2007). The importance of these means and the inclusion of these values in the teaching process, which presents a number of situations in which the client faced various unprecedented situations, is decisive in achieving the desired results. We consider that this characteristic of the clients we work with, namely courage can be perceived as an adaptive behavior to cope with the tasks of career development and to promote life satisfaction (Ginevra et al., 2018). In order to understand the complex two-dimensional link between positive psychology and career development, we need to consider the central value of work in the development of adolescent identity (Erikson, 1968)

and the perception of the individual on subjective well-being (Alberts et.al., 2003; Barnett et al., 2008; Van Zyl et al., 2019). From this perspective, career choices can contribute to the positive development of the individual with the ultimate goal of psychological well-being. The image of courage as an important attribute, a defining feature for the teacher and coach involved in water activities, requires objective, external standards to establish objective risk and define an action as courageous. The vision of courage as a process requires subjective evaluation of the action from the point of view of the individual who experiences it. This definition has been used by many disciplines. Four main aspects of courageous behavior are accepted by specialists: intent, deliberation, risk and noble or prosocial intentions (Rate, 2010). Positive psychology has revealed the construction of courage, debating the nature and dynamics of courage, as well as the possibilities of past and result (Seligman et al., 2005).

Methods

This paper was attended by 41 novice students practicing water activities. They rated it with a questionnaire with fourteen questions. The subjects participating in this study are the clients of the Ovidius University of Constanta. The orientation of the questions was towards the analysis of key factors, common concepts and main skills involved in practicing water activities. Subjects were instructed before starting to take the questionnaire. The subject values were analyzed statistically.

Results

The first question was designed with four situations in which the subject can experience a feeling of fear. The four situations have four variants of response, all four variants of response are identical in all variants. What are your choices? If you get criticized while you're on the water - I can't do the right move 48.78%. I want to quit and go ashore 7.32%. I don't sharpen anyone and I get stuck 9.76%. I'm even more afraid 14.63%. The most common situation affecting performance is water criticism (48.78%), suggesting that social factors have a significant impact on participants' confidence and skills. The situation with the least impact is the uncertainty about water depth (24.39%), which indicates a lower perception of this factor as an inhibitor compared to others (Table 1). If I don't know how deep the water is - I can't make the right move 24.39%. I want to give up and go ashore 17.04%. I don't sharpen anyone and I get stuck 7.32%. I'm even more afraid 31.71%. The desire to give up is the highest when the wind starts to blow (19.51%), suggesting that fear caused by physical changes in the environment is perceived as more serious than criticism or distance from the shore. Criticism is least associated with the desire to abandon, with only 7.32% indicating this option. If I move away from the shore - I can't make the right move 34.15%. I want to give up and go out on shore 14.63%. I don't sharpen anyone and I get stuck 12.2%. I'm even more afraid 19.51%. Emotional blockage is most common when moving away from the shore (12.2%), indicating high anxiety over losing control over distance from a safety point. Instead, blockage is rare if the wind starts to blow (2.44%), which shows that the participants consider this situation less intimidating on an emotional level. If the wind starts to blow - I can't make the right move 41.46%. I want to give up and go out on shore 19.51%. I don't sharpen anyone and I get stuck 2.44%. I'm even more afraid 17.07%. The most intense fear occurs when participants do not know how deep the water is (31.71%), reflecting fear of the unknown and lack of control. Criticism is associated with the lowest intensity of fear (14.63%), indicating that social anxiety has a lower impact than physical environmental factors.

Table 1

Response Variant	Criticized	Depth	Far from shore	The wind is blowing
I can't make the right move	48.78%	24.39%	34.15%	41.46%
I want to quit and get out	7.32%	17.04%	14.63%	19.51%
I'm not listening to anyone	9.76%	7.32%	12.2%	2.44%
I'm even more afraid	14.63%	31.71%	19.51%	17.07%

Second question of the questionnaire - When someone tells you that you have to do something risky, do you listen carefully? Among the five gradual response options offered, between level 1 (low attention) and level 5 (high attention) the answers were distributed as a percentage: for level 1 - 36.4%, for level 2 - 6.1%, for level 3 - 6.1% for level 4 - 0%, for level 5 - 50.5%. Respondents listen with a little attention (level 1) may have a significant previous experience in water activities, which gives them confidence. At the same time, they may have an implicit trust in the organizers or in the overall safety of the activity. At first glance we see a polarization between courage and fear, so the distribution of responses shows a strong polarization: those with a lot of courage (level 1) and those dominated by caution/fear (level 5) represent almost the entire sample. This reflects an inverse proportional relationship between courage and fear, influenced by self-esteem and the perception of risks involved in the aquatic environment. High caution in water activities (level 5 - 50.5%). In the context of aquatic activities, this result indicates a clear tendency for participants to ask questions and seek clarification before engaging in risky activity. This could reflect an awareness of the hazards associated with water, such



as drowning risks, strong currents or lack of experience in the aquatic environment. Respondents who choose level 1 (low attention) can be characterized by a high level of courage or confidence. They either underestimate the risks or have a sufficiently high self-esteem to believe they can manage the contingencies. However, this courage can sometimes be perceived as a form of over-reliance which completely ignores the real risks of the aquatic environment. Impulsive or confident behavior (level 1 - 36.4%). A significant proportion of respondents did not show increased attention before taking part in a risky activity on the water. This behavior could be explained by: Trust in the organizers of the activity (for example, instructors or guides). Lack of perception of real risks. A relaxed approach or previous experience in such activities, which reduces their need for caution. Those who choose level 5, show extreme fear and precaution, much attention) show high caution, often associated with fear of the unknown or with a deep respect for the risks involved in water activities. This attitude may be influenced by previous negative experiences or awareness of own limitations, but it may also signal low self-esteem in relation to such activities. Levels 2, 3 and 4 - only 12.2%, indicate a polarized attitude towards the risks involved in water activities. Respondents are either very cautious or approach activities with significant confidence, avoiding intermediate choices. Self-esteem and balance between courage and caution expressed by moderate levels of response (2, 3, 4), though poorly represented, could signal individuals with balanced self-esteem. They do not allow themselves to be driven completely by fear, but they also do not ignore the risks. The lack of answers in these categories may suggest that water activities are perceived to be either very risky or very safe, leaving little room for an intermediate response. Water activities, such as kayak, surfing or diving, often involve visible risks, which explains why most respondents showed increased attention before taking part. Water is perceived as a more dangerous environment than other types of activities due to lack of control in critical situations. This can explain why level 5 (a lot of attention) is dominant. In contrast, those at level 1 may be more or less aware of potential hazards. Question number three of the questionnaire was: If your next task is risky, then you pay attention to what's next? Between the five gradual response options, between level 1 (few questions) and level 5 (a lot of attention), the answers were distributed as follows: for level 1 - 18.2%, for level 2 - 18.2%, for level 3 - 18.2% for level 4 - 12.1%, for level 5 - 33.3%. General trend of polarization towards extremes, level 5 (a lot of attention) is the most frequently chosen option (33.3%), indicating that a third of respondents consider it important to pay more attention before engaging in risky activity. In contrast, the proportions for Tier 1, 2 and 3 are evenly distributed (18.2%), suggesting a more relaxed or moderate attitude towards risky situations for a significant segment of participants. Tier 4 has the lowest percentage, indicating a possible tendency for respondents to avoid intermediate responses in favor of the most polarized (levels 1/2/3 or level 5). Approximately one third of respondents (33.3%) take the highest precautionary approach, which shows that they perceive the risks seriously. However, the fact that more than half of the responses are distributed between levels 1-3 (54.6%) suggests a dose of confidence or underestimation of potential risks.

Question number four: What kind of capabilities does one need to have to have the courage? Internal and psychological traits self-confidence is frequently mentioned, emphasizing the importance of self-knowledge and self-esteem to make courageous decisions. Self-control and calm - the ability to manage emotions in difficult situations, including fear or panic. Ambition, will and perseverance, courage is associated with the desire to overcome personal limits and achieve their goals. Courage is associated with a clear understanding of the situations and the risks involved. Repeated exposure to similar situations helps develop courage by increasing competence and confidence. Curiosity and openness to new experiences: The exploration of the unknown is a powerful motivator for the brave and the ability to assume and mature: Respondents believe that a brave person must be able to understand the risks and assume them. The mention of this ability shows the relevance of technical skills in specific activities, such as aquatic ones. The next question was the fifth one: Can we be brave about doing something that we HAVE TO do? The answers were: yes - 93.9% and not 6.1%. In the philosophical tradition, courage is considered one of the four cardinal virtues (along with wisdom, justice and thrift). Through this prism, courage is not only an ability to face danger of willingness, but also a moral virtue when mobilized to perform a duty perceived as moral or social. Respondents who replied 'yes' reflect an implicit understanding that 'necessary' action can become an act of courage if it involves risks or exceeding personal comfort. According to (Timmermann, 2010), paraphrasing a theory issued by Kant, I., duty is essential to moral actions. If what we need to do is considered moral, courage becomes an essential virtue in enforcing debt, especially when it involves difficulties or dangers. Therefore, those who answered 'yes' validate the view that moral action is not without courage. Respondents seem to recognize that social responsibilities (e.g. protecting others, fulfilling a role in the community) require courage. This shows that the majority perceive courage not only as an individual virtue, but also as one that supports social cohesion and the fulfillment of common obligations. In societies where altruism is valued, courage is often associated with personal sacrifice for the common good. "We have to do" can be interpreted as a duty involving a personal cost (physical, emotional or moral), which underlines the courageous nature of the act. The 6.1% who said "no" could see courage as a voluntary choice, not a constraint. From this perspective, if one "must" do something, courage is no longer relevant, because the person is bound, and the action becomes a mere conformation to the circumstances. This position reflects a stricter conception, in which courage implies freedom of choice, not just a reaction to necessity. The sixth question was: Do you think that modern nautical events attract inexperienced people to these activities? The answers to this question were: yes 61%, not 19.5%, I don't know 19.5%. Most believe that modern nautical events are attractive for those without experience (61%), this view suggests that modern nautical events are perceived as accessible and sufficiently well organized to attract



people with no pre-existing knowledge or skills in nautical activities. The organizers of these events probably focus on creating an inclusive and attractive atmosphere, which makes them perceived as safe or interesting for beginners. A significant minority considers that these events do not attract inexperienced people (19.5%). This response may reflect skepticism about the accessibility of modern nautical events to those without experience. This perception may be related to the idea that nautical activities are considered risky, costly or require a certain level of preparation. A similar segment of respondents do not have a clear opinion (19.5%). The next question was the number seven: What type of event on water promotes an active lifestyle more? The answers were grouped and analyzed as follows: First category - competitive and sporting events - the most common answers: yachting, surfing, canoe, rowing, paddleboarding, windsurfing, jet skiing, Olympic Games. Respondents believe competitive water sports, such as the competitions and Olympic events, are the most conducive to active lifestyle. These events emphasize physical preparation, development of skills and constant involvement, being perceived as symbols of a healthy and energetic lifestyle. The second category - recreational and tourism activities. Frequent answers: Canoe tours, recreational boat trips, activities in low or smooth water, events organized in summer. Recreational activities are associated with an active lifestyle in a more relaxed context. They attract beginners or people who are not interested in the competition, but want to be active in nature. Next category - contextual elements and promotional factors. Summer events, hot water events, activities promoted on the internet, advertising. External conditions and promotion are considered important factors to encourage participation. Well-promoted and comfortable events (soft water, summer, pleasant temperatures) are perceived as having a positive impact on people's involvement in physical activities. The fourth category - inclusive activities. Competitions for all levels (beginners and advanced), paddle board yoga, surfing for all, were the most common questions. Activities that include both beginners and advanced participants are perceived as more accessible and effective in promoting an active lifestyle. They provide opportunities for participation in different levels of physical training. The latter category included all water sports, where many respondents believe that any nautical activity has a beneficial potential in promoting an active lifestyle, suggesting that the diversity of such activities contributes to broad participation, regardless of preferences or level of experience. The next question was: Do you think there are also negative aspects of practicing water activities? The answers to this question reflect a balance between those who recognize the existence of negative aspects associated with water activities and those who consider these to be minimal or non-existent, as long as safety rules are respected. Overall distribution of views: Yes: Most respondents recognize the existence of negative aspects, indicating associated risks and problems. No: A significant proportion consider that water activities do not have obvious negative aspects, especially if safety regulations are respected. Negative aspects identified: Risks and accidents: Respondents highlight inherent risks, such as accidents and "inevitable occurrences". This highlights the unpredictable nature of nautical activities, which may become dangerous under certain conditions. Fear and emotional impact: "The development of increased fear" and "fear" are cited as possible negative effects. For some participants, water activities may exacerbate water anxiety or fears, especially in risk situations. Comparison with other sports: Several respondents believe that, as in any other sport, nautical activities also involve unavoidable negative aspects. This view suggests an acceptance of the risks as inherent in any form of physical activity. Conditionality to compliance with safety rules: Some respondents indicate that negative aspects are non-existent or minimized if safety rules are respected. This shows confidence in regulations and preventive measures, but also a perception that risks can be managed effectively. The questionnaire also included the following question: What do you think encourages people to practice water sports on a regular basis? The answers highlight a variety of motivational factors that cause people to participate constantly in water sports, divided into several categories. Respondents mention beneficial effects on the human body, such as improving physical and mental state, well-being, relaxing and reducing stress. They underline the perception that water sports are not only pleasant activities, but also essential for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Attraction to water, pleasure to navigate, adrenaline, desire for self-overcome and new experiences, getting out of the comfort zone. These answers reflect the intrinsic motivations of the participants, such as passion for the aquatic environment, desire for adventure and exploration. Emotional elements, such as the love of water and the adrenaline provided by water activities, play an important role. The third category is represented by the social factors "Other people who are delighted with this sport", "other people who practice this sport". Social interaction and being part of a group are powerful motivators, showing that people take inspiration from each other and develop communities around water sports. Point four - promotion and organization "Posts posted on Instagram", "popularity", "Full information", "education", "Organization of activities safely". These points show the importance of accessibility of information and promotion of water sports. Online environments, such as social networking, play a significant role in attracting audiences, and safe organizing helps people feel comfortable trying activities. Environment and landscape are the fifth category, respondents mention landscape and the aquatic environment as attractive factors. Nature provides a unique framework that attracts participants and creates a special connection with the environment.

The answers given by the subjects to the last three questions were grouped and analyzed as such, for the question - Do you think that gender, age or education influence the type of water sports event chosen? The answers were: Yes 70.7%. Not 24.4%. I don't know 4.9%. The next question was: What do you think are the benefits of water-based activities? The last question of this study was: What are the social, emotional, body-related, sports-related and health-related reasons for participating in aquatic sports events? For question one, most respondents believe that gender, age and education influence the choices in terms of water sports events. This suggests that these demographic and educational features play a



significant role in determining the type of activities that participants feel comfortable with. For example, younger and more educated people might be more attracted to more competitive or technical events, while older or less educated people might choose more relaxing activities, such as canoe rides. The answers to the second question: the benefits are diverse, covering both physical and psychic, social and emotional aspects: Physical and psychic, harmonious development (physical and psychic), self-confidence, defeating fears, relaxation, coordinates the senses. Most responses indicate the benefits for health, both physical (stabilizing physical condition, defeating physical limitations) and mental (reducing stress, increasing self-confidence). Socialization and self-knowledge, teamwork, strengthening relations. Social interaction is an important reason for participating in nautical activities, with some responses emphasizing the importance of teamwork and communication. Emotional and related to self-confidence, courage, determination, self-knowledge. Many respondents say that water activities help to develop courage, self-confidence and overcome personal fears, which can increase personal satisfaction. The answers given to the last question highlight various motivations, including socialization and group integration, interaction with people of similar age, acquaintance with new people. The responses underline that water sports are an opportunity to socialize and be part of an active community. Physical and mental benefits, improving physical and mental state, reducing stress, increasing self-confidence. These activities are seen as a way to improve fitness, relieve stress and feel better emotionally. Personal motivation and the desire for self-overcoming, courage, self-knowledge, the desire for self-overcoming. Many responses suggest that participation in water events provides an opportunity for self-exploration and personal development. The influence of gender, age and education on the choice of activities on the water (Question 1) is closely related to perceived benefits (Question 2) and social and emotional reasons (Question 3): Physical and mental development and well-being (benefits) are important for both active and older young people, but the choice of a type of activity (e.g. rowing vs. yachting) is often influenced by the level of education and age. Higher and younger educated people seem to be more open to more technical and challenging activities. Socialization and group integration (answers in Question 3) is a reason for most people, indicating that regardless of age or education, people feel attracted to aquatic activities and for interacting with others. Fear and courage are a common ground between responses to the benefits of water activities (Question 2) and emotional motivations (Question 3). Many mention how water sports help to defeat fear and develop courage, and this is essential for those who perceive water activities as a personal challenge. Most respondents believe that gender, age and education influence choices in water activities, and these choices are closely related to the perceived benefits of activities, both physical and mental. Water sports are perceived as beneficial for self-confidence development, stress reduction and increased fitness, and socialization and self-knowledge are important reasons for participation. Likewise, the quest for self-fulfillment, courage and confronting fear are key elements that motivate individuals to become actively involved in these sports.

Conclusions

In the case of water-based activities, the majority of respondents take a cautious attitude: the need for clarification and details before acting is essential for a large part of the participants. This suggests that the organizers of these activities need to provide clear information and encourage questions in order to increase trust and safety. A significant proportion of respondents are based on instinct or trust, those who tend to ask fewer questions, which may require additional monitoring by organizers to ensure that these participants are well informed. A brief guidance session on safety risks and measures can be extremely beneficial, as participants exhibit polarized attitudes. In order to reduce fear and support cautious participants, it is important to give them clear information about safety measures and to explain what can be controlled during water activities. Those who are courageous should be encouraged to think more about real risks without dampening their enthusiasm. This can be done through simulations of risky situations and detailed explanations of potential hazards. Participants can benefit from preparatory activities that provide them with gradual confidence in their own skills (e.g. simple water exercises before more challenging activities), reducing both fear and overestimation of capabilities. This correlation between courage, self-esteem and fear emphasizes the importance of understanding the psychology of participants in order to design safe and enjoyable aquatic experiences. Courage is perceived as a combination of personal traits (self-confidence, self-control, ambition), acquired skills (education, training, previous experiences) and external factors (guidance, favorable context). The most frequently mentioned feature is self-confidence, followed by self-control and practical training, suggesting that the balance between preparation and mental attitude is the key to developing courage. Most (93.9%) see courage as compatible with an obligation, suggesting a socio-moral understanding of courage as a virtue supporting debt. Philosophically, this view is aligned with traditions that value sacrifice and responsibility as expressions of courage. The minority (6.1%) perceives courage as being related to freedom of choice, which implies that actions imposed by "must" are seen as not autonomous enough to be considered courageous. Criticism affects performance most (48.78%) but is less associated with desire to give up (7.32%) or intense fear (14.63%). It is the biggest trigger of fear (31.71%) and significantly influences the desire to abandon (17.04%). Exposure to new situations creates significant emotional blockage (12.2%) and intensifies fear (19.51%), indicating a psychological vulnerability to loss of contact with safety. Wind is perceived as a factor that affects performance (41.46%) and determines the desire to abandon (19.51%), but does not cause a significant emotional blockage (2.44%). Although a significant part of the participants (33.3%) devote a lot of attention before a risky activity, the rest of the respondents divide almost evenly between the less attentive levels, indicating a diversity in risk perception. This distribution might suggest the need for



better information or awareness of the associated risks to encourage a more cautious attitude in general. This distribution reflects a predominantly collectivist view, in which courage is valued as support for social debt, but leaves room for a more liberal interpretation, in which courage is understood exclusively through the prism of personal choice. Most (61%) believe that modern nautical events attract inexperienced people, suggesting a positive perception of the accessibility of these activities. However, the answers "no" and "I don't know" (19.5% each) highlight a segment of respondents who either consider nautical activities more exclusive or are not sufficiently familiar with these events to form a clear opinion. Most respondents are aware of the risks associated with water activities, such as accidents and psychological impact (fear). However, these risks are perceived as normal or sustainable, comparable to those in other sports. Respondents who said "no" believe well respected safety regulations and precautions can eliminate most negative aspects, stressing the importance of organization and education in practicing water activities. Water sports are encouraged by a combination of internal and external factors, including health benefits, personal passion, social influences, effective promotion and safe organization. The landscape and the unique environment in which these activities take place are also a major source of attraction.

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