

SOMETHING MORE THAN A SPORT, SAILING TO THE LIFE

Figen Sevinç

Bartın University, Turkey

Tülay Güzel

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey

Abstract: Each day the number of individuals is increasing which wishes for sports, challenges, nature, and wetland that increases the individual's recreative activities. It is seen that - especially- sailing organizations are getting more attention and also there have been so many competitions that are getting scheduled recently. In this study, it is researched how the individuals approach sailing and how the sailing affects their lives who participated in the sailing organizations in Çanakkale, Bozcaada. According to those purposes, an interview was set up with the 13 sailors who participated to the 2019 Naval Forces Cup Sailing Competition which took place in Bozcaada. As a result of the interview, it is observed that sailing takes very important role in individuals life that helps them to socialize, let them challenge the nature and to overcome the issues in their life.

Keywords: sailing, tourism, recreation, leisure, life satisfaction.

Introduction

Sailing recreation among water sports linked with marine tourism has increasingly become the centre of attraction in coastal countries and it is observed that the number of individuals interested in sailing sport and destinations is increasing. Especially in recent times, it has been observed that individuals prefer activities that relax individuals in physical, mental and spiritual sense, that are entertaining, satisfactory and enjoyable in their free time. Since there is internal and external motivation in individuals to participate in these activities, their interest in any of these events, the importance they attribute of these events and gain from participation (socialising, success, pleasure, life satisfaction etc.) plays an important role to turn towards these activities (Porter & Lawyer, 1968; Sung, 2000). One of these activities is the sailing sport included in the lives of humans as an adventure activity and marine tourism type and preferred for individual challenge against nature, leisure time activity and entertainment. Based on this fact, this study investigates the perspectives of sailors who visited Bozcaada, Çanakkale by participating in sailing sports activities in their lives and how sailing influenced their lives.

Methodology

This study aims to investigate how sailing activities as one of the open-air recreations and leisure time activity is perceived by individuals who participate in sailing sport, their perception as a touristic product and whether there is a correlation between life satisfaction and sailing activity. Based on these purposes, interview technique among qualitative research techniques which is commonly adopted in scientific researches and helps to understand the reasons of certain thought and behaviour as well as experience and mental perceptions was applied in this study (Patton, 1987; Seaton & Bennett, 1996; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Within this context, research questions developed for the solution of the research problem were considered, total of 15 questions among which 5 were about demographic properties was identified and additional questions were asked to obtain in-depth knowledge about the field or event.

The study problem can be identified as, “Is sailing tourism an important touristic product for coastal destinations? What is the position of this activity in terms of participants?” under the scope

of this study. The study problem has critical importance as it reflects the purpose of this study. The problem forms the main course of the study and it is important to reach study purposes with certain research questions. Kerlinger & Lee (2000), stated that the research question or questions are the forms of expression the research problem in question form. Within this framework, identified research questions are as follows:

- What is the direction of sailing tourism development and what direction should it have?
- What are the reasons for participants to visit a destination to participate in sailing activities?
- What is the place of sailing activities in the social and cultural life of the participants?
- What are the factors that impact the sailing activity participation of the individuals?
- What is the position of sailing activities in Turkey in a recreational sense?
- What could be done to develop sailing tourism from a sustainability perspective?
- What is the impact of sailing sport on individual life satisfaction?

Data collection tool was interview questions and these questions were formed by using various sources in the literature (Beard & Ragheb 1980; Diener et al. 1985; Sevinç & Özel, 2018; Sevinç & Duran, 2019). Questions prepared before the interview were collected under three titles as “sailing sports perception and sailing sport participation purpose”, “meaning added by sailing sport to life” and “life satisfaction” and data were assessed and analysed from this perspective.

Data collection was performed in Bozcaada, Çanakkale as the research field. This island was selected in the research universe as it is one of the active destinations throughout the year for sailing sport and it is the stopping point for İstanbul-Bodrum sailing contest route. At data collection stage, multilevel sampling method was applied for rich and informative purpose. After first five participants, individuals recommended by these participants were involved in the interviews and total of 13 participants were interviewed including 8 participants selected with snowball sampling. Interviews were conducted with individuals with advanced level of knowledge sharing and good level of knowledge accumulation. Interviews with 13 voluntary sailing athlete participating in Naval Forces Cup Sailing Race were conducted on Bozcaada between 5-9 July 2019 with semi-structured in-depth interviews. Interviews approximately lasted between 48-60 minutes. Researchers participated in a sailing event organised on the weekend between the same dates for on-site observation and data were transcribed.

Data analysis adopted the inductive method, in other words, content analysis, by using the data obtained from interview technique adopted in this study. Content analysis with coding was preferred to describe behaviours, gather data under certain conceptual framework and interpret this data and to identify the relationships between similar data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Thus, this study used coding and the purpose was to ensure obtained findings contributed to increasing reliability and validity (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). To test the validity of this study, views of two independent scholars from Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University were asked and these scholars were asked to assess the codes. As a result, coding had the final form, suitable themes were identified and reliability criteria were tried to be met for comparison. From this point, analysis data were coded based on four-staged analysis approach as expressed by Huberman & Miles (2002), concepts were identified, findings were defined and interpreted.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings obtained from this study, when demographic properties of the participants are analysed, all participants were male. It was determined that 38.5% of the participants interviewed in this study were between 45-54 years old. When education level was considered, 30.8% had undergraduate and 69.2% had master degree. Majority of the participants were from different occupation groups including computer engineers, ocean captain and managers. It was determined that the income state of the participants were above \$700. 80% of the participants expressed that they are sailing for more than 10 years. When monthly expenses for sailing activities were considered, it was

determined that 69.2% of the participants spend between \$0-100, 30.8% spend more than \$101 and annual cost for participants including races was more than \$10,000 especially participants with boat. It was stated that renting the materials was approximately \$150 and more. Based on the findings obtained from this study, the demographic properties of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic properties of the participants

Gender	Male	13
	Female	-
Age	25-34	3
	35-44	3
	45-54	5
	55-+	2
Education	Undergraduate	4
	Master	9
Income (monthly)	700 \$ +	13
Expense (monthly)	0-100 \$	9
	101 \$ +	4

According to findings Table 2 presents themes and codes created during data analysis after the interviews.

Table 2. Frequencies of the codes and themes between interviewees

Themes	Codes listed according to themes	Total mentions
Perception and aim of Sailing	Touristic Product	13
	Commune with sea	8
	Sport	7
	Hobby/Excitement	5
Meaning of sailing	The most satisfied attraction	13
	Feel Free and tranquility	11
	Meaning of my life	7
	Instrument of socialization	4
Sailing and Life Satisfaction	Precedence	13
	Satisfaction	13
	Reach ideal	10

findings for sailing recreation and event participation, to express how sailing recreation perception of study participants are shaped, questions related with what was their purpose to start sailing sport, what are their views about sailing activities and their state of participations were asked. Based on the findings obtained in this study, it was expressed that participants started sailing with interest and desire via sports, sustained this sport, did sailing sport and mainly participated in their club events. Long-time sailing contest participants state their purpose of start sailing and their current purposes as follows:

From March to October, I attend almost every weekend but only with a few exceptions like public holidays.
Participant 2

I started in 2014 with the opportunity that my company provides training for its employees. My goal was to get to know sailing. I went to this course wondering about sailing. I have been working at Arçelik Sailing Team for 5 years. My current aim is to increase my sailing experience by participating in races in different geographies I have not participated in before and to increase my knowledge to provide sailing boat maintenance on my own.

Participant 4

According to findings for meaning added by sailing activities to life, in this study, since sailing occupies a space in participants' life as a leisure time activity, answers to "what meaning does participating in sailing activities add? How did sailing sport influence your life?" questions were analysed. All of the participants stated that sailing as a recreational activity has an important place in their life, this activity has positive influence on their life and they are happy about it. Additionally, participants expressed that it is an enjoyable activity to spend time with and it has become a lifestyle. Participant statements are as follows:

I don't consider sailing as a leisure activity. I consider it my main occupation. Dealing with sailing is not only a time spent at sea with sailing, but also a process that includes the maintenance and preparation of the boat. Sailing sport infuses your life with peace and freedom.

Participant 9

Sailing is a sport, recreation and relaxation. After an exciting sailing, there is a feeling of relaxation.

Participant 12

Life conditions and current living standards cover the happiness and well-being of individuals and differentiate recreation activities. Being satisfied with their life, almost ideal position of their current life or reaching their expectations and almost not having anything to change in their life indicates that individuals have good level of life satisfaction (Diener et al. 1985). According to Findings for the relationship between sailing and life satisfaction, participants who expressed that they wanted to start sailing sports earlier and at younger age and sailing has a priority in their life had following statements for the questions:

I believe that I have overcome the problems that I have internalized with sailing by increasing the serotonin secretion with the relaxing effect of the sea and sporty focus. Besides, sailing sport contributes to the individual vision due to its interest. I'm happy, I'd like to start younger.

Participant 1

Sailing is a model of success with a team. I feel excited and concentrated before sailing, and then tired and satisfied. If I could start earlier, I would have built a life where I could spend more time at sea. Sailing would be a way of life rather than a sport.

Participant 10

Conclusion

When hypothesis emphasised in life satisfaction studies are evaluated from a sailing activity perspective, study findings and life satisfaction theories are parallel. According to activity theory, individual's focus on important events and purpose enable these individuals to reach happiness and required skill with these types of activities proportionally increase with life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). Based on obtained findings, it was determined that in sailing itself, challenging with difficulty gave more happiness than reaching to the results. Based on this point, as expressed in the purpose hypothesis, individuals who put efforts to reach and objective have life satisfaction (Scitovsky, 1976).

Therefore, happiness is achieved necessarily by participating in sailing activity. For this purpose, needs and purposes might be needed to completely fulfilled and this represents the hypothesis formed for pleasure and pain (Diener, 1984). Based on the interviews, sailing is mainly described as being close to the sea, avoiding stress, entertainment, sport, hobby, participating in recreative activities and personal challenge. Additionally, it was seen that the meaning of sailing sport in their lives differentiated and turned into a serious leisure time activity. Based on this fact and based on the findings obtained in this study, sailing is a sportive activity with skill and happiness that distances individuals from stress enable self-confidence and socialisation. Another result of this study was that sailing sport had an important place in individual’s life and this sport had positive impact on their life. Adrenalin, sense of accomplishment, being close to water areas and pleasure of the sports are among the most important reasons drawing individuals to sailing tourism. Accordingly, in recreational terms, more sailing activities in Turkey and encouraging individuals and creating training fields are among expectations. Additionally, preserving natural environment will ensure sustainability of sailing activities and contribute to development of regional and national level open-air recreations.

This study is limited with 13 individuals participating in Bozcaada, Çanakkale sailing contest. Future studies can have larger sample and interest level and motivation of individuals participating in sailing sport can be analysed separately. Satisfaction levels of all activity participants can be analysed and comparative study can be conducted based on demographic properties. Therefore, it is believed that the findings obtained in this study will contribute to the studies in related topic and shed light on future studies in open-air recreation.

References

1. Beard, J. G., & Ragheb, M. G. (1980) Measuring Leisure Satisfaction. *Journal of Leisure Research*. 12. 20-33
2. Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J. ve Griffin, S. (1985), The Satisfaction with Life Scale, *Journal Of Personality Assessment*, 49 (1), 71-75.
3. Diener, Edward. (1984), Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95(3), 542-575.
4. Huberman, A., & Miles, B. M. (2002). *The Qualitative Researcher’s Companion*, Sage Publications Inc. Thousand Oaks: California.
5. Kerlinger, F. N., & Lee, H. B. (2000). *Foundations of Behavioral Research*. Wadsworth, 4th Edition, USA.
6. Patton, M. Q. (1987). *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*. Sage: Newbury Park, CA.
7. Porter, L. W., & Lawler, E. E. (1968). *Managerial Attitudes and Performance*. Homewood, IL: Irwin-Dorsey.
8. Rossman, G.B. & Rallis, S.F. (1998) *Learning in the Field: An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.
9. Scitovsky, T. (1976). *The Joyless Economy*. Oxford University Pres. Oxford.
10. Seaton, A. V. & Bennett, M. M. (1996) *Marketing Tourism Products: Concepts, Issues, Cases*. Thomson Business: Oxford.
11. Sevinç, F., & Duran, E. (2019). Alternatif Turizm Türü Olarak Off-road Faaliyetlerinin Katılımcıların Yaşamlarındaki Yeri: Çanakkale Örneği. *Yalova Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 9(18), 1-16.
12. Sevinç, F., & Özel, Ç. H. (2018). Boş Zaman Aktivitesi Olarak Dalış ve Yaşam Doyumu İle İlişkisi. *Dokuz Eylül University Journal of Graduate School of Social Sciences*, 20(3).
13. Sung, H. H. (2000). *An Analysis of The Adventure Travel Market: From Conceptual Development to Market Segmentation*, PhD, Purdue University.
14. Yıldırım, A. & Şimşek, H. (2011). *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri*, Seçkin Yayıncılık: Ankara.