

## Investigating the Motivations and Expectations of Individuals Interested in Paragliding

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**KEYWORDS** Paragliding. Athlete. Outdoor Sports. Healthier. Recreational

**ABSTRACT** The present study aims to investigate the motivations and expectations of individuals who take up paragliding. Significant relationships were found with gender, marital status, age and level of education. According to the results, individuals generally take up paragliding because they enjoy the sport and they want to look healthier. Although, there is no obvious factor that affects the selection of paragliding as a sport, existence of a trainer in the immediate vicinity and the impact of the environment are found to be effective in taking up paragliding. Family impact and expectations to be famous are found unrelated to taking up paragliding. Expectations from paragliding decrease when educational level increases. It is observed that expectations of young individuals are higher and they are more willing to take up the sport. The study concludes that people take up the sport since they enjoy it and they want to stay healthy. Encouraging young and middle aged sportsmen to take up paragliding and arranging areas to do this sport will have positive contributions to paragliding.

### INTRODUCTION

Nature sports have gained popularity in recent years. Nowadays, recreational activities have turned into life styles. Besides, it is imperative to generate various programs and projects to expand the range of recreational activities and the time spent for them. Recreational activities support psychological, social and physical values of the individual by forming their own philosophies. Whether participation is active or passive, activities help individuals socialize and make life beautiful by affecting their lifestyles (Yerlisu and Ardahan 2009). Interest in nature sports has increased as well. Intensity of urban life and increasing stress related to work direct individuals to outdoor recreation activities. Nature sports have become favorable in our country as well and various implementation areas have been identified. Mountaineering, nature walks, paragliding and water sports can be listed among these sports (Kuru 2000).

Turkey offers favorable opportunities for many nature sports. Turkey is a country worth discovering for enthusiasts in air sports such as paragliding, gliding, parachuting and ballooning. Paragliding was first done actively at the beginning of the 90's in Fethiye in Baba Mountain by foreign sportsmen (Zorba et al. 2004). Nature sports and adventure tourism are also used to advertise products. Tourists who visit

the country are offered paragliding among nature activities (Page et al. 2006). Olivier (2006) mentioned that nature sports which are actively pursued in recreational activities should be organized and he added that these sports should be done in the framework of certain rules and regulations. As we can understand from this statement, nature sports require a certain discipline. Accidents may occur when these sports are not undertaken within specific rules and with a certain discipline. Research informs that paragliding is one of the high risk sports in which the highest number of accidents is observed. In their research, Fasching et al. (1997) found that the highest number of paragliding accidents is seen in May, July and August. The weather with thermal flows and high instability is clear in these months. This period is also the beginning of holidays. Thus, accidents are mostly experienced in this period. Increasing the number of training for flights and including aerodynamic structure and weather conditions in the trainings becomes beneficial to decrease accidents. Research has examined the injuries and deaths in these sports. Some studies have defined these sports as dangerous activities (Martha et al. 2010).

Individuals who prefer different sports have started to make selections among branches that are gratifying, entertaining and challenging (Voigt 1998). Nature athletes make use of the wild nature, adventure, closeness to nature, physi-

cal exercises, natural scenery, privacy, socialization, risk taking, challenges, entertainment and “search for uncertainty” (Carr 1998). As gathered from above information, paragliding is a risky sport. It is closely evaluated against risks and existing dangers (Maningas and Simpson 2003). Although the rate of injuries and deaths is high in these nature sports that do not allow for mistakes, these risky sports are getting more and more popular in Western societies. Hence, it is very important to identify the factors that underlie behavioral strategies about the various risks faced by the individuals who take up high risk sports (Martha et al. 2009). In general, adventure activities include instances of controlled physical challenges so that participants can perceive the physical risks involved. These activities composed of instances of uncertainties in various outputs reveal innovative behaviors and ideas and include testing the mental, social and affective expertise and levels of dealing with challenges (Priest and Gass 1997).

In line with the information provided above, the present research is important since there are not many studies about individuals who take up paragliding. The numbers of people who take up nature tourism and nature sports are increasing every year and this increase causes some problems as well. Paragliding is crucial for recreational activities and for tourism considering the geography and nature events of our country. In this context, the present study investigates the motivations and expectations to take up paragliding.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The explanatory study examines the demographics of the individuals that take up paragliding; a nature sport with increasing popularity, their interactions with the environment while doing the sport, their motivations and expectations. The reason for selecting individuals that take paragliding in the study is related to the fact that paragliding requires training, specialized knowledge, equipment and conditions. The study was undertaken with the participation of active athletes who do this sport. A total of 216 athletes (167 males and 49 females) participated in the study.

### Universe and Sample

Universe of the study was composed of individuals who take up paragliding in Turkey. Sample consisted of sportsmen older than 18

who actively paraglide and participate in festivals and organizations. A total of 216 individuals participated in the study. 167 of the participants were male and 49 were female. Following data collection, 7 of the questionnaires were not considered for the analysis since they either had been filled partially or incorrectly.

### Data Collection Tool

A questionnaire composed of 33 questions aiming to identify motivations and expectations to take up paragliding was used for data collection. This questionnaire was previously utilized in many studies (Olcüci et al. 2012; Yildirim 2007; Sunay and Saracalolu 2003; Bayraktar and Sunay 2004; Simsek 2005). The questionnaire was designed for the purpose of the study and implemented on the working group as data collection tool. Internal consistency reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was found to be 0.90. Evaluation criteria used to obtain Cronbach Alpha coefficient are as follows;

If  $0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$ , scale is not reliable.

If  $0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$ , scale has low reliability.

If  $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$ , scale is rather reliable.

If  $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$ , scale is highly reliable.

The questionnaire was composed of three sections:

1. Views regarding motivations for taking up paragliding,
2. Views regarding the reasons why individuals keep participating in paragliding,
3. Views regarding expectations from paragliding.

Intervals in interpreting the 5-point Likert type scale was calculated with the following formula:  $4/5=0.80$ . Accordingly the scoring is; 1.00 – 1.80 (None), 1.81 – 2.60 (Little), 2.61 – 3.40 (Medium), 3.41 – 4.20 (A Lot), 4.21 – 5.00 (Very High).

### Data Collection

Questionnaires were implemented by the researcher during Narli Paragliding festival on 16-18 August 2013 and during Turkish Aviation Association Adana Sportive Aviation Club Target Contest on 1-3 November 2013. The questionnaires were also sent to paragliding clubs by cargo and sent to sportsmen through e-mails. Most of the data were collected by the researcher during the contest and the festival. Question-

naires that had missing information or filled in-  
correctly were not analyzed.

**Data Analysis**

Statistical analyses were done using SPSS for Windows 16.0 package program and frequencies, percentages and arithmetic means were calculated. Independent samples t-test was used to compare groups quantitatively to determine the differences between scores obtained in the study and One Way ANOVA was used when there were more than two groups. Tukey test was implemented to identify which group caused the difference between groups. Results were examined on p<0.05 level of significance.

**FINDINGS**

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study aims to investigate the motivations and expectations of individuals who take up paragliding. The current research is believed to contribute to generalization of the factors that influence taking up paragliding. Among high risk sports, paragliding is becoming increasingly popular both as a tourism activity and a performance sport. The constant increase in the interest towards paragliding has brought attention from the media to these lifestyle sports (Olivier, 2006). In addition, this sport is considered to be high risk and dangerous. Distribution regarding the motivations for taking up paragliding (Table 1) shows the most prominent factor (13.4%) to be “Impact of a trainer in close vicinity”. Also “effect of one’s environment” (22.2%) was found

**Table 1: Distribution of the views regarding motivations for taking up paragliding**

<i>Questionnaire items</i>	<i>1 (none)</i>	<i>2 (little)</i>	<i>3 (medium)</i>	<i>4 (a lot)</i>	<i>5 (very high)</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Impact of mother, father or siblings on taking up paragliding	164 (75.9%)	-	35 (16.2%)	6 (2.8%)	11 (5.1%)	1.61
Impact of one’s environment	83 (38.4%)	20 (9.3%)	47 (21.8%)	48 (22.2%)	18 (8.3%)	2.52
Impact of friends or peers	74 (34.3%)	25 (11.6%)	60 (27.8%)	45 (20.8%)	12 (5.6%)	2.51
Impact of a teacher	99 (45.8%)	28 (13%)	30 (13.9%)	36 (16.7%)	23 (10.6%)	2.33
Impact of the media	85 (39.4%)	43 (19.9%)	48 (22.2%)	21 (9.7%)	19 (8.8%)	2.28
Impact of TV channels	98 (45.4%)	37 (17.1%)	39 (18.1%)	28 (13%)	14 (6.5%)	2.18
Impact of a trainer in close vicinity	94 (43.5%)	14 (6.5%)	38 (17.6%)	41 (19%)	29 (13.4%)	2.52
Impact of the desire to be a world famous sportsman	124(57.4%)	21 (9.7%)	38 (17.6%)	12 (5.6%)	21 (9.7%)	2.00
Impact of the desire to be an internationally acclaimed sportsman	106 (49.1%)	35 (16.2%)	40 (18.5%)	17 (7.9%)	18 (8.3%)	2.10
Impact of a favorite sportsman	115 (53.2%)	31 (14.4%)	32 (14.8%)	14 (6.5%)	24 (11.1%)	2.07

**Table 2: Distribution of the views regarding the reasons why individuals keep participating in paragliding**

<i>Questionnaire items</i>	<i>1 (none)</i>	<i>2 (little)</i>	<i>3 (medium)</i>	<i>4 (a lot)</i>	<i>5 (very high)</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Increasing financial income	164 (75.9%)	7 (3.2%)	20 (9.3%)	11 (5.1%)	14 (6.5%)	1.62
Enjoying paragliding	4 (1.9%)	—	14 (6.5%)	56 (25.9%)	142 (65.7%)	4.53
Awareness regarding the positive contributions of paragliding	32 (14.8%)	9 (4.2%)	74 (34.3%)	51 (23.6%)	50 (23.1%)	3.36
Spending recreational time positively by paragliding	12 (5.6%)	15 (6.9%)	51 (23.6%)	61 (28.2%)	77 (35.6%)	3.81
Staying healthy through paragliding	31 (14.4%)	27 (12.5%)	64 (29.6%)	47 (21.8%)	47 (21.8%)	3.24
Recognition and respect as an individual who does paragliding	50 (23.1%)	33 (15.3%)	57 (26.4%)	42 (19.4%)	34 (15.7%)	2.89
Enjoying achievements	29 (13.4%)	18 (8.3%)	75 (34.7%)	47 (21.8%)	47 (21.8%)	3.30
Seeing new countries	54 (25%)	20 (9.3%)	71 (32.9%)	25 (11.6%)	46 (21.3%)	2.94
Finding the real happiness in paragliding activities	9 (4.2%)	5 (2.3%)	66 (30.6%)	53 (24.5%)	83 (38.4%)	3.90

**Table 3: Distribution of the views regarding expectations from paragliding**

Questionnaire items	1 (none)	2 (little)	3 (medium)	4 (a lot)	5 (very high)	Mean
Being and staying healthy	33 (15.3%)	17 (7.9%)	68 (31.5%)	49 (22.7%)	49 (22.7%)	3.29
Having a good physical appearance	55 (25.5%)	19 (8.8%)	72 (33.3%)	32 (14.8%)	38 (17.6%)	2.90
Having relationships with the environment as a popular person who does paragliding	53 (24.5%)	25 (11.6%)	76 (35.2%)	42 (19.4%)	20 (9.3%)	2.77
Having a university level training in the future about paragliding	87 (40.3%)	33 (15.3%)	49 (22.7%)	24 (11.1%)	23 (10.6%)	2.36
Obtaining scholarships from universities abroad with the help of paragliding	117 (54.2%)	23 (10.6%)	41 (19%)	22 (10.2%)	13 (6%)	2.03
Being a trainer	65 (30.1%)	38 (17.6%)	52 (24.1%)	27 (12.5%)	34 (15.7%)	2.66
Being a paragliding trainer	72 (33.3%)	23 (10.6%)	60 (27.8%)	33 (15.3%)	28 (13%)	2.63
Having a financially comfortable life	125 (57.9%)	21 (9.7%)	42 (19.4%)	20 (9.3%)	8 (3.7%)	1.91
Being a national sportsman in paragliding	53 (24.5%)	35 (16.2%)	48 (22.2%)	40 (18.5%)	40 (18.5%)	2.90
Being recognized by everyone	58 (26.9%)	22 (10.2%)	74 (34.3%)	27 (12.5%)	35 (16.2%)	2.81

**Table 4: Analysis of the reasons for taking up and practicing paragliding and expectations from paragliding based on gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	P(P<0.05)
Reasons for taking up paragliding	Female	49	2.45	0.69	2.05	0.04*
	Male	167	2.14	0.98	2.05	0.04*
Reasons for practicing paragliding	Female	49	3.53	0.59	2.51	0.01**
	Male	167	3.22	0.79	2.51	0.01**
Expectations from paragliding	Female	49	2.91	0.83	2.48	0.01**
	Male	167	2.54	0.93	2.48	0.01**

P<0.05\* p<0.01\*\*

**Table 5: Analysis of the reasons for taking up and practicing paragliding and expectations from paragliding based on marital status**

	Marital status	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	P(P<0.05)
Reasons for taking up paragliding	Single	127	2.16	0.92	-2.1	0.31
	Married	89	2.29	0.94	-2.1	0.31
Reasons for practicing paragliding	Single	127	3.20	0.71	-1.9	0.04*
	Married	89	3.41	0.82	-1.9	0.04*
Expectations from paragliding	Single	127	2.67	0.88	0.22	0.43
	Married	89	2.57	0.97	0.22	0.43

P<0.05\* p<0.01\*\*

to be an important factor in taking up paragliding. When the whole distribution is examined, a highly prominent factor is not apparent because participants have various reasons for taking up this sport. Search for newer and more adventurous sports has popularized paragliding (Fasching, Schippinger, Pretschner 1997). Another interesting finding is related to the fact that family (75%), desire to be a famous sportsman (57.4%)

and desire to be a well-liked sportsman (53.2%) did not have any impact on taking up paragliding. Jack and Ronan's (1998) in their research point out that individuals who participate in various high risk sportive activities especially mountaineers and parachutists tend to look for more general and different sorts of excitement compared to individuals who participate in less risky sports. Sports such as mountaineering, para-

**Table 6: Analysis of the reasons for taking up and practicing paragliding and expectations from paragliding based on educational level**

	<i>Level of education</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P (P&lt;0.05)</i>
Reasons for taking up paragliding	High School	2	2.90	0.00	4.09	0.00**
	Primary	37	2.58	1.18		
	Undergraduate	143	2.19	0.89		
	Graduate	34	1.86	0.60		
Reasons for practicing paragliding	High School	2	4.22	0.00	14.91	0.00**
	Primary	37	3.49	0.76		
	Undergraduate	143	3.39	0.66		
	Graduate	34	2.58	0.77		
Expectations from paragliding	High School	2	4.20	0.00	5.93	0.01**
	Primary	37	2.77	0.83		
	Undergraduate	143	2.68	0.93		
	Graduate	34	2.14	0.77		

p<0.01\*\*

**Table 7: Analysis of the reasons for taking up and practicing paragliding and expectations from paragliding based on age**

	<i>Age range</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P (P&lt;0.05)</i>
Reasons for taking up paragliding	18-35	42	2.63	1.07	4.23	0.00**
	26-30	21	2.35	0.63		
	31-35	60	2.09	0.97		
	36-40	57	1.92	0.68		
	41-45	25	2.12	0.84		
	45 and above	11	2.77	1.16		
Reasons for practicing paragliding	18-35	42	3.30	0.65	0.75	0.58
	26-30	21	3.43	0.69		
	31-35	60	3.33	0.86		
	36-40	57	3.15	0.86		
	41-45	25	3.27	0.51		
	45 and above	11	3.49	0.52		
Expectations from paragliding	18-35	42	3.03	0.97	3.05	0.01**
	26-30	21	2.82	1.03		
	31-35	60	2.51	0.74		
	36-40	57	2.40	0.97		
	41-45	25	2.46	0.91		
	45 and above	11	2.86	0.65		

P<0.05\* p<0.01\*\*

chuting, rock climbing, car racing and speed surfing, involve an intense level of excitement (Kuru 1998). This high risk may be effective in families' preventing individuals from participating in paragliding.

As much as they involve risk, nature sports also provide highly rewarding opportunities. Paragliding is among the most pleasurable nature sports. Especially, in the summer months it becomes the largest tourism sector and focus of interest in Fethiye. This popularity keeps interest towards paragliding alive and has positive impact on the number of people interested in paragliding. It is argued that some open air ac-

tivities other than traditional recreational activities that involve risk and specific skills can be included in adventure tourism (Gülcan 2003). In their study, Page, Steele and Connell (2006) confirmed that nature and adventure tourism are used in public tourism as well. Public organizations have realized the interest towards nature and adventure tourism and their awareness has increased in terms of strategy. The most interesting ratio among the reasons for practicing paragliding (Table 2) is "enjoyment" (65.7%). The majority of the participants stated they took up the sport because they enjoyed it. Ardahan and Yerlisu Lapa (2011) also found that individuals

who do nature sports take up the sports because they enjoy them. Participants expressed that they were happier with the help of paragliding (38.4%) and it was also found that they felt they used their recreational times more positively through paragliding (35.6%). Olivier (2006) mentioned that interest towards recreational activities has increased recently including extreme sports. Another interesting finding in the study is the fact that the idea of increasing financial income is not related to taking up paragliding (75.9%). Similar studies have come up with different results as well. Page, Steele and Connell (2006) examined the use of nature tourism as marketing tools in other fields. In this study it is mentioned that people who take up paragliding can start initiatives to obtain financial gains. Public organizations use adventure tourism as marketing tools.

Use of nature sports in various fields with different purposes has started to direct the individuals who take up these sports to different fields as well. Views about expectations from paragliding in the current study have shown a homogeneous distribution. The most prominent expectation in the distribution is the expectation to be healthy and keep up health (22.7%). In their study, Ardahan and Yerlisu Lapa (2011) agreed that people take up nature sports because these sports have positive contributions to their health. Nature sports are individual or group experience sharing based on practicing instances of challenge in various activities (such as trekking, mountaineering, rock climbing, canoeing, rafting, paragliding and camping) in natural environments having mountains, the sea, rivers or forests (Cited in Celebi 2002). Contribution of these sports that require serious physical effort to health contributes to the findings in this study. Most common of these sports are activities such as walking, camping, sailing, paragliding, mountain cycling and surfing. Which of these sports will be preferred depends on choice and resources (Demirha 1998). Although not highly prominent, current research findings about expectations show that being a trainer (15.7%) and being a national sportsman (18.5%) are mentioned by participants. One of the interesting findings is the fact that participants do not expect financial gains from the sport (59.7%). Similarly, obtaining scholarships or being trained abroad (54.2%) is not found to be expected by the participants.

In the present study, significant relationships are found between gender and taking up paragliding and expectations from paragliding (Table 4). While 22.7% of the participants were female in the study, 77.3% were males. It was identified that gender was related to taking up paragliding ( $P < 0.05$ ) and there is a positive relationship with gender. Males are more interested in paragliding and take up the sport more ( $X = 3.22$ ) ( $t = 2.51$ ). Results show that male participants prefer paragliding more as compared to female participants. The significant difference obtained in this regard may mean females are more passive. Gender and expectations from paragliding are related. Another important result based on gender ( $X = 2.54$ ) ( $t = 2.48$ ) is related to higher expectations of males from paragliding. Considering the fact that paragliding is a risky sport, men are found to prefer it more. In their study, Martha and Laurendeau (2010) examined high risk nature sports with 432 participants. Results demonstrated that perceptions regarding the individuals who take up these sports may be seriously injured is higher when compared to individuals who take up moderate risk sports, and perceptions about individuals getting injured in low risk sports is lower. Based on this finding, it can logically be stated that the present research shows males are more inclined to participate in risky sports. In his study about accidents experienced in paragliding, Steed (2009) mentioned the fact that male sportsmen have more accidents than females. This finding may be related to the fact that the number of males practicing this sport is higher than that of females. Researchers also mentioned that female have limited opportunities in terms of recreational activities due to their roles (Manning 1999). This result is parallel to the findings of the present study. Many studies have pointed that gender affects motivation in recreational activities and males are more active and comfortable in their recreational preferences due to structures supported by social establishments such as family, work and social habits (Ardahan and Yerlisu Lapa 2011).

When participants were examined in terms of marital status (Table 5), a relationship was found between marital status and reasons for keeping up paragliding. Current study included 58.8% single and 41.2% married participants. According to research results ( $X = 3.20$ ) ( $t = -1.9$ )

single participants do the sport more. Literature does not have many studies on the relationship between nature sports and marital status. The existence of a significant difference in the current study may be interpreted that single participants prefer risky sports for their recreational activities. 127 of the participants in the study were single. It may be stated that single individuals are more inclined to prefer risky sports. Ardahan and Turgut (2013) emphasized this point in their study on nature sports. They stated that being married is satisfactory in terms of life satisfaction. It was also mentioned that a good marriage provides motivation for recreational activities. Some other studies showed that single individuals are more advantageous (Ardahan and Turgut 2013). Although, the relationship between marital status and participation in nature sports is not examined amply in the literature, it is stated in other studies that good marriages increase life satisfaction (Ardahan and Yerlisu Lapa 2011). Kaplan and Ardahan (2012) found that marital status is effective in participating in nature sports. These studies support the findings of the current research.

Level of education variable (Table 6) was found to be related to taking up and practicing paragliding and expectations from the sport. Significant relationships were found between reasons for taking up paragliding and high school and graduate education. This relationship was found to be  $p < 0,006$  in Tukey analysis. ( $X=1.86$ ) ( $f=4.09$ ). Similarly, reasons for practicing paragliding were found to have significant relationships with the level of education as well. Tukey analysis undertaken to pinpoint the location of the difference pointed to meaningful differences between primary and graduate levels and graduate, high school and undergraduate levels of education ( $X=2.58$ ) ( $f=14.91$ ). Researchers categorized paragliding as a high risk sport. According to Schulze et. al. (2002), examining paragliding in a study related to high risk sports may be interpreted that paragliding is a risky and dangerous sport. In their study, accidents in paragliding decrease by time. This fact can be associated with training.

The present study pointed to significant relationships between expectations from paragliding and level of education as well. There are meaningful relationships between graduate participants and primary, high school and undergraduates ( $X=2.14$ ) ( $f=5.93$ ). According to the

results, reasons for taking up and practicing paragliding and expectations from paragliding increase with the level of education. In his study, Olivier (2006) explored that participants are trained for emergencies and they can handle challenging situations. When the tables provided in this study are examined, it is observed that financial expectations decrease with the increase in the level of education. Participants do this sport because they enjoy it and they want to be healthy. Considering the fact that paragliding is a risky sport, it can be stated that participants in this sport have a high risk perception. Taking risks can be an independent variable in this sport. Emotional relaxation provided by extreme sports should not be overlooked (Olivier 2006). In their study, Martha and Laurendeau (2010) mentioned that individuals who take up high risk sports have more realistic risk perceptions. Similarly, in their study on nature sportsmen, Kaplan and Ardahan (2012) found significant relationships between level of education and reasons for taking up nature sports.

Investigation of relationships between age and paragliding (Table 7) shows significant relationships in terms of reasons for taking up paragliding and expectations from paragliding. A highly significant relationship was detected between the participants in the age range of 18-25 and 31-35 and 36-40 age ranges in terms of reasons for taking up paragliding. It is observed that participants in the age range of 18-25 are more eager in paragliding ( $X=2.63$ ) ( $f=4.23$ ). Lower preference for the sport by sportsmen in advanced ages may be related to economic or family reasons. In addition to this, accidents experienced in this sport may be effective in taking up paragliding mostly by the middle age group. In their study on high risk sports, Martha and Laurendeau (2010) investigated that perceived vulnerability against serious injuries has negative relationships with individual's perceived skills in risk management and positive relationships with the individual's history of injuries, sports experience and pushing the limits. These results support the findings of the current study. Another important finding of the study is the relationship between the expectations of the sportsmen in the 18-25 and 36-40 age ranges. Expectations of the young individuals are higher than those of the older individuals ( $X=3.03$ ) ( $f=3.05$ ). Younger sportsmen expect to be healthy and be trainers in the future. Researchers have examined the

social, economic, environmental and personal benefits of nature sports. Benefits of nature sports to the individuals can be listed as learning group dynamics, leadership, reassurance, ability to make individual decisions, risk management, taking responsibility for himself/herself and for the others, positive contributions to personality and physical development, self confidence and trust in others, happiness, interaction with others and socialization (McKenzie 2000).

As a result, “having a trainer in close vicinity and one’s environment” were found to be effective reasons for taking up paragliding but factors such as “family, desire to be famous and desire to be a well-liked sportsman” were not found to be related to reasons for taking up the sport. Besides, family did not have an impact on taking up paragliding. On the contrary, a trainer in the peer group or one’s environment played important roles in taking up the sport. If a close friend is trainer, it positively affects participants to take up paragliding. When the environment provides suitable conditions for the sport, it also plays an important role in preferring paragliding as well.

### CONCLUSION

Sportsmen take up the sport because they like it and they want to be healthy. Encouraging young and middle aged sportsmen to take up the sport and organizing areas to do the sport will make positive contributions to paragliding. Considering the positive effects of paragliding in terms of sports tourism, economic benefits of the sport will be comprehended better.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Projects can be developed in coordination with local authorities for popularizing the sport of paragliding; promotions can be given to sportsmen and specific areas can be designed for people from every ages to participate in paragliding. Paragliding trainers can be employed at sport clubs. Activities for developing paragliding sport can be done in partnership with private clubs and schools.

In the study, the views on paragliding were examined and it was aimed for it to be a case for future researches. Researchers are recommended to investigate paragliding sportmen, with a

specific emphasis on psychological and physiological dimensions of sportmen.

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