

# THE INFLUENCE OF THE NEAR SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE DECISION MAKING OF EXTREME SPORTS ATHLETES

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## INTRODUCTION

More and more people want to experience new sensations, seek their own limits and ultimately expose themselves to greater risk practicing **extreme sports** (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013, Mata, 2002, Pain & Pain, 2005). The sociologist Zuckerman (1971) considered that the personality of these individuals responds to a search for new sensations that impels them to take great risks. This article aims to make an approximation to **the socio-personal environment** of practitioners of extreme risk activities, of great difficulty and in non-existent or questionable security conditions in certain cases. Also, try to understand the relationship between them and the society that surrounds them. It is evident that each one of the athletes has an environmental, family and social environment of their own where they were born and grew up. It seems undeniable that, in parallel to **the decision to accept personal risk** (Huertas, 2013), third parties linked to the subject, whether family, friends and often also social networks and media, can exert some influence on the decision-making before the participation of the subject in **extreme physical activity** and, therefore, with the possibility of losing his life. The **objective** of this study, therefore, is to determine the **influence of the nearby social environment** in the decision making of extreme athletes in their risk activity.

## METHODS

### QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

13 EXTREME RISK ATHLETES

BASE jump (n = 2)  
Extreme skiing (n = 1)  
Extreme kayak (n = 1)

### DATA ANALYSIS

QSR | NVIVO

Extreme alpinism (n = 5)  
Solo climbing (n = 2)  
Solo navigation (n = 1)

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## RESULTS



### FAMILY

"Sometimes ignorance avoids suffering." (S.8)

"It is my life, they have to respect it." (S.5)



### FRIENDS

"My friend and friend, he saved my life by risking yours." (S.5)

"If I had not been with him, I would not have put my skis there!" (S.11)



### SPONSORS

"They ask me to do the podium to keep sponsorship." (S.10)

"I will not kill myself for money!" (S.2)

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### SOCIAL NETWORKS

"If you do not appear on social networks, you can not get sponsors." (S.12)

"We are slaves of superficial communication, but your story reaches many more people." (S.6)



### SOCIAL PERCEPTION

"What they do is incredible!" (S.2)

"These do not love life!" (S.1)



### SOCIAL MEDIA

"I decided to give up a summit to save a person and the press explained it as a failure." (S.5)

"They must be your allies." (S.6)

## CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusion of this work, in the answer to the initial question posed is that the socializing agents nearby **do not have enough influence** on the subjects to substantially modify their activity and, in any case, to condition their abandonment.

"Nothing or no one will limit my freedom, nor my path to happiness" (S.7)

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