CASE STUDY PERCEPTION: LACK OF ENERGY FOR NEW HIKERS AT GUNUNG LEDANG, TAMAN NEGARA JOHOR
(Kajian Kes Persepsi: Kekurangan Tenaga Dalam Kalangan Pendaki Baru di Gunung Ledang, Taman Negara Johor)

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Abstract

This research conducted to identify the perception of lack of energy towards the new hikers at Gunung Ledang, Johor National Park. The data collected using qualitative method via semi structured interviews towards the 3 certified hiking guides that delivering their guiding services to the top hill of the Gunung Ledang. 3 certified guides as the main source of data in this data collection process. Findings shown that the instant energy foods are very important in supplying the energy after energy highly used in the hiking activity at the challenging and risky areas of the hiking trail. Therefore, it is important for the new hikers to bring the foods that provide the energy while participating in adventure recreation sport activities for better hiking experience and to prevent the lack of energy issue during enjoying the hiking activities at the challenging mountain.
Keyword: Perception, Lack of Energy, New Hikers

Abstrak

Kajian ini telah dijalankan untuk mengenalpasti risiko kekurangan tenaga terhadap pendaki baru dalam rekreasi mendaki di Gunung Ledang, Taman Negara Johor. Data kajian ini dikutip secara kualitatif dengan menjalankan sesi temubual separa berstruktur terhadap Pandu Arah Gunung atau 'Guide' yang menjalankan perkhidmatan sebagai pandu arah mendaki gunung untuk pelanggan mereka sampai ke puncak Gunung Ledang. Seramai tiga orang pandu arah gunung yang bertugas di Gunung Ledang dijadikan sebagai rujukan utama pengumpulan data. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pengambilan makanan tambahan penambah tenaga adalah penting untuk membekalkan tenaga segera setelah kehilangan banyak tenaga semasa menjalankan aktiviti mendaki. Dengan ini, adalah penting terutama bagi pendaki baru menyediakan makanan penambah tenaga yang sesuai ketika melibatkan diri dalam acara sukan rekreasi lasak ini.
***Kata kunci**: Persepsi, Kekurangan Tenaga, Pendaki Baru*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Extreme recreational activities such as mountain climbing are popular physical activity (Niedermeier, Einwanger, Hartl, & Kopp, 2017). Exposure to risk is closely related to the involvement of this extreme recreational activity. However, it is very important to prioritize protecting ourself from potential risks during this activity (Fulbrook, 2017). By involving the recreation of natural wildlife such as forest reserves, national parks, and various interesting outdoor recreation destinations would highly expose the recreational enthusiast to a wide range of risks and hazards, both serious and minor. Mild injuries are very synonymous with the involvement of these sports activities due to their own negligence factors such as lack of self-preparation, lack of experience and also lack of competency in undertaking these extreme recreational activities (Noroozi, Khakzad, Khan, MacKinnon, & Abbassi, 2013).

This study focuses on new climbers in Mount Ledang, Johor National Park. However, the data were collected based on the opinions and views of accredited mountain climbing guides that whom are the main source of this study. The objective is to identify the risks faced by new climbers while undertaking rugged mountain climbing activities in the perspective of mountaineers at Mount Ledang, Johor National Park. At the same time, the limitation of this study is in reference to the newly climbed Mount Ledang based on the opinions of the 3 accredited Guides who work here.

This research is important to acquire new information in the academic field on issues related to new hikers' inability to climb in challenging mountainous areas. This study also serves as a benchmark for the importance of sports recreation enthusiasts to study outdoor recreation education in overcoming the problem encountered by new climbers who are unable to climb the mountain top. This is because, extreme climbers are exposed to a variety of risks including the issue of shortage of energy when engaging in this extreme sports activity, especially for new climbers. negligence in self-preparation is a risk factor when engaging in the climbing activities (Priest & Gass, 2017).

2.0 INVOLVEMENT IN EXTREME RECREATION

Engaging oneself in extreme recreational sports is one of the fastest growing industries (Giddy & Webb, 2016). Adequate preparation plays an important role in enhancing the fitness of athletes in sports activities (Armstrong, Tomkinson, & Ekelund, 2011). Fitness is important to focus not only for the high-performance athletes who are regularly involved in the competition, but also for those who are passionate about recreational activities. Comprehensive preparation in the engaging of this extreme hiking and climbing is essential in the sport of extreme recreation (Antoni et al 2017).

Extreme recreational sport such as mountain climbing requires high usage of energy (Praz, Léger, & Kayser, 2014). The steep and challenging hiking trail requires adequate fitness level in overcoming the tasks of mountain climbing. This is because engagement with these activities also requires good fitness to carry out challenges and obstacles in the wild such as climbing hills, rocks, ropes and various activities that requires high energy and fitness capacity. This phenomenon of requiring high fitness is not just an issue in Malaysia, it is also an issue of sports and recreation abroad. The Education of Sports nutrition that's promoting the fitness of athletes is growing drastically in the United States and around the world (Olivo, 2017).

Moreover, fans of these outdoor recreational activities are less aware of the need for proper preparation before undertaking these activities. There are many sport personnel who suffer from impaired condition in sports activities that result in poor performance and fail to perform well (Loucks, Kiens, & Wright, 2013).

3.0 RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted in April 2018 at Mount Ledang, Johor National Park. The study involved five guides that in charge to take the climbers from the camp site to the top of Mount Ledang. Respondents of this study were assigned an initial stage after they completed their climbing activities. The data of this study were collected from semi-structured interviews with 3 experienced and accredited guides. The method of this study is using the Intended Sampling where the sample of this study was determined before conducting this study focusing only on accredited professional guides in conducting extreme recreational and hiking activities in Mount Ledang. This is the case study of new climbers in Mount Ledang, Johor State Park. At

the same time, the interview protocol is about the risk of energy shortages for new climbers who just started climbing here. The interview data was recorded and NVivo version 10.0 was used to process and analyze the data collected in this study.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Here are comments from interviewers about the issue surrounding the energy shortage while hiking in Mount Ledang, Johor National Park.

> Failure to climb to the top for new climbers has many factors, especially from mistakes or carelessness of the climbers themselves such as lack of physical preparation specifically lack of training and adequate knowledge about the climb. As a result, they are unable to climb to the top of a mountain that requires strong stamina and physical strength (Interviewee 1)

Based on the comments above, this illustrates the negligence of the new climber himself or his lack of preparation before engaging in this daunting recreational sporting activity. Not only just physical training, knowledge related to climbing activities also needed to be given attention such as sports nutrition knowledge to find new energy that is rapidly disappearing to continue the challenging climb. This is important for getting enough energy so that the climb is not met with any setbacks especially for newcomers or casual climbers.

At the same time, over eating with the aim of gaining energy is also a risk to climbers. Here are the comments from Interviewer 2

> Inability to climb to the top may also factored in eating a heavy meal at breakfast which causes the body to become heavy for the climb. Moreover, some climbers didn't even take breakfast until they had no energy to climb. Proper nutrition also plays an important factor in climbing (Interviewee 2)

Failing to manage proper nutrition is also a factor in the failure of this mountain climbing activity for new climbers. The mistake of choosing the wrong food causes climbers to become tired and unable to continue their hiking. Proper nutrition planning is essential to ensuring adequate supply of energy while climbing to ensure consistent consumption and supply throughout the journey. Being over weight also affects your ability to climb in challenging areas that require agility and even more energy. Body weight also influences energy use during extreme activity, where obese climbers need more energy than ideal western climbers (Aull, Rowe, Hickner, Malinauskas, & Mahar, 2008)

> For both newcomers and casual climbers, the problem of not having enough energy to climb to the top of a mountain is common. Although some of them may reach the summit, the allocation of time to rest during the climb is long. Unlike other climbers who can move faster (Interviewee 3)

Debilitation due to lack of energy supply is a common issue for both newcomers and casual climbers. There is no denying that new climbers are able to reach the summit but their time to reach the peak is slow due to frequent breaks throughout the climb and may require longer rest periods to recover energy. With longer rest periods it is also possible to descend late into the mountain and cause it to arrive late in the evening or at night. It is risky to get to the foot of the mountain because dark nights are more likely for climbers to fall especially for new climbers.

As a precautionary measure in handling the issue of shortage of energy supply, the interviewer explicitly suggested the consumption of energy suppliers to be used as a supply for this mountain climbing expedition. Nutrition sources that contains minerals, multivitamins, and hormones are significant in increasing stamina (Sen, Nair, & Bagchi, 2013). Here are the suggested comments from Interviewee 2

> For new climbers, food source that supply energy is essential for immediate energy booster such as bananas, chocolate bars, isotonic drinks to get new energy due to high energy use to climb on challenging trails (Interviewee 2)

Sport nutrition knowledge is also important for athletes to understand the true concept of sports nutrition (Ming, 2016). This shows that food that supplies energy fast are essential to reduce the risk of energy deficiencies when climbing especially in challenging areas or after challenging routes. After

overcoming the challenging path that requires high energy consumption, this will reduce the body's energy supply especially for new climbers who cannot anticipate the challenging obstacles on the climbing track. This is also supported by Interviewer 1 as follows:

> It is highly recommended for new climbers to bring in food that supplies energy as a supply to address the problem of not having enough energy to climb other than sufficient water supply (Interviewee 1)

The younger generation has been identified to be consuming energy drinks at a high rate in various social and sporting activities (Visram, Crossley, Cheetham, & Lake, 2017). It has become a trend for young people to take energy drinks as an instant or supplemental supply of energy during sports and recreational activities. In addition to the energy drinks, energy booster food supplies are also very important as they address the issue of climbing in Mount Ledang as an energy supplier.

Furthermore, the analysis also shows that the frequency of respondents mention the problem of insufficient energy is 11 times for all interviewers. This shows that energy issues are an important factor that needs to be addressed. Energy issues were the main concern of all the respondents related to the problem for new climbers in the summit of capturing Mount Ledang. This energy issue should be given priority to new climbers so it does not interfere with this strenuous recreational activity as hiking requires a lot of energy as it is a physically demanding activity to overcome various obstacles and challenges while climbing and along the trail. Therefore, the need to pay attention to sports nutrition knowledge is important to reduce the risk towards climbers during mountain climbing especially in mountainous geographical areas. Sports nutrition education is effective in enhancing the effectiveness of sports nutrition knowledge in reducing risks during sports and recreational activities (Rossi et al., 2017).

5.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that energy issues play an important role in climbing for new climbers in Mount Ledang. Awareness for new climbers to attain sports nutrition education should be given priority especially in identifying food sources that can provide immediate energy for new climbers to overcome the problem of energy shortage for new climbers. This is intended to facilitate hiking for new climbers to reach the summit without delaying the hike due to shortage of energy supplies. By gaining knowledge and understanding of the needs of extreme activities which in turn can lead to the risk of injury, this promotes less risky and safer situations in conducting recreational activities.

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