






Animation and leisure animator – new categories of leisure pedagogy

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Abstract

The author provides information on the concepts of leisure time and animation, explaining their historical and cultural origins and how they have evolved over time. The article highlights the importance of leisure time in human development and the critical role of leisure animators in organizing and promoting recreational activities for tourists, guests, or participants in holiday and tourist resorts. Although leisure time is an essential part of life, it remains difficult to define consistently, but it has been a significant topic in many disciplines, including humanities, social sciences, and economics, because of its role in human development and upbringing. The author also emphasizes the competencies required for animators to carry out their tasks effectively, including organizational skills, interpersonal skills, and versatility. When combined with the term “leisure time” animation refers to the stimulation of people to engage in activities that inspire, amuse, stimulate, and promote relaxation, personal development, reflection, and enjoyment. The leisure animator is responsible for encouraging and inviting people to participate in such classes and processes, as well as organizing and promoting entertainment for tourists, guests, or participants in holiday and tourist resorts.

Key words: functions of leisure • negotium • otium • scholé

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Scholé – has few shades of meaning: 1. inactivity, stillness, rest, respite from something or relief; 2. leisure time spent in discussion, listening, learning, entertainment or social gatherings; 3. doing something slowly, without any rush, sluggishly and lazily; sometimes it is translated as sluggishness and idling [1, 2].

Otium – freedom from professional activities, freedom, inaction, peace, but also time free from public affairs, private life or literary classes [3].

Negotium – means activity, work, commitment, effort, toil as well as government service or commercial matters [4].

Leisure time – is devoted time for all classes the individual can devote themselves to which from the own willingness and from various reasons: for an amusement, for getting the latest news, for the unselfish education oneself or of the voluntary participation in the social life, apart from, family and social professional obligations [13].

Animation – etymologically derives from Latin *animus*, *animare*, meaning to revive or “anima”, which means soul. In this sense, animation is to revive, stimulate, create.

INTRODUCTION

Leisure time in the colloquial sense is associated with rest, respite, relaxation, holidays as well as fun, sport, tourism and other forms of entertainment. This expression can spell very being of this time, as well as his functions or activities accomplished in the free time. The unity of various meanings is stemming by confronting them with the human work.

In Greek term, it is called *scholé*. It has few shades of meaning:

- inactivity, stillness, rest, respite from something or relief.
- leisure time spent in discussion, listening, learning, entertainment or social gatherings.
- doing something slowly, without any rush, sluggishly and lazily; sometimes it is translated as sluggishness and idling.

In certain meanings, this word also means school as a place where free time is used [1, 2]. Today, schools do not associate with leisure time, but with the difficulty and effort of learning. However, ancient Greeks considered it an institution that allows the fulfilment of life with the fruits of free moments.

In the Dictionary of Latin by the term *otium* we read “freedom from professional activities, freedom, inaction, peace, but also time free from public affairs, private life or literary classes” [3]. Modern dictionaries translate this word similarly, but there are some differences. It is free time, rest, peace and idleness [4]. An antonym for this word is *negotium* – meaning activity, work, commitment, effort, toil as well as government service or commercial matters [4].

An excellent illustration of the transformation of leisure can be found in an analysis of its usage in the German language. Generally, Germany uses two words for leisure: ‘Freizeit’ and ‘Musse’. However, in older German dictionaries, only the term ‘Musse’ can be found, and not the word ‘Freizeit’. Freizeit should be translated as leisure time in the sense of recreational (off-class). Musse or Muße has the sound of peace and quiet, and similar to ancient Greek language it is associated with fruitful free time, reflection, meditation etc. [5]. These changes indicate that initially leisure time was seen as a time for activities considered particularly valuable, related to

social, civic and religious content. The term: free time in the sense of release from work appeared later with the emergence of the industrial economy. **The modern concept of free time** brings new accents of importance, also different from those used in antiquity and in the middle centuries. Some authors point out that it has been closely linked to the emergence of highly developed societies, modern technologies and the evolution of employment and technology [6-8].

As notes K. Denek „Time discourse is taken by representatives of different scientific disciplines, taking into account the specific aspect of the gaze. It is very difficult to have a consistent definition of time” [9]. Typically, definition authors try to determine the time through events or the absence of specific events that occur or not, within the hours, days, weeks, years. It is similar with the definitions of free time. Although it must be acknowledged that the optics of perception and thus the observations are sometimes diverse.

Leisure time is an essential part of every person’s life regardless of his age, education or wealth. Modern man has become accustomed to the existence of free time. We rarely reflect on what is really free. This question, often based on humanities, including pedagogy or social work, has long been mainstream, not only for philosophers, but also sociologists, psychologists, biologists and economists. Each scientific discipline creates its own way of understanding and defining leisure time.

The issue of leisure time and his role in human development and upbringing has long been seen as a significant. It was addressed by many theorists of this issue [10]. Comprehending the leisure time almost always developed, as confronting the notion “working hours”, “work” or for sometimes comprehending “physical effort”, in addition the one last, only in the situation of undertaking the ancillary activity. It is worthwhile emphasizing that the official terminology is not matching in this issue fully, as for contents, what comprehending the leisure time is enclosing. Many authors representing humanities accept, recalling UNESCO’s leisure research, which adopted the definition of leisure time by the **French sociologist Joffre Dumazedier** [11]. He regards the time remaining for the man after the filling by him as the leisure time of all, home and school professional obligations which can

freely be used to rest, entertainment and the unselfish development of the personality [12]. Of leisure time in consequence this way understood it is devoted time for all classes the individual can devote themselves to which from the own willingness and from various reasons: for an amusement, for getting the latest news, for the unselfish education oneself or of the voluntary participation in the social life, apart from, family and social professional obligations [13]. A fact that all these activities must result from freedoms and disinterestedness of the subject are the single most important factor an author of definitions is underlining which is taking them. In of the one, as well as they in other definitions of this concept are stressing that the leisure time lies apart from, family or social professional obligations individuals. In other words, a leisure time is a period of the day in the life of the man, with which to have at one's disposal perhaps he according to one's will and the recognition [14].

NEW CATEGORIES OF LEISURE PEDAGOGY

Contemporary pedagogy is presenting the similar position. Wincenty Okoń, in the pedagogic dictionary shows that the leisure time is a time at the individual's disposal, after performing compulsory tasks, i.e., of the career, sciences at school and at home and of essential homework's. It is worthwhile adding that the quoted author determines also desirable forms of exploiting him, like e.g.: rest, entertainment, social activity about unselfish and voluntary character and to the development of interests and talents through the knowledge acquisition and amateur artistic, technical, scientific or sports activity [15]. Such a position is characteristic of pedagogy. **Aleksander Kamiński** leaving similar preliminary assumptions a leisure time is defining the phenomenon appearing both amongst children and teenagers, and amongst adults. He is also emphasizing that it is this reverence of our time "which freely and voluntarily having at our disposal, we can fill up with the rest, the play and the white-collar work taken up from the personal need, for the own development (with self-education), with social, artistic, sports, technical and other activity" [16]. Kamiński, as well as many other educators are also calling for the child-rearing, young people and adults to valuable organizing and spending the leisure time. It must then

develop (those upbringing) in the person certain determined abilities, habits and essential techniques for the subsequent use in the leisure time, to arouse the need and the interest and to prepare for the determined lifestyle. Responsible for the upbringing institutions of the education and upbringings and institutions of the free time, as well as social-education organizations and media are supposed to be, determining forms and different plots which can fill it.

Aleksander Kamiński suggested the definition, according to which the leisure time should be "(...) free from: of basic career, in it also for students from school classes; of paid additional work or from the work in the second profession, and in relation to students – from doing one's homework; of commuting's to work (of college); of satisfying basic needs of the organism (the dream, the personal hygiene and eating meals); of domesticity and family and of college education oneself working" [17]. The contemporary researcher of issues of the leisure time is defining the leisure time in similar categories describing him as "(...) time without duties, intended to any classes" [18].

It should be noted that leisure time is an extremely difficult concept to define, as it is an interdisciplinary concept. Many times, it is a problem taken by researchers of different disciplines of science e.g. of economics or sociology [19, 20]. Contemporary researchers and analysts of the phenomenon of the leisure time are referring to various definitions of predecessors, in harmony however will admit that of there are many presentations of it. K. Kwilecki analysing issues of the definition of the leisure time is pointing among others following: "**K. Przecławski** a leisure time treats this time which remains for the man for his free instruction after performing activities associated with satisfying the needs biological and hygienic (*sleep, food, toilet*) and compulsory activities (*the work, the learning, family responsibilities, the commuting to work or schools*). **A. Zawadzka** understands leisure time as: *time used for non-compulsory activities, taken voluntarily for leisure, entertainment, comprehensive development, participation in social life*. In turn, leisure time for **R. Wroczyński** it is a remaining time after carrying, professional, social family responsibilities out and intended to the rest, *entertainment and the development of own interests according to avocations and likings*" [21].

The problem of the existence of the leisure time and ways of exploiting it is connected with a life-style, with age bracket, and many times with investing the activity in the sphere connected with the learning, the work and also the economy. Border is difficult to capture because many times the similar activity assigned to the sphere of the learning or the work, made with commitment and pleasure is becoming involved in a sphere of the free time which according to definitions belongs to rest. Models of spending free time which are connected to the adopted lifestyle. For both school-age children and adolescents as often as adults or adults entering adulthood, it is important to be able to create ways to complete free time. Influences and models drawn in the family or found and regarded being applicable in a peer group have an important part, but (in the light of post-war and contemporary examinations) meaning of models proposed by mass media grows. It is also derivative upbringings [22].

Extremely in this sphere cultural institutions are accomplishing the important task, of the physical culture and the after-school education which from one side should create accepted socially forms of spending the free time and at the same time assist the individual in its intellectual and physical development, creating proposals attractive and serving the development. In this context, the issue of free time animation and the new profession of leisure animator is gaining importance.

COMPREHENDING THE ANIMATION OF THE LEISURE TIME ETYMOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The word animation etymologically derives from Latin *animo*, *animare*, meaning to revive or "anima", which means soul. In this sense, animation is to revive, stimulate, create. This word has its context in different fields. We are talking about animated film, computer and graphic animation, socio-cultural animation, etc. If we add the term "leisure time" to the word "animation", we are talking about stimulating people, otherwise encouraging them to activity. In this context the animator will be a person which has the task effectively of encouraging and to invite in the leisure time for classes which they will inspire, amuse, stimulate and will cause that you will rest and at the same time you will develop, you will take reflection, and you will enjoy yourself.

Traditionally, the leisure animator is the name of the hotel is a job title in hotel trade, which defines the employee who organizes leisure time, staying in holiday and tourist resorts. They are being organised above all to the purpose providing the hotel or the boarding house of entertainment for tourists, participants in the holiday or guests during their stay in the given place. Today, this usually takes the form of an organized animation program which includes sports, artistic, theatrical, musical activities and special thematic animations for children.

Functions of the animation of the leisure time

The most important functions of the animation of the leisure time:

- relaxation function – entertainment causes releasing stresses and the recuperation.
- integration function – where classes are integrating tourists and are supporting of making new acquaintances.
- progressive function – organized activities support the personal development and self-development of the unit;
- motivational function – mobilizes tourists to take active forms of leisure time.

Fundamentally, the stay during holiday or in hotel is intended to rest. From this argument exchanging the relaxation function as first amongst important tasks seems to the animation justified. The essence here is that attractions and entertainment should be organized in such a way that they lead to the regeneration of the body's forces. In our day, in addition to the restoration of vital forces, an important element of relaxation is to discharge excessive stress associated in particular with work and everyday duties.

Man as a social being for his development, good functioning, as well as rest needs contacts and relationships with other people. It is important so that they are these are relations built on the mutual respect of their needs, protecting both before mutual tyranny as well as the lawlessness.

Integration function answers social needs of the man. The intended animations are designed to integrate their participants. The shared participation in different forms of classes is leading to new contacts and acquaintances. Being an animator, it is necessary however to remember, that

social needs of different participants e.g. of extroverts and introverts can be different. Therefore, this needs to be taken into account by organising a variety of animation proposals.

Progressive function is not mentioned in all studies on free time animation. However, the assumption that proposals for animation classes should be built so that participation in them serves the development and/or stimulates the self-development seems reasonable. The leisure time already from the ancient tradition served reflection and the self-reflection. Widespread theatrical performances initially organized in honour of Dionysus, and in later centuries they were a form of participation in culture (mass, as on a then scale) regardless of religious connotations. In their essence, they served self-reflection and response to the hardships of everyday life. As otherwise, it is possible to understand the ancient catharsis, which brought the depiction of ancient tragedies but also comedy. The Olympics performed the similar role. Contemporary forms of recreation and rest persons should serve the development, however not as filling about educational character but above all as facilitator of developmental and self-development processes.

Both the health and the personal development of the participant in rest require it's activity. **Motivational function** it is an assumption that the organised animated film of the leisure time is actually encouraging participants for active spending leisure time. One should understand this activity widely, as an active (active) attitude towards action taken. In addition to physical activity, we can also indicate mental activity, creative activities or various forms of tourism. It is essential for the participant to be not only a passive participant in rest, but as well as a searcher of what is beautiful, good, clever or finally of what he likes.

Definition of the concept

Animation of leisure time it is a department of the contemporary tourism and the hotel trade which is dealing with the organization of the leisure time of tourists, staying in lodging or holiday centres. We also call animation all forms of activation and encouragement to spend time together in a pleasant way that appear to all kinds of events and meetings of groups of people. We should also emphasize that in our times an animation of the leisure time isn't only a department

of the contemporary tourism and the hotel trade, dealing with the organization of the leisure time of people, staying in holiday centres and tourist. Providing for participants entertainment is a basic function during their stay in the given place. The contemporary animation is accepting also other forms of action, among others childcares and organising the activity in periods of short-lived rest e.g. during parties, fetes, occasional parties. In its traditional form the animated film of the leisure time most often assumes the character of the organised animation program, in which you can find sports, plastic, drama, musical classes and special animated films for children.

THE ANIMATOR AS THE ROLE OF A PROFESSION

The animator of leisure time is a profession more often met and popular in labour market. Animators of the leisure time are persons carrying various animation action out in the leisure time. Animators of the leisure time are persons carrying various animation action out in the leisure time. Sometimes these tasks are interfacing with education or protective action. They carry out their tasks in many places, in particular related to tourism such as hotels, guesthouses and resorts. However, they are increasingly finding employment in various shopping centres where they organize children's points, wedding houses, where they animate the fun and activities of the youngest participants, organized events in other children's play centres or during various events, during which they are tasked with proposing various attractions to their participants e.g. games, face painting fun, etc. It should be emphasized, however, that a typical place where you can meet people struggling with free time animation are primarily tourist facilities in tourist destinations attractive at home and abroad.

The most common specialties

In the work of the leisure animator we meet many types (groups) of activities. Among the most common specialties J. B. Bączek counts:

- kids' entertainer – animator dealing with games and games for children and young people (most often from 3 to 16 years);
- sport entertainer – animator organizing, refereeing and coordinating sports entertainment tourists.

- show entertainer – animator dealing with evening performances (e.g., karaoke, skits, beauty queen competitions of hotel, etc.);
- all-round entertainer – animator performing all of the above roles simultaneously – versatile [23].

Kids entertainer will of course take care of children. This is a person who from morning to late evening organizes entertainment for the youngest tourists. As a standard these are: art classes, manual classes, painting on children's faces, balloon creations or mini-disco dances. In this type of animation, patience, empathy and commitment will be the key features. All pedagogical competences can be very useful (which is why we most often employ pedagogical students or people with a colony educational certificate in this sector). The vast majority of the Kids entertainers are women, but gentlemen also do well in this role and are very well liked by children.

Sport entertainer is the person responsible for preparing and conducting all activities active in the hotel. The most popular of these are beach volleyball, water polo, aerobics and aqua aerobics, table tennis, mini golf, boccia or darts. In this case, most of the most frequently sought are those studying on academies of physical education or playing sports. Much more a slim and well-built animator will be reliable than so which the "beer belly" already bred and of course more a tanned, slim and attractive girl who runs aerobics than a person with a lot of overweight. It's perhaps a little sad, but it's worth saying it out-right. Employment in sports animation often has to do with the appearance and age of the candidate (although of course no employer will officially admit it).

Show entertainer is a connoisseur, person performing on stage. This type of animation can make you very satisfied, but it requires a lot of important skills (such as working with a microphone, effective self-presentation, dress code). To workstations of this type of persons are most often wanted with experience and communicating with the minimum two foreign languages.

All-round entertainer is a versatile animator, "from everything". Sometimes he deals with children, sometimes organizes sports tournaments, also does not scare himself to go out on stage with a microphone in his hand. This workstation is being allotted to new candidates which

in the animation will be working for the first time. Thanks to that, the candidate for the profession of animator can work in different situations, to avoid the monotony and to personally find out, what is working best for. Smaller hotels (up to 50 rooms) often employ all-round animators. In larger ones, however, there is often their specialization.

TASKS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ANIMATOR

Like the forms of animation, the work of animators can be diverse (they have different professional tasks). However, most often the work of the animator is to encourage tourists to actively relax, including especially family leisure, fun together, regardless of interests, degree of physical activity or age. The animators spend most of their day fulfilling their duties, i.e., teach dance, play instruments, paint or deal with other useful time-saving children. The work of the animator is also the organization of competitions in which adults or young tourists, and sometimes whole families take part. Every day, usually at 4 pm, the competition is solemnly completed by the award. In the evening, there are usually groups for adult holidaymakers, during which animators watch over the course of competitions, sing or organize strictly theatrical performances. Until midnight, they usually accompany guests and have fun with a conversation.

It is the responsibility of the animator to provide hotel guests with such attractions so that they do not have time for boredom, integrate with the rest of the holidaymakers, and learn about the qualities of the place where they are staying.

In order to carry out their tasks, animators should have a number of competences related to the organization of play, contacts with people of different ages, both younger and older than them. The profession of leisure animator requires not only a mobility, but also internal readiness for frequent changes in the place of residence due to frequent domestic and foreign trips. Such a person should also have a very good health condition, be athletic and flexible. Among the mental competences it should be emphasized that the leisure animator must demonstrate a great emotional resilience, be able to manage physically mentioned tasks. In addition,

a person working in this profession must have a good eyesight and hearing.

Additional animator's competence

An important part of the animator's responsibilities is to promote activities among guests, but this should be done in a non-imposing manner, so that the information about the offer is clear and accessible, but not enforceable. Many guests travelling with children are primarily interested in caring for them. Therefore, the attractiveness and availability of this part of the offer of animators is especially important. It is worth adding that many animators specialize in children's animation. Complementing the animation competence in this regard can be very useful and increases the attractiveness of the animator in the labour market. Some hotels have special notice boards where animators display posters with their program.

It should be emphasized from the animators' specialists (retaining their general competences) that are welcomed in each team of animators. In addition, to the already mentioned children's animations, a valuable specialization is dance and show, that is, animators familiar with dance and its science (especially the most fashionable ones of the season) and well-leading evening proposals for adult guests. It is a task that requires a lot of hit, sense and tact, sometimes knowledge of the label and of course the basics of instructors in the field of dance teaching. The valuable competences are also the ability of organizations pleasant and curious trips and leading them is important advantage. The most valuable animator in the profession, however, is versatility. According to J.B. Bączek "Animator all-round is a person who deals with the organization of leisure time in the widest sense of the word. Such an animator does not have his specialization and deals in short with "everything". This means that in his work he takes care of children, prepares and conducts an evening show, organizes and conducts sports activities, as well as deals with public relations in the hotel. (...) Such animators work in groups and complement each other. (...) The all-round animator must be the most versatile among animators as he does not have his narrow plot, he needs to know a little bit about everything: on children, sports, music and acting, this is the most interesting work and in the course of it the most you can get the most of learning" [23].

Usually, the work of the animator in hotels, holiday centres or events is a team action. Therefore, the ability to work in the team is also an important competence of leisure animators. Typically, a group of animators is headed by a supervisor usually called "Team Leader" or "Chief animator" (senior animator) or formerly cultural and educational manager. It is a person responsible for the animation program, communication between the manager of the hotel and animators, as well as for motivating and giving supplementary education to animators. This function is entrusted to people who have already worked in animation for a minimum of three seasons. In international centres, it is important to use a minimum of three foreign languages. Performing such a role requires many managerial skills as well as in terms of customer contacts. Also requires the responsibility, the consequence, as well as such competence, as: motivating people, the constructive criticism, persuasion and negotiating abilities and the ability of the time management. Higher competencies involve the fact that this is a better paid work.

CONCLUSIONS

The two important concepts presented here are important elements of modern social life in which the culture of leisure and leisure culture gains its right on an equal footing with the culture of work or the culture of the organization. By touching important aspects of human life, which is leisure time, they become not only an interesting but also important subject of pedagogical, sociological research, as well as health sciences and physical education. In the pedagogical research alone, educational effects, development factors and the aspect of education until the free time. As we indicated these issues can be from work pedagogy, care pedagogy or cultural pedagogy.

Modernity with all its complexity, digital entourage and moral distractions puts a question before us at the same time important, interesting and difficult. What we will do, how we will use, in what way we will use what is truly dependent from us and only our truly dependent on our will - of leisure time. More important how we will prepare next generations for this choice.

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