

ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS ANIMATION – EFFECTS AND BENEFITS

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Abstract

Entertainment services are conceived to ensure a pleasant spending of the holiday time. The complex problem of agreement and the benefits of sport activities was approached by many authors such as: G. Stănciulescu, N. Lupu, G. Țigu, D., R. Minciu a.n.

The research was made during holiday at Vega Hotel on a group of 200 persons. Selected by the time spend on holiday and taking into consideration the importance of sportive activities practiced during the agreement programmes with the purpose of the improvement of functional capacity of tourists.

Hypothesis of the research - the implementation of certain sporting activities coordinated by license specialists as part of the entertainment hotel programme entails the improvement of the subjects' functional capacity, of their physical development parameters and of their psychomotor relaxation capacity.

The research results confirmed the hypothesis. The main conclusion is that the agreement and sport programmes have multiple benefits over the tourists.

Key-words: entertainment, sport animation, effect, benefits, functional capacity

Introduction.

The pleasant spending of the leisure time at the place of destination is also one of the main preoccupations for the holiday providers. The development of such activities/services that meet these requirements depends, on the one hand, on the evolution of the holiday content which can no longer resume to offering tourists accommodation and meal conditions and, on the other hand, on the reconsideration of the free time value.

The entertainment services are specific to the long- and medium-stay tourism units, the rest units and the high class units. For the purpose of performing such activities, one needs facilities that are adequate for the spending of the leisure time and for amusement: sports fields, pools, saunas, gym and fitness centres, slot machines, etc., but also qualified personnel to train and monitor tourists.

The typology of the activities focusing on this objective varies greatly in accordance with the variety of the ways and places to spend one's holiday. They are generally defined as animation/entertainment and stand as a distinct and important component of the tourism product.

The attainment of a holiday's main purpose – rest, recreation and fun, escape from reality - assumes, among other things, the creation of a relaxation environment. In the same time, the increase in the preoccupations for the materialization of the active rest desideratum – an essential characteristic of modern society holidays – stimulates the appearance and development of a certain category of specific services, namely the entertainment services.

Theoretical grounds.

Tourist entertainment may be defined as the set of means, equipments, events and forms offered by social groups with a view to create a state of well being and pleasure, to offer the sensation of a satisfaction, or a fulfilment, or to leave a favourable impression and memory (Gabriela Stănciulescu, N. Lupu, Gabriela Țigu, 1998).

In its quality as main component of the tourist product, the entertainment also fulfils a series of functions; these functions are different according to the tourist and his physical and psychological needs, as well as according to the holiday providers (economic agent and resorts) and their problems.

With respect to tourists, entertainment (animation) first of all takes into account the satisfaction of their physical needs for rest, relaxation, movement and even the development of their capacities. For this reason, the sporting activities, especially those which set the body in motion – starting with the mere walk and ending with the practising of complex sports – and their corresponding facilities: sports fields, tracks for wayfarers or mountaineering, ski slopes, swimming pools are encouraged. The second aspect concerns the psychological invigoration of tourists by means of relaxation, amusement, the creation of an atmosphere of communication and good humour and even by enriching tourists' knowledge. The satisfaction of these requirements implies the organization of cultural-entertaining and instructive-educational activities; this category includes trips, visiting different tourist objects, assisting to shows, meeting with representatives of different professions, taking part in contests, stimulating creation, etc.

From the tourism organizers' point of view, entertainment appears first of all as a factor of competitiveness for resorts and units and of enhancing their attractiveness by the differentiation of the tourism supplies. In the same time, it is a way to individualize products and destinations having stimulating effects on the tourist traffic. The existence of the entertainment and the variety of its forms stir up tourists' interest in a certain area and ensure, for most of the times, their return.

Entertainment also stands as an important source of revenues and of economic efficiency growth. Generally, entertainment holds around 10-15% of the total holiday spending from the tourist industry, though the percentage significantly varies from one form of

tourism to the other; thus, skiing, hunting, yachting or the extreme sports assume the allocation for this type of activities of sums of money that shall materialize in the increase of the total volume of receipts and, accordingly, in the modification of the place assigned to these activities in the holiday budget.

The recognition of the increasingly important role of the animation as part of the tourism supply translates in the new approaches regarding the arrangements of the tourist areas and resorts, which

turn the entertainment facilities into one of the main components of the tourism facilities.

The entertainment activities are - as shown - of a great diversity, arising from the need to meet as much as possible the individual and group requirements, the specific character of the resorts and the reasons that generated the trip.

One of the most expressive and complete ways of classifying the entertainment services takes into consideration its content, namely (R. Minciu).

Table 1. Types of tourist animation

Types of animation	Characteristics	Forms
The animation for pure relaxation purposes	this category comprises activities such as sunbaths and baths in the sea, walking-wayfaring, sight-seeing, meeting with friends and relatives.	Shopping Trips Walks
The recreational animation	general (facilities for amusement and/or populated with characters from fairy-tales or comic strips), thematic (nautical, planetarium, zoological), reservations and casinos.	Trips
The commercial animation	usual or specific shopping (presents, souvenirs, handicraft items) which appears as a pleasant way to spend free time.	Shopping
The animation oriented at achieving optimal body shape	the spread typology of the treatments - from the balneal treatment, as medical product, to the weight loss, beauty treatments and fitness - as well as practising different sports as a way to maintain good health.	Practising sports
The cultural animation	Its objective is to get to know the tourists, to form and educate them, focusing on the moral side of their personality. It is one of the most widespread types of animation and one of the most accessible to tourists, irrespective of their level of education and their convictions (political, religious).	Visits to museums and memorial houses, taking part in various cultural events, circuits related to the life and work of certain literature, music, national and universal art personalities, scholarships, trips for the purpose of learning foreign languages, visits to places of worship (churches, monasteries, cathedrals, mosques) and pilgrimage.
The show animation	is characterised by a variety of forms; among these, nature trips for its landscape diversity, as well as the richness of its flora and fauna.	Theatrical events, cinemas, musical, art and folklore events, sports competitions – national or international championships Olympics, rallies, contests.
The gastronomic animation	usually addresses a specialized type of audience	Fairs and exhibitions, congresses, circuits with an industrial, agricultural content.
The professional animation	Addresses a specialized public, generates an important volume of tourist spending for the business tourism, focuses on developing specific skills of the employees	Reunions, congress events, conferences, seminars Fairs and exhibitions

Source: ¹ Rodica Minciu *The Economy of Tourism*, 3rd edition revised and enlarged, Uranus Publ. House, Bucharest.

In order to entertain its clients, the Vega Hotel offers the possibility to rent ski-jets and water wheelers, and the hotel beach has 3 volleyball courts, a football court and a playground for children under Kindergarten supervision.

This is why Vega created on the first floor of its hotel an intimate atmosphere area for relaxation where hotel guests may benefit from the assistance of specialists in body harmony: Sauna (2 persons),

Jacuzzi (4 person-capacity), massage salon, body treatment salon, fitness room.

The purpose of the research

Is to underline the effects of practising sports under the coordination of a specialist on the workload of each individual that takes part in such entertainment programmes during his holiday.

Hypothesis of the research

The implementation of certain sporting activities coordinated by license specialists as part of

the entertainment hotel programme entails the improvement of the subjects' functional capacity, of their physical development parameters and of their psychomotor relaxation capacity.

The procedures and methods of research

The research was carried out during the summer holidays (June 1st - September 1st, 2009) at the Vega Hotel on a number of 200 persons aged between 25 and 65 years old (100 women, 100 men). These persons have been selected based on the criterion of the

duration of their stay, meaning that only persons with a stay of at least one week and who agreed to daily participate in the sporting activities of the entertainment programme have been selected.

Each participant in the experiment was subject to the Ruffier test. The Ruffier test is a sub-maximal stress test based on the measurement of the heart rate during the period of recovery from effort. The Ruffier index (RI) is calculated from formula:

$$\text{RUFFIER INDEX} = \frac{(P2 - 70) + (P3 - P1)}{10}$$

The interpretation is done according to the value of the Ruffier index: 0 – 2.9 good index; 3 – 6 average index; over 6 – deficient index.

Animation programmes

One of the animation programmes offered by the Vega Hotel during 09.06-11.06 included the following:

09.06.2009

Clients shall check-in at 12:00, at the Vega Hotel;

Between 12:00 and 14:00 clients may have lunch at the Akolade restaurant;

Between 14:00 and 17:00 they can still have coffee, tea, cookies, snacks, sandwiches or fruits served in the Violet Lounge;

Dinner is served between 18:30 and 21:00 in the Akolade restaurant;

Between 21:00 and 21:30 children may go to the hotel disco. The entertainers organize different games for children and teach them how to dance.

After 21:30, the entertainers prepare a hypnosis show for adults and a disco programme with a DJ.

All inclusive: 10:00-22:00, drinks served after 22:00 shall be charged.

10.06.2009

Sporting activities:

Between 10:00 and 12:00 – aqua gym programme, football games for boys and girls; water gymnastics for ladies and water wheeler contest for gentlemen.

Between 14:00 and 18:00 volleyball games and water aerobics for adults, football games for children; train rides in Mamaia;

Between 10:00 and 18:00 – Mini club type of activities for children. Children activities include stories, puppet theatre, etc.

From 21:00 to 21:30 children may have fun and dance at the children disco under the careful supervision of the entertainer. At the end, children shall be awarded the certificates for their performances during that respective day.

Starting with 21:30, clients may attend a pantomime and amusement show. The Violet Lounge Bar is equipped with a telescope that hotel guests can use to look at the constellations and where they can find interesting information related to the sky.

Meal and drinks

Between 08:00 and 10:00 clients may have breakfast in the main restaurant;

Between 10:00 and 11:00 the hotel guests may have hot drinks, snacks and fruits served in the Lounge Bar; Between 12:00 and 14:00 tourists may have lunch in the Akolade restaurant.

Between 14:00 and 17:00, they may still have coffee, tea, cookies, snacks, sandwiches or fruits served in the Lounge Bar;

Dinner is served between 18:30 and 21:00 in the Akolade restaurant;

Between 21:00 and 21:30 children may take part in the programme prepared by the entertainers which includes dancing and game playing.

All inclusive: 10:00-22:00, drinks served after 22:00 shall be charged.

12:00 to 15:00 Buffet type of Festive Lunch served in the Akolade restaurant, amusement programme, show, DJ disco;

Between 15:00 and 17:00, tourists may have coffee, tea, cookies, snacks, sandwiches or fruits served in the Delice gelateria.

Hotel guests may have dinner between 19:00 and 21:00 in the Akolade restaurant;

After 21:00 – amusement programme, DJ disco for tourists. The entertainers invite famous dancers and they teach tourists different Latin, folk and other types of dance movements.

11.04.2009

Sporting activities:

Between 10:00 and 12:00 – aqua gym programme, swimming contest at the pool for children and football or volleyball games for adults.

Between 10:00 and 12:00 – Mini club type of children activities.

Meal and drinks

Between 08:00 and 10:00 hotel clients may have breakfast in the Akolade restaurant;

Between 10:00 and 11:00 the hotel guests may have hot drinks, snacks and fruits served in the Akolade restaurant;

12:00 - check out. The guests' stay is over.

Entertainment and sports:

- indoor pool, lounge chairs, sun shades and towels - 09:00 to 20:00;
- sporting activities: fitness centre, tennis table, water gymnastics, aerobics, darts, pool volleyball – 09:00 to 20:00;
- according to the day or evening programme: life music, evening shows, folk shows and other types

- of shows, animation, prize contests, dances, DJ, various games, dance lessons, karaoke;
 - supervised activities for children: children's club, playground for children, egg painting, etc. 10:00 – 18:00;
 - children's disco according to the animation programme – 20:00 – 20:30;
- part of the activities are available on a weather-permitting basis.
- Animation programme:

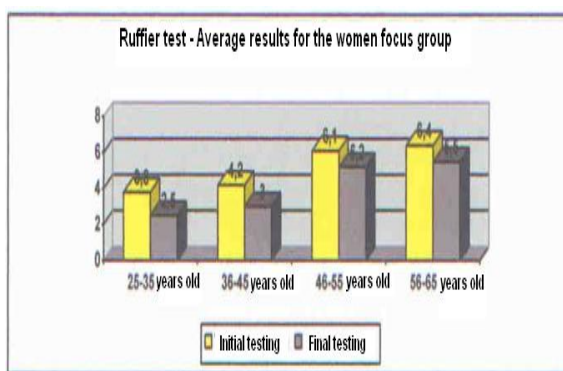
- daily sporting activities: football, volleyball, basketball, tennis, gymnastics, aerobics, pilates, Windsurfing, aqua gym, darts, tennis tables, etc.
- entertainment show every night;
- disco with pro DJs;
- children's mini club: entertainers, face painting, children's party, mini disco.

Sports and relaxation: fitness centre, 2 open air pools: one for children and one for adults, lounge chairs, sun shades and towels for pool, beauty salon, Spa, massage, sauna, Jacuzzi procedures;

Table 2. Centralizing the results of the research

Ruffier Test		X –	X –	X –
Focus group / Age		Initial test	Final test	Difference
Women's focus group	25-35 years old	3.8	2.5	1.3
	36-45 years old	4.2	3	1.2
	46-55 years old	6.1	5.2	0.9
	56-65 years old	6.4	5.5	0.9
Men's focus group	25-35 years old	2.8	1.4	1.4
	36-45 years old	3.1	1.9	1.2
	46-55 years old	4.2	3.5	0.7
	56-65 years old	5.8	5	0.8

Graphical 1. Average results for the women focus group

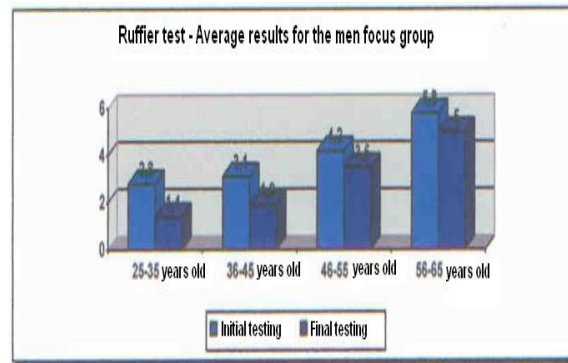


Result interpretation

This function test indicates that the initial testing of the women's focus group registered values that are inferior to the ones of the final testing. The focus group aged between 25-35 years old registered an IR average value of 3.8, while the final one was of 2.5. The average

result thus improved from a medium index to a good one. In the other focus groups, an important improvement of the functional capacity can be noticed; thus, the final IR testing was under 6, which determines a medium range IR.

Graphical 2. Average results for the men focus group



Result interpretation

In the case of the men's focus group, an amelioration of the functional capacity can be noticed in all the age categories as a result of practising the motor activities included in the entertainment programme implemented for the purpose of the research.

The improvement of the functional capacity between the two tests was higher for the 25-35 years old and the 36-45 years old categories as compared to the 46-55 years old and 56-65 years old categories for which the increase was inferior to the first two categories, though significant.

It is to be noticed that in the 25-35 years old category the IR turned from a medium one to a good one as a result of the motor activity programme, this increase being the highest of all the age categories.

Conclusions.

The results of the research confirmed the hypothesis, proving that the participation in the motor activities designed for the holiday-specific entertainment programme triggers the improvement of the participants' functional capacity, as well as the increase in the attractiveness of the holiday-specific activities.

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The entertainment development strategy – as a major preoccupation of the tourism organizers – is defined, in this context, according to tourists' motivations, aspirations and expectations (and varying according to age, education, proneness, character), as well as to the profile, structure and characteristics of the resorts involved. With respect to the objectives, the following should be achieved:

- ensuring suitable facilities (sport fields and centres, transportation means, entertainment means, sports materials renting centres, showrooms, etc.);
- hiring specialized personnel: entertainers, trainers, etc. and having centres (schools) for their period training;
- developing programmes (actions) with an entertainment-recreational character (trips, contests, shows), as well as activities and client information means with respect to these activities.

Generally, a good organisation and progress of the entertainment, together with the attractive content of its related actions, stands as an additional way to attract tourist flows and to encourage trips.