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## Identification of benefits and challenges associated with the work of a hotel animator

**Abstract.** During a single season, animators work with several thousand hotel guests. Parents and their children expect entertainment and attractions at a high level. Certainly, animation is a lot of fun. However, it is associated with numerous challenges. The aim of this study described in this article was to identify the most common benefits and challenges reported by animators in the survey conducted by the authors. The first part outlines the job of a leisure animator in the light of the literature. The main part is concerned with the benefits of working as an animator and challenges that animators can face in their work. The study is based on data collected during an online questionnaire survey involving 110 animators from Poland, working in various travel agencies. The findings confirm the main hypothesis of the study: opportunities to interact with people and travel are the most frequently reported advantages of leisure animation. Animation is also seen as a chance for self-fulfillment and continuous development. However, the job is associated with a lot of stress and long working hours, which constitute one of its challenges.

**Keywords:** leisure time, animation, hotel, animator, hotel industry

**JEL Codes:** J400, J810, Z290, Z300, Z320

### 1. Introduction

Animation is a growing sector in tourism services. Travel agencies and intermediary companies increasingly employ people tasked with organizing leisure for

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children and adults. Many hotels in Poland and in the world are located in remote areas or are relatively far away from urban centers, so the provision of entertainment by specialized and professional hotel animators can constitute an advantage over the competition.

The aim of this article is to identify benefits and challenges associated with the job of a hotel animator. Research on leisure time can be found in many publications devoted to this subject, but there are few studies investigating the role of the hotel animator. The job of a leisure time animator involves practical knowledge but it also requires engagement, commitment and a unique set of qualities [Rokicka-Hebel, Ziółkowska, Patyna 2016]. So far not much research has been conducted on barriers and threats faced by leisure time animators

The survey conducted during the study found that opportunities to interact with people and travel are the most frequently reported advantages of leisure animation. On the other hand, factors such as stress and cultural barriers can often be the source of misunderstandings and difficulties for animators. Results of the study can help employers to eliminate or at least improve certain unfavorable conditions encountered in hotel animation.

## 2. Theoretical aspects of hotel animation

Animation involves organizing sports and recreational activities in kindergartens and schools, community centers and in outdoor contexts. One particular category of animation work is associated with coordinating and conducting leisure activities in resorts and other tourist destinations [Smith 1999, 2009]. Given the various types of leisure time animation, one can list the most common categories of animators [Bączek 2013]:

1. Animator for children
2. Animator for teenagers
3. Sports animator
4. Show animator
5. All-around animator.

In the past few years hotel animation has become an indispensable service provided by hotels in Europe and across the world. More and more hotels are employing more or less experienced animators. For some tourists, animation is the main attraction of their stay and is advertised as the main tourist product to potential buyers. The animation sector is undergoing significant changes and continuous development [Paczyńska-Jędrycka, Eider 2014].

People involved in the preparation of events for hotel guests should be aware that it is a responsible and difficult job, which gives a lot of satisfaction. However,

before starting to organize events and prepare animation activities, one should consider factors that determine the ultimate success and lead to positive results. Successful animation of different age groups requires a particular set of personal traits and skills, such as those recommended by Litwicka [2016].

Animators should be very well organized and thoughtful. According to hotel guests, they are some of the most important people in the hotel. They spend time with guests every day and organize their activities. As representatives of the hotel, they must demonstrate good manners, commitment, eloquence and great people skills [Przeclawski 1996]. Animators are also expected to resolve conflicts when working with different age groups. Being group leaders, they must be assertive. A person in charge of animation must often make decisions for the group and be able to calmly accept constructive criticism. Another key feature is self-confidence. Animators should not let themselves be intimidated by guests staying at the hotel. After all, they are the ones who set the rules of games. Faced with all kinds of people, of different ages, they should be able to adapt their language accordingly. This skill will help them to command respect and establish good relations with the guests [Bączek, Misztal 2017]. Another important requirement is fluency in a foreign language, preferably English. Work abroad involves communication with foreigners. Leisure time animators must also know the history and culture of the region where their guests are staying [*Animator czasu wolnego...*]. Since animators receive commissions from the sale of trips, the knowledge of tourism and culture is very important. This is why proper education is also required. Generally, people who work as animators have graduated from a college or university. Obviously, employers also value previous experience in animation [*Jak zostać animatorem?* 2016]. Nowadays, in addition to language skills, animators are expected to have computer skills, the knowledge of regulations and the basics of marketing [Litwicka 2016]. Employment in well-known tourist resorts usually involves a longer stay abroad, which means no possibility of direct contact with family and friends. While animation work is usually seasonal, with typical contracts lasting from 3 to 6 months, there are some tourist resorts, animators can work all year round.

### 3. Research methods

The study described in this article is based on an online questionnaire survey carried out on a self-selected sample of 110 Polish hotel animators, the majority of whom were secondary school or university students and university graduates. Respondents represented employees of the largest travel agencies as well as well-known animation companies and employment agencies<sup>1</sup>. The questionnaire was

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Grecos Holiday, TUI, Rainbow Tours, Neckermann, Itaka, Stageman, Animatria, Net Holiday, Sun&Fun.

posted on Facebook between March and April 2019 and was directed to special interest groups devoted to leisure animation<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the link to the survey was also sent to the largest tour operators (travel agents) in Poland.

## 4. Results

The survey questionnaire included a section with questions about respondents' demographic details (age, sex, completed course of leisure animation, etc.). 110 completed questionnaires were returned. The sample consisted of animators from all parts of Poland, who have worked for at least one season. 88 of them were women (80%), 22 men (20%).

47 animators were 22 to 25 years old, accounting for 42.7% of the sample. The second biggest age group (32 respondents) were aged 18-21, accounting for 29.1% of the sample. The least numerous groups were respondents aged 26-29 and those older than 29 (14.5% and 13.6% respectively).

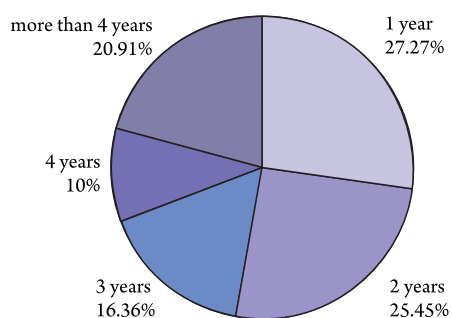


Fig. 1. Distribution of respondents by years of experience in leisure animation

Source: own elaboration based on Borodeńko 2019.

Figure 1 presents the sample structure depending on respondents' work experience. More than 27% of respondents have only worked during one season. 25.45% of animators have had two years of experience. Almost 21% of respondents have been engaged in animation for more than four years.

Respondents were also asked about the country in which had worked as leisure animators. Since multiple responses could be provided, the total number of places indicated by respondents was 193 (Fig. 2). The most popular destination country was Poland (74 responses). Nearly half of all respondents have worked in Greece (53). 14 people have worked in Bulgaria and 12 in Spain. The number of animators who have worked in other countries did not exceed 10. 15 animators have worked in Africa, including such countries as Egypt and Tu-

<sup>2</sup> E.g. "Praca dla animatora" (*Work for a leisure animator*), "Animacja czasu wolnego – oferty pracy" (*Leisure animation jobs*), "Animacja Czasu Wolnego ITW – Polska" (*Leisure Animation ITW – Poland*), "Animacja czasu wolnego" (*Leisure Animation*), "Animatory Grecos 2019" (*Leisure Animators Grecos 2019*), "Akademia Rainbow" (*Rainbow Academy*), "Stageman – Animacje" (*Stageman – Leisure Animations*).

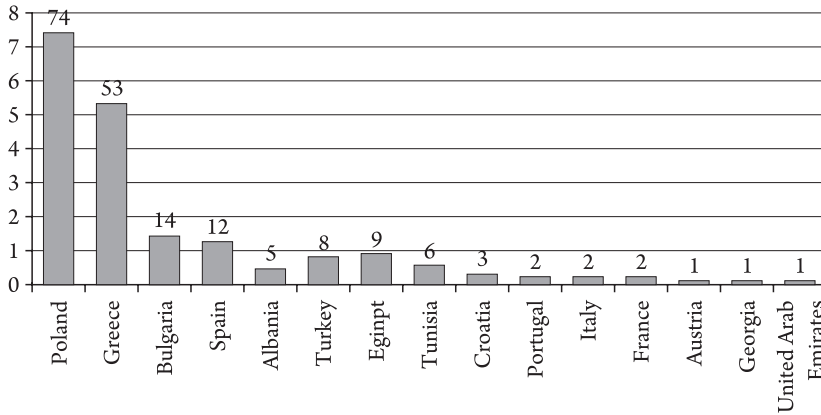


Fig. 2. The number of animators who have worked in different countries

Source: own elaboration based on Borodeňko 2019.

nia (9 and 6 people, respectively). 8 respondents have indicated Turkey, 5 have worked in Albania, which is a developing country in terms of tourism. As can be seen, the labor market for entertainers is quite large as evidenced by reported postings in the United Arab Emirates, Georgia, Austria, France, Italy and Portugal.

Another question in the survey was about the average duration of animation work during the last season (Fig. 3). Almost half chose a period of 3 to 4 months (49%). 32% indicated the option of less than 3 months. Only 11% of respondents were employed for more than six months.

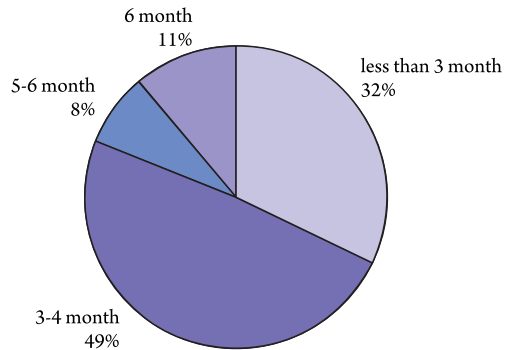


Fig. 3. Average duration of animation work during a single (the last) season

Source: own elaboration based on Borodeňko 2019.

In the following question respondents were asked to assess various benefits of working as a hotel animator (Fig. 4). The first benefit was the salary. 18 respondents (16%) admitted that the pay was important in choosing this job. 19 respondents (17%) regarded wages as rather not important. As regards opportunities to travel, 82 respondents (75%) regarded the chance to participate in excursions as very important. The opportunity to learn foreign languages was important for 74 respondents (68%). 12 respondents found it rather unimportant (11%). Another benefit of working as an animator is being the center of at-

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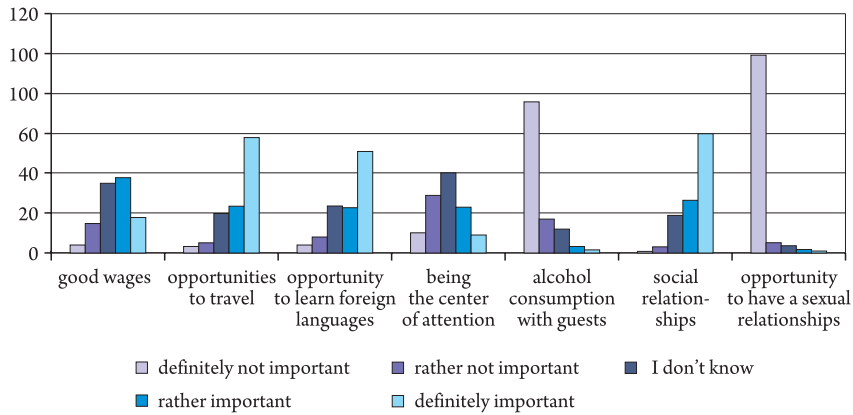


Fig. 4. Benefits of working as a hotel animator in the opinion of respondents

Source: own elaboration based on Borodeńko 2019.

tention. For 38 respondents (35%), being the star of the hotel was unimportant. This benefit turned out to be important for 32 respondents (29%). As many as 80 animators (73%) assessed alcohol consumption with guests as unimportant. However, 5 respondents found it to be rather important. When it comes to social relationships, 97 respondents (89%) said that keeping in touch with guests they met was definitely or quite important. The last benefit listed in the questionnaire was the opportunity to have a sexual relationship with guests. For 104 respondents (95%) having sex with guests was either definitely or rather unimportant. However, 3 respondents did admit this aspect of the job mattered to them.

The questionnaire also included an open-ended questions, in which respondents were asked to list the biggest benefit of working as a hotel animator (Table 1). The most popular (35%) advantage of this job was networking with people (38 answers). The second most frequently mentioned benefit were opportunities to travel (26 answers). Personal development was listed by 16 animators, and the integration of employees – by 12 respondents. For 9% of hotel animators self-realization was a significant benefit (10 answers). Other benefits mentioned by the respondents include lack of boredom, taking care of physical fitness, character formation, fun, good wages, a *high degree of independence*, flexible working hours, making people happy, learning a foreign language, combining passion with work satisfaction and increased self-esteem.

As regards wages, over two thirds of respondents (69%) were satisfied. The remaining 31% believed they should be paid more. Figure 5 shows the number of respondents whose monthly wages fall into a given bracket. The most numerous group of animators (31%) reported earning between PLN 2000 and 2499. Less than 20%

Table 1. The biggest benefit of working as a leisure time animator according to respondents

The biggest benefit	Number of responses
You can get to know new people	38
It is an opportunity to travel	26
Personal development	16
Integration with other employees	12
It's a chance for self-actualization	10
You can gain new experiences	8
You can learn a foreign language	8
You can make people happy	7
It pays well	5
You can combine work with your passion	5
It gives a lot of satisfaction	4
It enables you to get fitter	3
It is fun	3
You have a lot of independence	3
Flexible working hours	1
It forms your character	1
It improves your self-esteem	1
Lack of boredom	1

Source: own elaboration based on Borodeńko 2019.

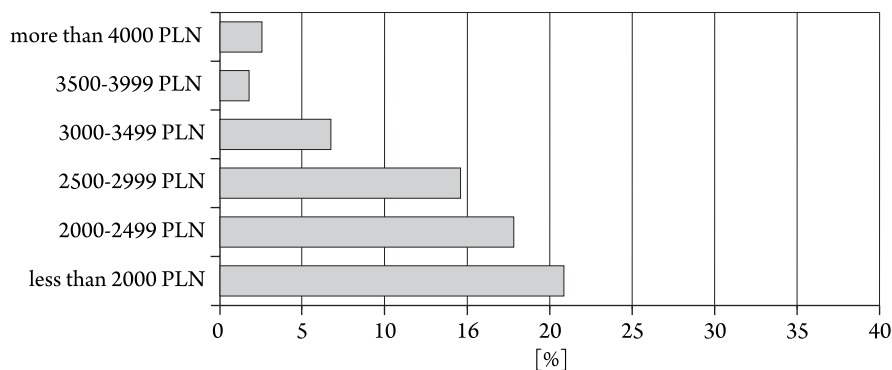


Fig. 5. Average monthly wages earned by the animators in the sample

Source: own elaboration based on Borodeńko 2019.

of the animators in the survey earned the lowest wage (below PLN 2000), while only 8% of respondents received the highest wage of over PLN 4000.

In the last question concerning the benefits of leisure animation, shown in Figure 6, the respondents were asked to say how they spent their free time. Almost all of them (85%) admitted that during their work they had time to pursue their passions and interests. Examples of activities listed included individual or group travel, relaxing on the beach, sports activities, walking around the area, or just lying on the couch. 16 respondents (14,5%) reported they did not have time for their own leisure. 66% of hotel animators reported spending at least a few minutes polishing their language skills.

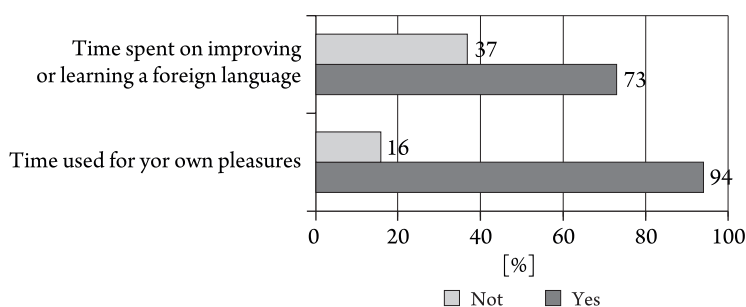


Fig. 6. Ways of spending leisure time by hotel animators

Source: own elaboration based on Borodeńko 2019.

The second major part of the questionnaire was devoted to challenges and barriers faced by hotel animators. The responses were also given using a 5-point Likert scale, with the possibility of choosing specific challenges. Moreover, animators who had experience of working with children and teenagers were asked to name the most common problems associated with these age groups. They were also encouraged to describe causes of conflicts with the manager or other employees, if they ever occurred. Figure 7 presents how the challenges and barriers encountered in the animator's work were perceived by the respondents.

The first source of challenges were cultural barriers. The vast majority (52%) of respondents (57 persons) either did not perceive any cultural barriers in their job or said they experienced them only to a small extent. 21 respondents (19%) said for them cultural barriers were a occurring challenge in animation work. Opinions about the experience of missing the family or homesickness were divided more or less equally. The number of those claiming they experienced such feelings often or very often was only slightly bigger than that for whom it was either a minor problem or no problem at all (39% vs 37%). Another challenge mentioned in the survey was the hot climate, since animators very often have to



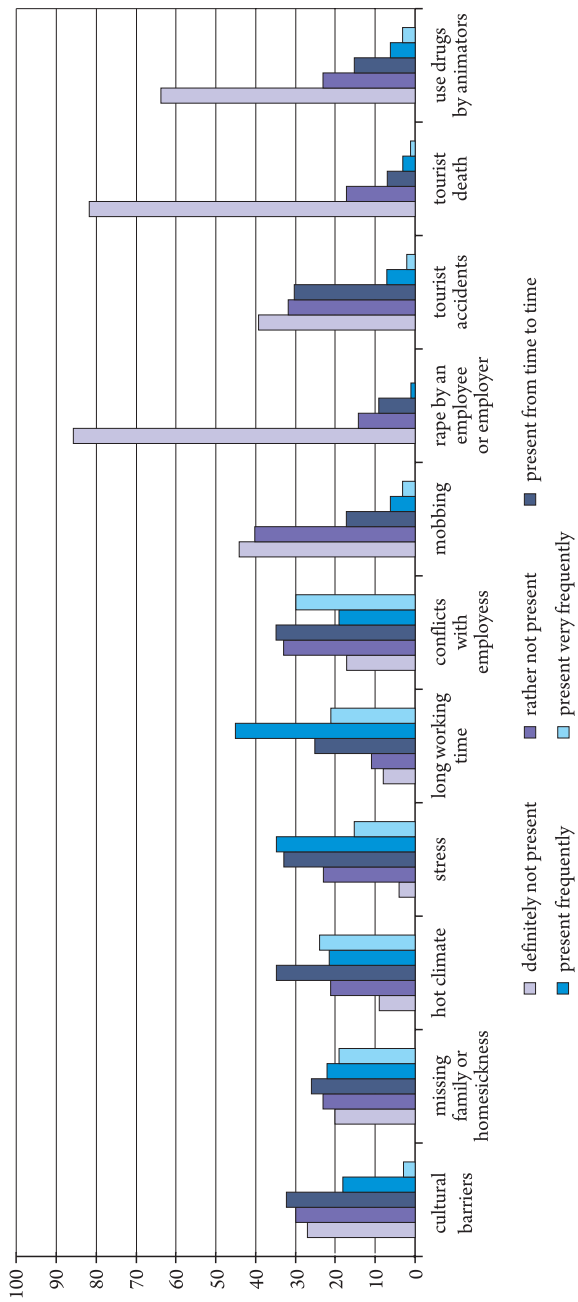


Fig. 7. Frequency of selected barriers in the work of hotel animators

Source: own elaboration based on Borodenko 2019.

work in hot and very sunny weather. Nonetheless, for 30 animators (27%) this was either a minor problem or no problem at all, but 45 respondents (41%) indicated they experienced it appears often or very often. As regards stress, almost half of all respondents (45%) agreed that it was a frequent or very frequent factor. 27 respondents (25%) either did not experience stress at all or did so only rarely. For a large majority of animators (60%) long working time were a frequent or very frequent challenge. Only for 19 respondents (17%) the problem of long working either did not exist at all or was only marginally present. Among comments about conflicts with employees, 50 respondents (45%) either did not experience such conflicts at all or only very infrequently. However, 25 animators (23%) found them to be a such problem. With respect to bullying at work, i.e. the use of violence, harassment or intimidation, the vast majority of respondents (84%) reported that mobbing was either not present or was very rare. Only 8% of respondents indicated that this problem was occurring. Opinions about rape in the workplace were largely unanimous. 90% (100 answers) respondents claimed that this problem did not occur at all or very rare. Only one person indicated that such cases happened frequently. Respondents' experience of accidents varied but the majority (65%) either did not experience them at all or only rarely. Only 9 people (8%) reported that accidents in leisure animation happened often or very often. As regards cases of a tourist dying, the pattern of responses was similar to that observed in the case of rape in the workplace (90% vs. 10%). The last aspect mentioned in the survey was the use of drugs by animators. The vast majority of respondents (78%) replied that they did not have any access to drugs at work. However, 9 animators (8%) admitted they had used whenever drugs at work, and one indicated they did so frequently.

After evaluating selected barriers and challenges, respondents were asked to name up to 3 challenges that can be encountered in hotel animation. 90 respondents provided answers. Most respondents mentioned stress (88% answers). 17% respondents indicated long-term work at the hotel and 15% – homesickness. Other challenges listed by the respondents include language problems, conflicts between employees, hot climate, accidents and drunken intrusive guests. Other challenges were only mentioned by individual animators.

Respondents were also asked whether they had ever had a conflict with the hotel manager or another employee. 66% of respondents said they had never experienced such a conflict, and 34% declared that misunderstandings or inappropriate behaviors on the part of their employer or colleagues did happen in their work. Another finding from the study was that some animators did not show respect for less experienced colleagues and would start arguments over religion, politics or culture. One female animator claimed that she was repeatedly chatted up by the hotel manager and invited to a restaurant. Some respondents also complained about problems with airline transfers. Others also mentioned

misunderstandings and conflicts with the group leader or inconvenient travel arrangements to the airport. One respondent reported cases of harassment. Two people had been given tasks that were not their responsibility. Several animators reported having been deceived by their colleagues.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Advantages of working as a hotel animator

Each role in the workplace, including the organization of leisure, offers benefits and involves challenges, which must be faced by each employee. While leisure animation is interesting, offers opportunities to develop one's own interests and find self-fulfillment, it is more difficult than many people think.

Opportunities to travel are commonly considered to be the greatest advantage of this job. Although Poles' financial wellbeing keeps improving, not everyone has the time and money to visit foreign countries and learn about new cultures. Working as a leisure animator offers a possibility of making these dreams come true. Based on the author's own experience and from discussions with other animators, the job is seen as a chance to visit many interesting countries for free. Many animators take advantage of optional tours offered by travel agencies for guests staying at the hotel. Animators frequently spend their free time by sightseeing individually and / or in groups and relaxing on beautiful beaches. For many young Poles, a stay in warm countries is an attractive prospect.

Working abroad is also associated with learning a foreign language. Animation is often described as a "language school". The job provides daily opportunities for speaking English and learning some words of the local language. A few months' stay in a foreign country can improve the animator's fluency and vocabulary considerably, which is something that is often much more difficult to achieve when learning in Poland.

Another benefits of working as an animator are the wages, which usually depend on such factors as the country where the work is performed, the length of the contract, a person's work experience, self-presentation at the interview, the knowledge of foreign languages [Bączek, Misztal 2017].

Animators working in European countries tend to earn more than those employed in Africa. This is because in the Arab world local residents are frequently hired as animators and their earnings are generally lower than those of European citizens. Salaries paid in tourist resorts are higher, because tours and trips are more expensive. If the financial aspect is a priority, one should look for job offers in European destinations, such as Spain, Portugal, Malta and Switzerland.

Earnings are also influenced by the contract length and, naturally, by the amount of work experience. The market values experienced animators, who are available for a longer period. Hoteliers and many travel agencies prefer to hire one animator for half a year rather than three who are ready to work for only two months each. The employer is obliged to pay for an employee's flights and accommodation, and more employees means higher costs. It is also easier to train one person who signs a long contract and can completely focus on it.

The ability to use several languages is obviously a valuable asset for an animator. The more foreign languages a candidate knows, the higher salary he or she can expect. It is a good investment to learn Russian and English as the number of Russian guests is generally growing. Many Russian citizens can afford expensive holidays and like to spend a lot of money on such occasions. English, being a global language or *lingua franca*, enables employees from different parts of the world to communicate with each other.

At the interview, as always, it is first impressions that really count. That is why, each candidate should show their talents and the most valuable skills. Professional choreographers, singers, magicians can earn more than an animator without such skills and certificates.

In addition to financial benefits, animators have ample opportunities for social interaction. Throughout the season, animators get to know a few hundred or a few thousand visitors. Some of these contacts are maintained for a long time. Animation is an opportunity to meet future employers or travelers who can have some interesting job offers.

Another benefit of being a leisure animator is the contribution one makes to integrating employees through activities aimed at building positive relationships between them. Animation involves group work and helps to create relationships based on respect, support, friendship, etc. People chosen to work in different positions should complement each other. In the field of organization and management theory Czermiński proposed two principles that must be satisfied to integrate positions and units within an organizations: the principle of combining units according to a common criterion and the principle of single leadership [Czermiński, Grzybowski, Ficoń 1999]. Employees are able to work more efficiently when they can set goals and manage their own work [Chyłek 2011].

The role of an animator makes the person a kind of star in the hotel. After a successful evening show, guests often congratulate the animator, want to get to know him or her and exchange a few words. Animation is a chance to feel like a celebrity. Every day, hotel guests look and smile at the animator. This is an ideal job for those who seek attention.

The final benefit worth mentioning is the opportunity of gaining new experiences. The job can involve working with children, youth, adults and seniors.

Other valuable experiences that can be listed in the CV include participation in excursions, use of many languages, meeting new people, integration with other animators.

## **5.2. Challenges involved in working with children and teenagers**

In addition to the benefits discussed above, animators can encounter various obstacles and conflicts when working with children and teenagers. Younger children often display a lack of discipline, which can be manifested as aggression and misbehavior in a direct or indirect sense [Skorny 1973]. Examples of direct harassing behavior on the part of children include hitting, pulling, squeezing, choking, pinching, kicking, tripping others up. Such acts of aggression often involve the use of objects, such as pins, rulers or stones. Aggression takes the form of fights, beatings, unfair treatment. Indirect bullying includes various forms of disturbing other children or hiding objects. Indirect disruptive behavior consists in destroying or damaging other people's property [Urban 2005]. Violence in children occurs at an early stage of life. The youngest children watch aggression on television and read about it in fairy tales. A common problem faced when working with children is disrespectful behavior towards the caregiver and frequent cries. Such behavior can be caused by things observed in the immediate environment. Children who witness minor fights, feel that something is wrong [Żuczkowska 2013]. Another challenge is associated with problems and sadness experienced by younger children. More and more families are dysfunctional [Choina 2001]. In their work animators can meet children who are indifferent to situations when others are being harmed or have a distorted hierarchy of needs and values. Such behavior can be caused by the absence or very rare displays of affection and love for the child. Such children often find it difficult to carry out even the simplest tasks, or are unwilling to participate [Siemek 1987]. Another thing to remember is that small children need variety. Animators must be familiar with a variety of games and activities. Younger children are very physically active and they quickly get bored playing and always expect something new.

As regards teenagers, they also display frequent mood swings. In this group, the most common problem faced by leisure animators is also the lack of discipline and respect for the caregiver. During their stay in the hotel, parents give their children a lot of freedom. Young people are busy spending time with each other and may prefer to plan their activities on their own. Working with young people is extremely difficult. One has to learn how to deal with and resolve frequent quarrels, fights and misunderstandings. Bad behavior in young people can result from various kinds of addiction. Teenagers often play video games and

spend a lot of time at the computer at the expense of interpersonal communication [Prokosz 2004]. Animators often find that young people are indifferent to the world around them, which is a special challenge when it comes to social integration. Young people who stay at the hotel with their parents often feel lonely, lack self-confidence, are afraid of new experiences and believe that their life is meaningless [Konaszewski, Kwadrans 2018]. One common problem is smoking. Many teenagers turn to nicotine to impress their peers or to be accepted in the group. Another problem that makes work with young people difficult is the use of drugs. While most hotel animators rarely have to deal with this phenomenon, they should have basic knowledge on this subject. Teenagers use drugs to feel better. Puberty is associated with a search for identity, which can lead to various forms of experimentation. The abuse of designer drugs and other substances has many different causes and depends on the individual. Sometimes, however, it can be a family problem [Elliot, Place 2005]. Another problem associated with young people staying in hotels is alcohol consumption. This may be particularly tempting in the case of all-inclusive packages. Confronted with drunk teenagers, animators are forced to refuse animation and notify parents about such behaviour. The final factor that often has a negative effect on problematic teenagers is violence in the media, which can desensitize teenagers and encourage them to resort to violent behaviour.

Unfortunately, it is usually impossible to obtain prior information about children and young people that animators are going to work with. Usually, they are expected to start their animation programs right from the start. The first meeting is an important moment when the animator can introduce him- or herself and explain the rules that young participants should follow. When this stage is handled inappropriately, the participants can get easily discouraged or become negatively disposed. To avoid or reduce the risk of conflicts and to provide an unforgettable experience, the animator should know as much as possible about the group and must constantly observe their behavior, keep them satisfied with the holiday experience, manage their free time effectively and stimulate integration between participants [Litwicka 2016].

## 6. Summary and conclusions

The article addresses the topic of leisure animation, which involves organizing and conducting activities for children, teenagers and adults. There is a broad range of options in leisure animation, such as sports events, outdoor and playground activities, board games for children, interesting evening events, etc. There is a special group of animators who are responsible for organizing free time activities in holiday resorts.



During the entire season, animators can work with thousands of hotel guests. Regardless of age, tourists expect high quality entertainment. Studies indicate that qualities like patience, qualifications and organisation skills have a positive effect on tourists' satisfaction, whereas kindness, interactions with guests, communicative skills and professionalism have not been found to increase the level of satisfaction [Pekovic et al. 2019]. For many animators it is a pleasure and a source of satisfaction to organize games and other activities. However, the job involves certain difficulties and challenges.

The main purpose of the article was to identify benefits and challenges most commonly recognized by leisure animators. Another objective was to collect some first-hand information about some practical aspects of this job, such as the range of duties, preferences and expectations, ways of spending free time, etc.

The study was based on responses provided by 110 animators from all over Poland, who have worked at a hotel for at least one season. Most respondents were secondary school or university students and university graduates. The majority of those who responded to the online survey were employed by Grecos Holiday travel agency, where one of the authors works as an animator.

The responding animators indicated opportunities to travel and social relationships as the biggest benefits of the job, while hot climate and stress were regarded as the biggest challenges. Asked to list benefits of hotel animation, the majority of respondents mentioned the opportunity to get to know new people. The second most popular benefit was the opportunity to travel.

Regarding the challenges of leisure animation, the two most frequently selected answers were stress and long working hours. It is important to add at this point that one of the authors of the study has been working as an animator for a number of years and agrees with opinions expressed by the respondents. It is true that officially shifts of hotel employees are eight hours long but they stay at the hotel all the time and are available to tourists. As for stress, it can be caused by a sudden change in the animation program, equipment failure during classes or conflicts and misunderstandings with the team. In addition to these main causes, stress can also be induced by various other individual factors.

The research potential of the study was certainly not fully exploited and some questions could have been worded better. Since most respondents were employed by the Grecos Holiday travel agency and the company is based in kujawsko-pomorskie province where the authors also work, the sample cannot be regarded as representative of the whole hotel animator sector in Poland.

From the results of the study, the literature review and experiences of the authors, it can be concluded that the job of an animator offers interesting professional prospects for young people. Leisure animator can benefit from opportunities for sightseeing, traveling or getting to know people. However, the job is not free from certain downsides, such as missing the family and the mother country, stress, hot climate and long working hours.

Finally, the authors would like to thank all respondents for sharing their professional experience and offer valuable tips to other animators or people who are planning to take up work in leisure animation. All respondents agreed that “keeping that smile on your face” is the most important thing in this job. In addition, would-be animators should not be afraid of new challenges. Another important quality mentioned by the respondents is openness. They believe that future animators should establish new relationships, learn about new traditions and cultures. On our part, we would like to add that animators should not be primarily motivated by financial benefits but see the job as an opportunity for self-development and the broadening of their horizons.

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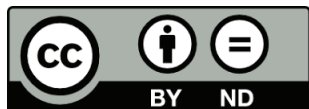
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**Appendix:** [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1VEgei5fOTMu\\_RIQTwk9R\\_QSHXZgYRpjUuFs51P1NXE/viewform?fbclid=IwAR28RVOsYY86UUEQqcd8XL1otVrVv9ySzFcnRKEof4KYEQUS0Mfq1Tu1d1A&edit\\_requested=true](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1VEgei5fOTMu_RIQTwk9R_QSHXZgYRpjUuFs51P1NXE/viewform?fbclid=IwAR28RVOsYY86UUEQqcd8XL1otVrVv9ySzFcnRKEof4KYEQUS0Mfq1Tu1d1A&edit_requested=true)

## Identyfikacja korzyści i wyzwań związanych z pracą animatora czasu wolnego w hotelu

**Abstrakt.** W ciągu jednego sezonu animatorzy czasu wolnego współpracują z kilkoma tysiącami gości hotelowych. Rodzice i ich dzieci oczekują rozrywki i atrakcji na wysokim poziomie. Z pewnością animacja to świetna zabawa, jest to jednak związane z licznymi wyzwaniami. Celem badania opisanego w tym artykule była identyfikacja najczęstszych korzyści i wyzwań zgłaszanych przez animatorów hotelowych. Pierwsza część przedstawia pracę animatora rozrywki w świetle literatury. Główna część dotyczy korzyści płynących z pracy animatora i wyzwań, przed którymi stoją animatorzy w swojej pracy w hotelach. Badanie własne opiera się na danych zebranych podczas ankiety internetowej, w której wzięło udział 110 animatorów z Polski, współpracujących z różnymi biurami podróży. Wyniki potwierdzają główną hipotezę badania: najczęściej spotykane zalety animacji czasu wolnego to możliwość interakcji z ludźmi i podróżowania. Animacja jest również postrzegana jako szansa na samorealizację i ciągły rozwój. Jednak praca wiąże się z dużym stresem i długimi godzinami pracy, które stanowią główne z jej wyzwań.

**Słowa kluczowe:** czas wolny, animacja czasu wolnego, hotel, animator czasu wolnego, hotelarstwo



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**Suggested citation:** Borodeńko D., Smoleńska O.I., 2020, Identification of benefits and challenges associated with the work of a hotel animator, *Studia Periegetica*, 2(30): 61-77, DOI: 10.5604/01.3001.0014.1219.