86 - THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL IN RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE HOTEL NETWORK OF GRAMADO/RS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has grown rapidly in recent years creating an expansion of hotel firms. A hotel is a commercial enterprise that sells goods and services, such as rooms, food and drinks among other things, to a clientele of visitors who are willing to pay the price or fee for lodging, eating, drinking and spending time in a different and pleasurable environment (ASCÂNIO, 2003).

By presenting an uninterrupted period of time, tourism gives the individual the opportunity to take part in all the different forms of recreation he or she may desire during their stay. Thus, it allows people to rest, to have fun, to contact other people they may find pleasant and to take advantage of the activities offered by the hotel.

The recreational sector of the hotel field is responsible for offering entertainment and leisure to the guests in the form of a variety of flexible and accessible programs for different clientele age groups such as children, teenagers and adults. These recreational activities are aimed at making the guests feel good during their stay and allow them to have more fun, to relax and to enjoy the time they stay at the establishment where they are lodged (NEGRINE; BRADACZ; CARVALHO, 2001).

Recreation has become to be considered not only a must for people to recharge their energy for work, but also as an enjoyable asset, a part of their life style. According to Castelli (2003), hotel recreational services should seek out and satisfy the desires and needs of modern man, since the trend of people trying to make themselves over psychically and somatically through the practice of recreational activities already exists.

For Lehn (2004), there is an option for enjoyment of recreation away from home to be found in tourism and hotel hospitality through the rendering of recreational services by hotel establishments. While

Vieira (2003) considers that the guest that travels for recreation and fun wants action, and wants to do everything he/she cannot do during the working months, in other words, seeking participation in desired activities through the recreational services available at the hotel.

The hotel market, when hiring a professional to work in recreational services, looks for people with a suitable profile for this type of position. Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001) point out that the hotel recreational field can be open to professionals from different backgrounds, however, based on accumulated experiences, the authors state the Physical Education professional is the professional that presents profile best suited to work in this field. The authors convey a message to hotel executives saying that this type of service should be performed by people who have received specialized training, at least for the coordinator of activities. The authors also conclude that “recreationists who perform well do excellent 'public relations' within the company and the bonds they establish with the guests serve as motivational factors for their return” (p. 63).

Pires (2004) traces the relationship between Physical Education and recreation/leisure and points out that the Physical Education professional can work in the recreation field, as the content related to the physical and sportive aspects are very familiar to this professional who could best deal with these matters. This author also affirms that the P.E. professional should keep in mind the comprehensive scope in this field of recreation where one cannot simply reproduce the same approach and objectives used in a school or in sports.

The Physical Education Professional is responsible for directing, orientating and accompanying all those who practice sports and physical activities. The curricular grid of the Physical Education course covers a range of different possibilities for professional work like teaching in a school, gym activities, sports training, recreation, sports administration, and dance.

Oliveira and Silva (2005) classify recreation as a field of operation for the P.E. professional. According to Law No. 9.696, dated September 1, 1998, that regulates the Physical Education profession and creates the respective Federal and Regional Councils for Physical Education, the professional in this area should:

coordinate, plan, program, supervise, enliven, direct, organize, evaluate and carry out tasks, programs, plans and projects, as well as provide auditing, consulting and counseling services, hold specialized training sessions, participate in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teams and write up technical, scientific and pedagogical reports, all of which pertain to the areas of physical activities and sports. (BRAZIL, 1998, no page).

The professional field of recreation, therefore, requires a qualified professional who is aware of the social transformations occurring in the world of work and who is able to visualize the potential of recreation as a significant feature of daily life, inserted in a real social context with a lifestyle that put him within a permanent process of personal and social growth.

Thus, the recreational professional should have a solid social and cultural background with an eye to working in a sector that covers public recreation policies as well as investments made through private sector policies. In this manner, the cultural industry of recreation, essentially based on the logic of consumerism, needs to be marked by the logic of a better quality of life for everyone.

Based on these points, a study was carried out with the objective of verifying the perception of the hotel managers on the role of the Physical Education professional in recreational programs offered by the hotel network of Gramado/RS.

2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

This descriptive study was developed in the hotel network of Gramado (RS) with the aim at verifying the perception of the hotel managers on the role of the Physical Education professional in the recreational programs offered by those hotels. Five hotel managers collaborated with the research. They were selected through a convenience type of sampling from among the Gramado hotels offering recreational programs to their guests. The choice of this type of non-probabilistic sampling was due to the fact that the researcher selected the subjects that were the most accessible for the study. The managers chosen to participate in the study were those who voluntarily made themselves available and signed a Free and Clear Commitment Form.

The instrument used to collect data in this study was the semi-structured interview, validated by three professionals with renowned knowledge in the field of the present study. A tape recorder was used during the interview and afterwards the recorded information was first transcribed then returned by the researcher to the collaborators for confirmation of the data obtained.

The data collected from the interviews with the hotel managers was processed and analyzed. This data was coded

into categories of information according to the responses obtained during the interviews. The analysis and interpretation of the data were presented in line with the following categories of information: characteristics of the hotels analyzed, description of the collaborating hotel managers, recreational concept, physical space reserved for recreational activities, recreational activities offered by the hotels, expected background and training of the hotel recreation professional, and finally the profile of the professional working in hotel recreational services.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The five hotels analyzed were rated as either 4 or 5 stars, have from 87 to 230 rooms and have been operating in the Gramado hotel market for from 1 to 35 years. Of the five subjects of the research, two were general managers, two were managers in charge of recreation and one was a supervisor. All those interviewed had university degrees; two of them were doing graduate work at specialization level and one was enrolled in a master's program. Of the five hotels analyzed, three had hired Physical Education professionals, one hired a professional during the high season months to give classes in his field and one did not employ a P.E. professional to promote recreational activities.

Concept of recreation

Initially, the research subjects were questioned about their concept of recreation. Upon analysis of the responses obtained, it was noted that two of the interviewees remarked in their concept of recreation that recreation provides well-being and relaxation, voicing their opinion in this manner: *"they are activities for well-being…offering activities that encourage the participation of everyone"* (Hotel B), and *"to provide the guest moments of well-being, rest and relaxation..."* (Hotel E). This concept is along the same lines as Marcellino's (1995) notion of recreation, which is activity that provides pleasure, fun and satisfaction for those who do it. Bacal (2003) also characterizes recreation as free time filled with activities that give satisfaction and which provoke feelings of well-being in the individual. The concept expressed by the research subject from Hotel C is "*a time to disconnect from daily financial, economic and family worries"*, which is coherent with the definition of Dumazedier (1973), who affirms that an individual can make use of recreation when he or she is free of professional, family and social obligations. In Camargo's (1989) view, recreation is also characterized as an activity to be enjoyed during one's spare time after disconnecting from professional and domestic duties. Contrary to the other research subjects, the interviewees from Hotels A and D used examples of recreational activities when they expressed their views about the concept. These recreational activities, according to Marcellino (1996), which include artistic, intellectual, physical, manual, touristic and social interests, are all a part of recreation.

The findings show that all the research subjects point out in their definition, even by way of examples, that recreation is an activity done in a voluntary manner, in other words, out of free choice. This characteristic is in accordance with the studies of Dumazedier (1973), Camargo (1989), Marcellino (1995) and Bacal (2003), who define recreation as a free-choice activity, i.e., the individual is at liberty to select the type of activity he or she would like to do, seeking pleasure, satisfaction or a feeling of well-being in this way.

Physical space reserved for recreational activities

The approach for the study of each hotel's physical space consisted of detailing the locations that could be a part of a recreational program, for the best use of these spaces. These hotels had facilities such as: a gym, a swimming pool, a children's recreation room, a patio, a game room, and a tennis court, among others.

It should be noted that the five hotels have adequate facilities for promoting recreational activities, some more complete than others but all had the potential to offer these types of services. The fact that some hotels boasted better infrastructures than others does not prevent setting up recreational programs, since, according to Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001), these programs always require a project, which means that the activities offered should be compatible with the spaces the hotel has available.

Recreational activities offered by the hotels

The study verified that the research participating hotels offered their guests a variety of recreational activities. Featured children's activities included: children's recreation, recreational games, pool fun, storytelling gymnastics, gymkhanas, and recycled materials, clay or painting workshops. Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001) believe activity programs designed for children have to be much diversified to provide multiple experiences. When a hotel has a swimming pool, which was the case with the five hotels analyzed, the activities can vary

among gymkhanas, games like water polo and other playtime fun. The authors also recommend giving clay, collage or recycled materials workshops. This was the fact at two of the hotels in the study since they already offered this type of activity, holding various workshops for children. In addition, the hotels in the study provided activities such as gymkhanas and other games for their young guests. One of the hotels in particular organized elaborate activities using costumes to stimulate the children's imagination, such as: the search for Cinderela's shoe, finding Nemo, and 'Serranito´s' rescue.

Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001) praise another sort of game, storytelling gymnastics, in which the storyteller includes movements and sounds, during the story that should be imitated by the participants, as if they were characters in the story. Lehn (2004), also presents the idea of creating characters as a resource used by recreation leaders. These characters are created to entertain the guests and stimulate them to participate in the events programmed to enliven their hotel stay. Some of the subjects interviewed noted that the recreational programs varied according to the season of the year, since they took advantage of special dates like Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day or Christmas to offer activities centered on these themes.

For the adults, the five hotels had activities in the swimming pool, but only three offered hydrogymnastics with P.E. professionals. Besides hydrogymnastics, guided walks were also mentioned as a recreation option at the hotels that had a P.E. professional on staff. Other activities like those done in the gym, parlor games, sauna and archery were also cited by those interviewed.

The recreational activities for adults, according to the research subjects, are in accordance with Castelli (2003) who proposes gymnastics and dance classes, swimming class, competitive and ecological gymkhanas; painting and art; music and theater; drawing; material recycling; ecological excursions; slide shows and movies; tennis; bicycle tours, dances; hydrogymnastics; swimming pool games; archery; basketball; volleyball; indoor soccer; soccer; card and board games, among other activities.

Training expected of the hotel recreation professional

Upon analysis of the desired training for professionals working in hotel recreation, according to the subjects of the study, there was a nearly unanimous opinion asserting that the P.E. professional presented appropriate skills for work in this field.

Pires (2004) believes that the P.E. professional can work in the field of recreation considering the fact that the physical and sports elements are familiar to this professional and can be best put to use by him. Marcellino (2002), also defends the idea that the content of the recreational activities should be developed by the appropriate professionals depending on their area of specialization, therefore, certain recreational matters, such as the contents of activities of a physical nature, should be exclusively developed by professors of Physical Education.

According to Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001), there is currently thought and discussion on the need to train teachers to work with leisure activities. Actually what is being considered is new ways of training through pedagogical courses, i.e., the training of play specialists that would deal with the planning and carrying out of recreational programs. Although, the authors experience in relation to the matter, so far, indicates that professionals working in the hotel recreation area need a background and training providing ample knowledge and diversification. Given the currently existing training courses in Brazil, there is every indication that the P.E. professionals, mainly those from undergraduate courses, display training compatible with doing this work. Generally a P.E. course, besides concerning itself with the pedagogical preparation of the students, include an ample curriculum in terms of practical activities, like sports, dances, gymnastics and recreational activities in general.

One of the study subjects put forward the idea that the professional that would be working with children's recreation needed to have a different kind of pedagogical knowledge in order to handle the children. According to Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001), those graduating in P.E. go through different experiences in the educational process in regards to recreational activities than those a hotel can offer. The training encompasses sports and recreation experiences, pedagogical and scientific training that allows performing different functions in a service of a recreational nature within a hotel, for example, children's recreation leader. Menestrina (2000) also points out that the P.E. professional also ought to have knowledge in the pedagogical area as well, in other words, this professional understands how to plan, deliver a lesson, and evaluate educational activities. Another research subject said that for the adults, the proper training would be Physical Education while for the children it would be Children's Education. Recreational services according to Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001) should be performed by people with higher education, at least the one coordinating the activities. The same authors point out that a P.E. professional or a teacher, interested the recreational field would be the most suited for this type of work. In Menestrina's (2000) opinion, the professor of P.E..has knowledge of the following areas: psychopedagogy, biology, sociocultural and technical studies, which makes the person able to do the job, including the activities of his or her competence in hotel recreation working with children and adults.

Expected profile of the hotel recreation professional

The profile of the professional that works with hotel recreation is of extreme importance to the subjects from the hotels in the study. The characteristics commented on in the interviews regarding this profile refer to a responsible, dynamic, communicative and captivating professional. Also mentioned were other necessary characteristics of this professional: charismatic, ethical, spontaneous, caring, cheerful, extroverted, encouraging and with a pleasant appearance .

Castelli (2003) when pointing out the desired profile of the person working in the recreation field cites some qualities that were expressed by the subjects interviewed. The author believes the professional should be polite, sociable, cordial, enthusiastic, responsible, have a pleasant appearance and be flexible with schedules as well as being a leader. Cavallari and Zacharias (2000), also highlight similar characteristics when defining this professional like: maintaining good rapport, trust and friendship; having a good general attitude and posture.

Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001) think the person that will perform the duties of recreation leader should have developed the following skills: ability to take the initiative in a dialogue, to get in touch with people, to persuade and encourage them to participate in the activities offered without losing one's temper or respect, to take on the role of facilitator and to continually seek to redo and revamp programmed activities with creativity in order to meet the guests´ needs.

Two research subjects interviewed cited when outlining the profile of the hotel recreation professional that the person must be communicative with the rest of the staff and must know the rules of the hotel. Cavallari and Zacharias (2000) also mention the need to keep in contact with the other hotel employees, keeping a fair relationship with all hotel sectors, and in so doing, able to get the help needed to do the job.

One interview yielded an example of how to encourage the guests to take part in recreational activities:: *"it's not enough to put up a poster, like for instance: 'Today there is a fashion show!' No one will go. You need someone encouraging: 'come on', 'let's go over there and watch!'".* According to Negrine, Bradacz and Carvalho (2001) the recreation professional needs to be encouraging and go after people and persuade them to participate in the programmed activities. This professional should be able to take the initiative to greet, ask a person's name, invite them to participate in this or that activity, and to notice when someone needs to be helped out. The recreation leader also needs to seek innovative alternatives, often when an activity is proposed where few people know each other. As is common in the hotel business, one needs to get certain activities going, even with a few people, so others will want to join in too.

4 CONCLUSION

It was found that the managers of the hotels studied are favorable to the role of the Physical Education professional in hotel recreation programs, nevertheless, among the five hotels analyzed, three had hired P.E. professionals, one hotel hires a professional only during the high season months to give classes in his field and one of the hotels analyzed did not employ a P.E. professional to promote recreational activities..

It was noted that all of hotels studied had areas reserved for recreation, with potential for the work of a P.E. professional, since the hotels catered to a clientele that sought this type of lodging. With regards to the recreational activities offered, only the hotel which did not count on the services of a recreation professional had fewer activity options. The other hotels offered a wider range of programmed activities, mainly those aimed for children.

In regards to the training for the professional to work in hotel recreation, there is nearly a unanimous opinion that the P.E. professional has the desired skills to work in this field; however, a background in Children's Education was pointed out as a qualification to work with children. Concerning the profile of the professional, the person is expected to be responsible, dynamic, communicative, captivating, charismatic, ethical, spontaneous, caring, cheerful, extroverted, encouraging and to have a pleasant appearance. It was found that the Physical Education professional is already a part of the hotels studied; therefore, it is up to this professional to look for his space in this job market, and to keep up-to-date while proposing quality recreational activities which promote good health and well-being.

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THE ROLE OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL IN RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE HOTEL NETWORK OF GRAMADO/RS

ABSTRACT

This study aims to verify the hotel managers' perception of the Physical Education professionals' role in recreational programs offered by hotels in Gramado, Rio Grande do Sul. The descriptive study used semi-structured interviews with the managers of the hotels analyzed. The results show the physical structure, the recreational activities offered to the guests and the profile and training of the P.E. professional working in hotel recreational programs. It was found that the managers of the hotels analyzed are favorable to the work of the Physical Education professionals in the hotel market and that some of these hotels count on their participation in promoting the recreational programs.

KEYWORDS: Hotel. Recreation. Physical Education Professional.

L'ACTION DU PROFESSIONNEL D'ÉDUCATION PHYSIQUE ET SPORTIVE AUX PROGRAMMES DES LOISIRS OFFERTS PAR LE CIRCLE HÔTELIER DE GRAMADO/RS

RESUME

Cette étude propose vérifier la perception des gérants des hôtels sur l'action du professionnel d'Éducation physique et Sportive aux programmes des loisirs du circle hôtelier de Gramado/RS. L'investigation a utilisé l'interview semi-structurée appliquée aux gérants des hôtels analysés. Les résultats ont montré la structure physique, les activités des loisirs offertes aux hôtes, la formation et le profil du professinonnel agissant dans les loisirs hôteliers. On a observé que les gérants des hôtels analysés sont favorables à l'action du professionnel d'Éducation physique et Sportive dans l'industrie hôtelier et une partie de ces hôtels veut leur paricipation pour promouvoir les programmations des loisirs.

MOTS-CLES: Hôtellerie. Loisirs. Professionnel d'Éducation Physique et Sportive.

LA ACTUACIÓN DEL PROFESIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA EN LOS PROGRAMAS DE OCIO OFRECIDOS POR LA RED HOTELERA DE GRAMADO/RS

RESUMEN

Este estudio tuvo como propósito verificar la percepción de los gerentes de hoteles sobre la actuación del profesional de Educación Física en los programas de ocio en la red hotelera de la ciudad de Gramado, Rio Grande del Sur (RS). La investigación, de abordaje descriptivo, utilizó la entrevista semiestructurada aplicada a los gerentes de los hoteles observados. Los resultados analizaron: la estructura física, actividades de ocio ofrecidas a los huéspedes, formación y perfil del profesional que actúa en el ocio hotelero. Se observó que los gerentes de los hoteles analizados son favorables a la actuación del profesional de Educación Física en el mercado hotelero y, una parte de estos hoteles, cuenta con la participación de estos profesionales para promocionar programaciones de ocio.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Hostelería. Ocio. Profesional de Educación Física.

A ATUAÇÃO DO PROFISSIONAL DE EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA NOS PROGRAMAS DE LAZER OFERECIDOS PELA REDE HOTELEIRA DE GRAMADO/RS

RESUMO

O presente estudo teve como propósito verificar a percepção dos gerentes de hotéis sobre a atuação do profissional de Educação Física nos programas de lazer na rede hoteleira de Gramado,RS. A investigação, de corte descritivo, utilizou a entrevista semi-estruturada aplicada aos gerentes dos hotéis analisados. Os resultados mostraram a estrutura física, atividades de lazer oferecidas aos hóspedes, formação e perfil do profissional atuante no lazer hoteleiro. Observou-se que os gerentes dos hotéis analisados são favoráveis à atuação do profissional de Educação Física no mercado hoteleiro, e, parte destes hotéis, conta com sua a participação para promover programações de lazer.

PALAVRAS CHAVES: Hotelaria. Lazer. Profissional de Educação Física.