Original Article

Family Life and Leisure Education Among Children in Cocody (Abidjan-Côte D'ivoire)

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Abstract - Leisure is presented as a set of activities in which the individual engages to entertain himself during his free time. It contributes to the rest, relaxation, and entertainment of the actor. The International Convention on the Rights of the Child, for its part, insists on the importance of access to leisure activities for the youngest. In this context, we are interested in understanding how leisure impacts children's social relationships in urban Ivorian areas regarding Boudon's rational choice theory (1986). This qualitative research reveals that parents mobilized leisure resources in children's education. In addition, the study shows that leisure contributes to their socialization and development.

Keywords - Family, Education, Leisure, Children, Socialization, Fulfilment.

1. Introduction

Leisure is a set of activities in which the individual intends to have fun or train, for his voluntary social participation or his free creative capacity, after having freed himself from his professional, family and social obligations (Dumazedier, 1962).

In addition, leisure is presented as permission to do things at your own pace, participate in an activity of your choice, and abandon it at will. At this level, leisure is defined according to three different approaches. These are leisure as free time, leisure as an activity and leisure as a state of mind (Cordes and Ibrahim, 1999). To these three approaches, Sessoms and Henderson (1994) add a fourth, leisure as experience. For their part, they define leisure as an activity experienced during moments of freedom for the experience's satisfaction.

For his part, Kraus (1984) defines leisure as the part of an individual's time that is not directly devoted to working, professional responsibilities or other obligatory forms of maintenance or personal care. He adds that leisure implies freedom and choice, that it is used in various forms and that we seek to meet the following needs: reflection, personal enrichment, relaxation and pleasure.

From this definition, it emerges that leisure does not oppose work. It is rather the time that remains when we subtract the time for work and the time necessary for social life activities. From this free time, the individual derives rest, relaxation and entertainment. In this context, the charter on leisure drawn up by the International Association for Leisure and Recreation affirms in its preamble that *"Everyone has the right to leisure"*. It is, therefore, not a privilege but recognized as a right for every human being. In the same vein, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948, specifies that the use of leisure is a fundamental right of every human being for his good. -be (U.N., 1948).

In addition, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates the importance of children's access to leisure activities. It insists on the right to have games and leisure activities adapted to the age of the child. Thus, article 31 indicates that: "the child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in games and recreational activities appropriate to his age and to participate freely in cultural and artistic life" (U.N., 1948).

Given that leisure provides pleasure and well-being, the choice of its practice is personal. Thus, the possibility of having many reasons to have fun and the benefits of this practice are priceless. Leisure not only keeps the brain active through relaxation but also makes life more enjoyable (Chombart and al, 1976).

Leisure activities affect all aspects of individual development, cognitively, emotionally, socially and behaviorally. Overall, leisure contributes as much to an individual's personal development as it helps him to develop his social environment (Sessoms and Henderson, 1994).

As for the family, it is presented as a universal primary group whose forms, although relatively stable, can vary according to societies and their historical context. It is also a social element external to individuals, and its duration of existence is greater than them: the individual is born in this institution which preexists him, and when he dies, it does not disappear. The family is also of paramount importance since it is she who takes care of the first tasks

of education. This education, given by the family, has several objectives: the parents transmit to the child a "model of being" and a perception of his environment, which forms his personality.

This institution is a fundamental element for society since it allows individuals to initiate the structure of their relationships with each other. Indeed, the family makes it possible to structure these relationships by giving the child the first definitions of the roles he must adopt, the rules he must submit to, and the socially legitimate behaviours he must put into practice (Ferréol, 2002).

Education covers any social activity aimed at transmitting to individuals the collective heritage of the society in which they live. This term includes both the training given by educational institutions or various groups, the socialization of the child by his family, the influence of the media, etc. It is therefore presented as a social activity aimed at transmitting the culture and values of a society (Dédy and Tapé, 1995).

Therefore it is through the family that the child is socialized. Through his interactions with his family, the child learns and integrates into his personality the ways of thinking and acting in his environment. Each individual begins by appropriating the heritage and vision of the world of their first role models, their parents. In this way, one could say the child would learn and integrate into his personality the social class (even if mobility is always possible) and the genders to which he belongs (Ferréol, 2002).

In this context, we are interested in understanding the impact of leisure on family education in the Ivorian urban environment. Faced with this situation, questions deserve to be raised: How does leisure in a family context influence children's social relationships in urban Ivorian areas? From this main question, two subsidiary questions emerge: What are the social representations linked to children's leisure in the lives of families in the municipality of Cocody? What are the leisure facilities for children? Which do parents use to entertain their children in the commune of Cocody? This study aims to analyze leisure's impact on children's family education in the commune of Cocody (Abidjan). Specifically, it describes the social representations associated with children's leisure in urban family life and then identifies the leisure facilities for children in the commune of Cocody.

This research is based in part on the theory of social representation. It consists of anchoring knowledge in a world of hierarchical social values resulting from the asymmetrical positions occupied by groups and individuals in a social field. In this respect, representations constitute intellectual constructs through which actors make the world around them intelligible. Thus, representations have an impact on the lives of individuals and the interactions they may have (Paugam 2010).

Social representations are "forms of socially developed and shared knowledge, having a practical aim and contributing to the construction of a reality common to a social whole" (Jodelet, 2003). They underpin attitudes and guide behaviour. In the context of research, this theory has made it possible to explain how the social representation linked to the practice of leisure for children in families indicates the level of integration of leisure in the family education of children in Cocody.

The research is further based on the theory of rational choice, a variant of the methodological individualism of Boudon (1986). According to this author, the principle of methodological individualism states that to explain any social phenomenon, it is essential to reconstruct the motivations of the individuals concerned by the phenomenon as the result of the aggregation of individual behaviours dictated by these motivations. The first, the individualism postulate, maintains that the social phenomenon results from combining individual actions, beliefs or attitudes. Individual actions and attitudes generally belong to the category of acts. Actions are behaviours endowed with intentions; they depend not only on the ability of the individual to give himself an intention but also on his ability to adapt to the situation in which he finds himself. The second postulate consists of understanding the why of the actions, beliefs or individual attitudes responsible for the phenomenon. Indeed, it makes it possible to understand the meaning that actions and beliefs have for the individual. For Boudon, social actions depend on the knowledge or experiences of each individual. These actions are influenced by socio-cultural values and norms that reflect the preferences of individuals in the defined context. The third, the postulate of rationality, explains the beliefs of the primitive mentality. According to methodological individualism, the actor must be considered in principle as having strong reasons for doing what he does and for believing what he believes. The actor takes particular account of those related to his interests. The theory of rational choice, through these 3 postulates, allows the study framework to understand the attitude of the actors in front of the practice of leisure and their choice to integrate leisure into family education. It also makes it possible to understand better families' access to leisure sites for children in Cocody (Abidjan).

2. Methodology
2.1. Data Collection Materials
At the level of the delimitation of the field of study, the choice to conduct the research in the municipality of Cocody in Abidjan can be explained by the assumption that this geographical field includes the largest number of spaces dedicated to leisure for children in the country. Regarding data collection techniques, documentary research, direct observation and interview were the methodological instruments used. The literature search focused on the review of previous work related to the subject of study. Thus the search for documents led us to the IRD (Institute for Research and Development) and the French Institute. We have consulted some general and

specialized works where we have been able to gather information relating to the leisure activities of children in general. Direct observation, in turn, allowed us to observe, describe and note behaviours related to the research topic. This intentional approach concerns the visualization of the ways of acting or thinking of families in a leisure space chosen as a place of investigation for the research.

As for the administration of the interview guide, this tool has made it possible to understand better the issue of integrating children's leisure into families.

According to N'da (2015), it is an oral face-to-face meeting between two people or a person and a group, one of which transmits to the other information sought on a specific problem. It is an exchange during which the interlocutor expresses his perceptions, his interpretations, and his experiences; At the same time, the researcher, through his open questions and reactions, facilitates this expression, preventing it from moving away from the research objectives. According to Grawitz (1996), the interview is, from a technical point of view, a process of scientific investigation which uses a process of verbal communication to collect information to the objectives that have been set.

We administered the interview guides to parents, children and resource persons working as leisure professionals for children. They allowed us to understand better the influence of leisure on the family education of children within the family in the Ivorian urban environment.

2.2. Survey Sample

The survey's target population is families with children's recreation programs. In doing so, the study specifically investigated families who dedicate themselves at least once every two weeks to leisure activities with their children. She also surveyed staff working in a children's recreation area. The sample size is 55 social actors detailed as follows:

-15 relatives;
-30 children;
-10 leisure professionals for children.

Leisure site staff	10
Parents	15
Children	30
Total	55

Source: Our survey

It should be noted that the place chosen to administer the interview guide is a children's recreation site called Doraville. In doing so, all the interviews were therefore conducted in Doraville. It was created in April 2010. It is an educational leisure center in the commune of Cocody in the city of Abidjan. This space is the leader in children's play parks in Côte d'Ivoire and one of the leaders in the West African sub-region. It receives more than 100

thousand visitors annually. Doraville is home to three (03) major game departments, namely classic games, optional games, and edutainment activities. The survey lasted 2 weeks, from August 17 to September 1, 2021, and was distributed as follows. From August 17 to August 24, 2021, interview with the staff of the Doraville leisure site. From August 24 to September 1, 2021, interviews with parents and children met in Doraville.

2.3. Survey Data Processing

After the semi-structured interviews conducted with the respondents mentioned above, the collection of this field information was submitted for transcription. It consisted in fully transcribing all the recordings from the interviews in addition to note-taking. This made it possible to have the full restitution of the data during the interviews. The next step consisted of reading the information in detail while selecting the key points that would be used for data analysis. These were classified by category of meaning or theme, which led to thematic content analysis. Then followed was identifying significant ideas and their categorization (Négura, 2006). The results after analysis of the survey data allowed us to understand the impact of leisure on the family education of children in urban Ivorian areas. Our study is part of a comprehensive analysis of education and the question of children's leisure use.

3. Results

3.1. Social Representations of Actors Associated with leisure

The survey reveals that the actors give leisure practice a preponderant place of choice. According to them, it is necessary for everyone, especially for children. Indeed, they should not be deprived of play because, beyond fun, leisure has a character of learning and development. Playing gives children free rein to their imagination, which helps to develop their creativity and sense of awakening. Thus through play, the child expresses himself. In addition, according to the results of the study, by playing, children learn to think when they have challenges to meet and clues to find by implementing game tactics and strategies such as observation, listening, memorization, location in space and time, calculation, reading, precise movements but also physical skills. These faculties allow them to flourish and develop well. Hence the words of this mother A.M.

"Me, I give first place to leisure for a child and those after school. Because the child has to play, even while playing, the child learns he can learn to count, to calculate, and it is suddenly easier to remember during this moment of play. Also, it must be said that leisure is essential for everyone because through the telephone, television, radio etc. We do leisure without knowing it."

Some go further; they show us the social aspect of leisure for children. Indeed, by playing, children learn the rules of life in society and make friends. Playing with friends allows you to learn to share, listen to others, show solidarity, and be good losers. This builds self-confidence

in the child. All of these elements obviously call for the socialization of the child. This is what this father, K.J. explains to us in these terms: Leisure in a formal environment is the practice of any recreational activity to achieve educational objectives. Either so that the child recognizes the colors and knows his limbs, his left or his right... Whereas in an informal environment, the child himself creates activities out of the blue without purpose in a deliberate way (…), and the child, regardless of the environment or the place where he plays his game, he makes friends and, at times, they themselves establish game rules that they respect. »

3.2. Typology of Games Available in Leisure Areas in Cocody

At the infrastructural level, the leisure sites for children in Cocody have balafons, rattles, dinettes, legos, balls, medical balloons, flutes, and slides and trampolines. According to the actors, these game instruments contribute to the well-being, development, and socialization of children and the family in general.

However, it should be noted that outside playing hours, the use of equipment by children is done with the agreement and supervision of the supervisors; no supervisor leaves the child alone on the playground. In fact, this precaution is taken to avoid injury to children or any other damage which could compromise their physical condition. This is reflected in the words of the C.A. staff: "We never let children and adults alone at any time use the games. You need the supervisor's permission because, with these people, everything is possible, so to avoid any incident, you need the supervisor's agreement". These spaces have a good state of infrastructure. Indeed the state of the infrastructure is of paramount importance for the actors because the children, given their fragile state, cannot practice their leisure on or with degraded infrastructures.

4. Discussion of Results

This study aims to analyze the impact of leisure on children's social life in the municipality of Cocody. A qualitative study allowed us to understand how leisure has made a place of choice within the family. Establishing a relationship between the results obtained and those of other previous studies is necessary.

4.1. The Social Representations that the Family has of Leisure for Children

When we refer to the typology of Parlebas and Martin (1981), we understand that leisure activities are classified into three (03) categories according to the degree of investment of the child's body (physical leisure/non-physical) and the degree of commitment. These are the sports activities instituted within the framework of an association or a club (basketball, tennis, football, etc.). Ludo sports activities practiced outside the framework of the institution are free activities or quasi-sporting games devoid of formal rules (cycling, skating, etc.) or even traditional games (hopscotch, hide-and-seek) or, finally, street games that do not fall within the institutional

framework and also games played in a center dedicated to activities.

First, the results made it possible to highlight the social representations that family actors have of leisure. Indeed, according to the parents surveyed, leisure is essential for all children. It can be seen in the work of Pierard (2015). The author demonstrates that leisure activities are a place of socialization and development for children and must therefore be accessible to all.

Furthermore, through their analysis, Kindelberger and al (2007) show that leisure contributes in a specific and significant way to the cognitive and social development of children and adolescents, including adults. They thus appear as revealers of the interests and psychological and sociological needs of children. They are likely to provide useful information to psychologists, sociologists, and guidance counselors for children. In this respect, leisure always impacts the family's life in the sense that it enriches the cognitive capacity of the human being.

In addition, Passmore and French (2001) classify extracurricular activities according to the purpose pursued in the activity, thus suggesting a psychological dimension to the activities. These authors identify three main categories of goals pursued: "self-actualization" activities requiring significant cognitive and social regulation (sports, arts, etc.). Social activities, pretexts for the relationship with peers (discussing, chatting, going out...). Relaxation activities without special requirements (idleness, television and radio listening, etc.). This type of a priori grouping makes it possible to consider which characteristics of the person the leisure activities are likely to play on. The possible influence of leisure activities thus suggests that beyond a simple time, these activities claim an actual status as a development environment.

Reichhart et al (2013), for their part, carried out a study within a French medico-social establishment with 15 people with disabilities from low-income families. He highlights in his study that family leisure practices contribute to family strengthening.

4.2. Types of Games Available at Leisure Sites

Several gaming instruments emerged following the investigation. Non-hazardous instruments include balafons, rattle, dinettes, legos, balls, medicine balls and flutes. These play instruments are not all exposed like the slides, the trampolines and the turnstile. As for the material of the infrastructures, rubber and wood are preferably in neat spaces. Similarly, Wagner and Thirion (2014) established 26 physical and playful activities to be practiced individually or collectively with the child through a study carried out in the territory of Belfort. These games have the specificity of being practiced in undamaged spaces.

The CREDOC report (1999) distinguishes different places where children practice leisure. The main leisure

activity for children aged 6 to 12 is practiced in a sports club (this is the case for 74% of them). 7% of children practice it in a leisure center or day camp. 6% in a cultural association. 5% in a music school or conservatory. Among the places of leisure instituted, we also add the school through the workshops organized on extracurricular time. But there are other places of leisure identified as the house and the library. It is in this same vein that Parlebas and Martin (2004) argue that children's leisure activities are practiced in parks, sports fields, the neighborhood in general and in leisure spaces. In addition, in the broad sense, leisure-time physical activity (PLA) means different forms of sports, games and other leisure activities.

These activities can occur almost anywhere: stadiums, public gardens, gymnasiums, lakes, swimming pools, parks or squares. Three types of infrastructure for APL can be defined from this observation: sports facilities, special infrastructure for leisure, urban spaces and green spaces. For him, the children have more fun and joy in the leisure centres, especially the outdoor ones. The outdoor center is an equipment designed for the development of the personality of the child where this practice of educational leisures receiving children of school age outside or in addition to school activities, for the practice of versatile educational activities, in good health and safety conditions, under the supervision of qualified personnel.

In terms of the types of leisure developed for children, Perrin (2011) analyzes play in autistic children in leisure spaces. For the author, social play develops spontaneously in the typical child, but it remains an objective to be achieved for the autistic child. It appears as the first indicator of trouble. Through his study of leisure sites, he distinguishes different levels of games that lead the child to interact with his peers. These are isolated play, side play, parallel play, and shared play. These games involve autistic children performing the same activity with their peers. The present study, which is restricted to children who live with their parents, also made it possible to identify different games of autistic children classified according to a type of leisure, namely social leisure, cognitive leisure and awakening leisure which are put in their favor to bring these children out of their inner world, by socializing with others.

5. Conclusion

The practice of leisure is an interesting issue in Ivorian societies because of people's perceptions around this activity. This concern led to the following research question: how does leisure influence children's social life in urban areas? Thus, this question leads to a general objective which proposes to analyze the impact of leisure practice on the family education of children in the commune of Cocody. This study is based on a theoretical and methodological framework. The theoretical framework made it possible to highlight the reasons which motivated the choice of the study, the definitional approach to leisure, the state of knowledge on the question of children's leisure, the problem, the objectives of the research, and the examination of the theoretical reference in which the study fits. As for the methodological framework, it made it possible to present the survey area from a geographical and social angle, the data collection tools, and the population surveyed through sampling. This qualitative study administered an interview guide to 55 actors. The research results reveal that the actors represent leisure as an activity of high social significance in family education. It allows children through play strategies to socialize and is beneficial to their social balance. In addition, some game instruments emerged following the survey in leisure areas in Cocody-Abidjan. Non-dangerous instruments such as the balafon, the rattle, tea sets, legos, balls, the flute, slides, the trampolines and the turnstile are made available to the children. In terms of child safety, the materials are made of rubber and wood.

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