

# LUDIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES: A study in public schools in the city of Santa Vitória do Palmar, RS – Brazil

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## ABSTRACT

The educational processes are fundamental for the formation of citizens more aware of their role in the construction of a more egalitarian and fairer society. In a world where human activities are constantly accelerated by capitalist practices, it becomes increasingly necessary to think about the role of education in the formation of new citizens who are aware of their importance in society. Thus, this work aimed to identify the ludic and recreational activities that contribute to the educational processes of First Grade students from public schools in Santa Vitória do Palmar, RS - Brazil. In the methodology, a bibliographical research was carried out. For data collection, interviews with the teachers responsible for the First Grade classes at each school were applied and the non-participant observation method was used, in addition to the photographic survey. It was identified that all the public schools in the city have ludic and recreational activities that contribute to the educational processes of the enrolled students.

**Keywords:** Recreation. Ludic. School. Santa Vitória do Palmar / RS.

## INTRODUCTION

The practice of leisure is a subject somewhat discussed by several authors of different areas of knowledge; in some cases each one has different conceptions about the subject. One of the most prominent concepts in Brazil, according to the authors Gomes, Pinheiro and Lacerda (2010), was the concept emerged in the 1970s by the French sociologist Dumazedier. Dumazedier's concept of leisure has contributed to a better understanding of the development of this practice.

In this context, Dumazedier (2008 & 2014) explained that leisure is expressed in various forms of occupation of time, forms in which the human being surrenders freely, or for the practice of resting, recreation, entertainment, participating in voluntary social actions. Those activities are always performed after the fulfillment of social, family and professional obligations.

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The practice of leisure activities has an important role, since it makes the human being dissociate from daily routine, even if for only a short period of time, being possible to experience sensations and expose feelings and emotions (Dumazedier, 2008 & 2014).

Moletta (2003) also considers that leisure provides human beings a better quality of life, stimulates mental health and makes social relationships more enjoyable, regardless of age, social class and social styles.

According to Dumazedier (2008), leisure as it is understood today is the result of a process that began to be built after the beginning of the first Industrial Revolution. Before that time, working and non-working time occurred naturally and simultaneously. The work happened in order to contemplate the cycles of nature and this rhythm was broken several times through breaks for games, ceremonies, singing and, in general, they were confused with the daily activities from sunrise to sunset. As reported by Camargo (2006), leisure is a cultural

model of social practices that influence the personal and social development of individuals, also called informal education or cultural animation.

This ludic model of learning is employed to help traditional and institutionalized formal education of schools in Brazil and in the world with the aim of providing better quality in teaching that happens or should happen in a relaxed and pleasurable way. After all, the children are the main object of this model and they absorb the content more intensely when they are entertained with pleasurable and/or challenging tasks and activities.

The child has been approached as a mere object of investigation. They have been seen as incomplete beings, which is far from what they are in reality when they interact with others and transform themselves. Therefore, it is a challenge to point out ways so that children can express themselves in the fullness of their individual being: their word, their gesture, their intersubjective relations, their contradiction, their humanity. (Debortoli, p.95, 1999).

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That said, ludic activities should be developed aiming at the development of citizens who are aware of their place in society, but not as an inferior being to others, but as an individual who is capable of making and creating, also being a transforming agent of the social environment in which he lives. Leisure is a space of social transformation and collaboration for the construction of new standards of coexistence (Bacal, 2003; Lohmann & Netto Panosso, 2012).

Thinking about this ludic/pedagogical relation, this work became relevant to contribute to the study of the relation between leisure and educational processes within the public schools in Santa Vitória do Palmar, focusing on the 1st Grade of each school. That said, this study aimed to identify the leisure activities that constitute the ludic model of learning of the 1st Grade students of public schools in Santa Vitória do Palmar.

In order to make this objective possible, a bibliographical research was carried out, four interviews were conducted with teachers from each school, and the method of non-participant observation was also used. At the end, the data were tabulated and the results were analyzed. The bibliographical research, the interviews and the non-participant observation were carried out in October, 2016. In the analysis of the results it was observed that all the public schools in the city have informal learning activities that contribute to the students' educational processes.

### **THEORETICAL REFERENCE**

Studies in the area of leisure that discuss its relation with education take knowledge of the ludic practices with the intention of contributing to the debate of this ludic/pedagogical relation. This work had, as scientific evidence for the construction of knowledge in the area of leisure, some authors who talked about the history of leisure and how it underwent adaptations over time, some who approached the technical and conceptual themes about leisure and tourism, and others who related the educational processes with ludic and recreational learning activities.

As reported by Camargo (2006), an activity can only be considered as leisure if it presents characteristics such as gratuity, personal choice, pleasure in doing certain activity and the release of obligations.

In accordance with this statement, it can be said that for a given activity to be considered a leisure activity it must follow the rules described in the author's concept, however, those rules are not fixed and there are often exceptions, as the author himself points out,

leisure is a cultural model of social practice that interferes with the personal and social development of individuals. This is the so-called informal education, in a society that, not only through school and family, but also through its meeting places, diffused information of TV, newspapers, billboards, cinema, chats, becomes an educational society (Camargo, p. 71, 2006).

In this way, the leisure activities, if well planned, contribute effectively to the educational processes of students to strengthen social and individual values in a recreational, relaxed way and that can positively influence the social life of the individual.

The informal activities within the schools are those activities that are free of obligation on the part of the students and which provide a greater sense of freedom of choice, and it can therefore provide a differentiated form of learning.

Leisure implies liberation and pleasure, rest, fun and development, according to the classic scholars on the subject, as Dumazedier (2008 & 2014). In the school context, those leisure activities provide, among other things, the development of personality. Dumazedier (2014, p. 33 and 34) presents concepts that need to be revisited, especially when mentioning that leisure

[...] allows a greater and freer social participation, [...] offers new possibilities for the voluntary integration of recreational, cultural and social groups; enables the free development of attitudes acquired at school [...]. The development function can also create new forms of voluntary learning, to be practiced during life and to contribute to the appearance of innovative and creative behaviors.

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In agreement with Waichman (1997), recreation can be defined as education in the free time and of (or for) the free time, and it works as a subsystem of non-formal education that requires a structure, specific methods, precise objectives, teachers specialized in the subject, etc., starting from a more consumerist continuum and getting to the situation of protagonist.

The sensitive rationality is a challenge to the objectivist analysis of science, to the logical argumentation, to the technical utilitarianism, because sensitive knowledge operates through uncertainty, through unpredictability, it is open to the configuration of new possibilities of the construction of reality. In this context, the ludic can be understood as an operator of the imagination, the dream and the creativity as dimensions of the human. (Melo & Dias, 2010 p.3).

That being said, it is perceived that playfulness is configured as a fuel for the subjectivity that is presented to the child when the child makes contact with other forms of apprehension of reality through informal activities at the school where they study. This reinforces the development of new ways of learning what was taught in the traditional system and supports new forms of learning by teachers and students.

The recreation is committed to a vision of education that, with games, dynamics, challenges, gymkhana, toys and ludic strategies, enables the individuals to live, produce and reinvent culture and, with this, to build learning of all kinds of orders: cognitive, motor, affective, relational and social (Camargo, 2006).

According to Guerra (1988), the recreation and leisure activities can differ in the form of participation: active recreation and passive recreation. The active recreations can be further divided into: motor activities, which require the body, for example, children's games and sports in general; intellectual activities, that is, the mind is more used, such as in chess and puzzle; artistic or creative activities, for example, painting, drawing, carpentry, sculpture, theater, music, etc. and Risk activities, which are those in which the people who practice test their integrity, through activities such as skydiving, diving, free flying, etc.

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The passive activities, for the same author (1988), are represented by the following: sensorial activities, where there is an interactive participation with the activity, such as cheering for your team in a football stadium. There are also the transcendental activities, which are mixed up with idleness by the participation of spectator; however, they refer to the activities of appreciating paintings in the museum, contemplating nature, relaxation, etc.

In this sense, it was noticed the importance of the formulation of informal activities of leisure in schools, that is, of recreation as a form of complementary education in the formal education of the students, since these activities play

a mediating role between the learning in the school and the reproduction of these experiences in the daily life of the students. However, it was necessary to raise the family's awareness about these issues.

## METHODOLOGY

This research, according to its purposes and objectives, is characterized by being of the exploratory type as a way of obtaining theoretical and conceptual information on the main themes of this analysis, using the bibliographic and documentary survey. The exploratory research aims to provide an approximation between the researcher and the discussions that have already been made on the topics addressed in this research (Leal, 2011).

The field research became necessary to better understand the object of study and to get closer to it, allowing a direct experience with the students of the studied schools, the object of study of this research, and allowing the researchers to observe the students from those schools (Gil, 2010).

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This work was characterized as a qualitative descriptive study with interviews with the teachers who make use of informal learning techniques, with ludic and recreational activities. The interviews were held in October, 2016 with the teachers responsible for the First Grade classes of the public schools in Santa Vitória do Palmar.

The method of non-participant observation and a photographic survey were also used in order to identify and record the moment when the activities were carried out by the students. The school teachers and principals did not authorize interviews with the children

In this research, neither the names of the schools were published, nor were the faces revealed in the figures contained in the "results and discussions" section in order not to expose teachers, students and other members of the city community.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the city of Santa Vitória do Palmar there are four public schools that work with the ludic model of learning through informal recreation activities with the First Grade. School 1, School 2, School 3 are located in the center of the city, and School 4 is located in a district farther from the center. The four schools have First Grade classes with an average age between 6 and 7, with a variation of 14 students (at School 4); 30 students (at School 1).

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At all schools it was possible to identify informal recreation activities that contribute to students' learning. The activities identified at School 1 (Table 1, below) were recreation activities, ludic games, outdoor tours, city museum visits, drawing, theater, role plays, folding, assembly, modeling, and physical activities.

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Table 1 - Informal activities of the public schools in Santa Vitória do Palmar.

SCHOOL	ACTIVITIES		AGE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
1	Recreation Activities; Ludic games in general; Outdoor tours; Visits to museums; Drawing;	Theater; Folding; Assembly; Modeling; Dramatization; Physical activities;	Between 6 and 7 years old	30
2	Painting; Creation of mosaics; Folding; Cutting and clipping; Ludic games in general, music, picnics;	Fairs; Gymkhana; Parades; Talent presentations; Theater; Phonics Method;	Between 6 and 7 years old	15
3	Recreational physical activities; Movies and videos; Modeling clay; Posters	Helper of the day; Ludic games in general; Cutting and clipping; Assembling games;	Between 6 and 7 years old	25
4	Visits to museums; Painting; Drawing; Theater; Traditional dances;	Story time; Videos, movies; Assembling games; Word formation;	Between 6 and 7 years old	14

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2016

In Figure 1, it is possible to verify one of the moments of recreation experienced by the children of School 1. During the observation, the researchers identified that the children interacted with each other, without any type of separation.

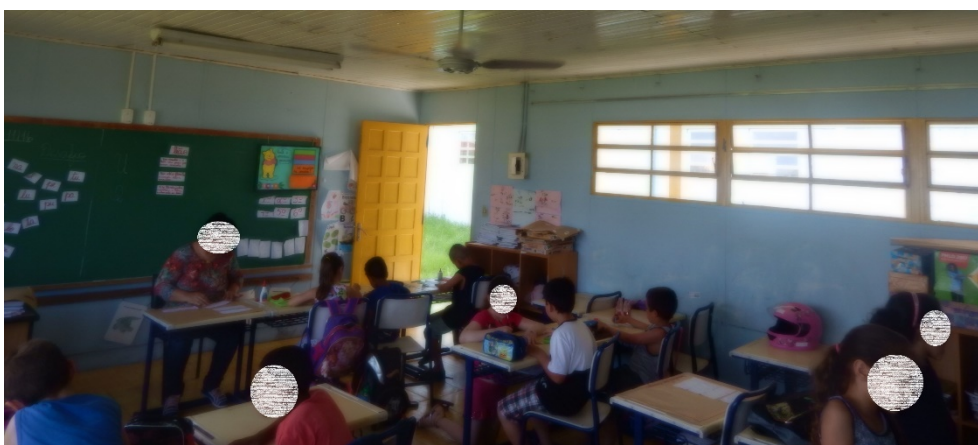
Figure 1 - Recreation activity at School 1



Source: Authors' collection, 2016

At School 2, activities like painting, mosaic creation, folding, cutting and clipping, ludic games, music, picnics, fairs, gymkhanas, parades, talent presentations and the use of the phonics method were identified. In figure 2, below, it is possible to observe the children drawing animals that participated in an individual story of each student.

Figure 2 - Ludic activities at School 2



Source: Authors' collection, 2016

At School 3, activities such as visits to museums, painting activities, drawing, theater, traditional regional dances, story time, educational videos and films, jigsaw puzzle assembly and word-games were identified. At School 4, we identified physical activities, recreation activities, movies and videos, activities with modeling clay, creation of illustrative posters, the helper of the day, ludic games, cut and clipping and assembling games.

#### PERCEPTION OF THE TEACHERS AND THE DIRECTORS OF THE INSTITUTIONS

When the teachers were questioned about how the classroom activities were planned, all of them answered that the activities were planned by the teachers, according to the content of the class. During the class, several activities are carried out to avoid children's distraction and tiredness and to make classes more enjoyable. The recreation, trips, movies and other activities are planned along with the school principal. The teachers were questioned about what their school principals think about the students' learning process through games.

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The four principals say that they help, encourage, and care for these types of ludic activities with the children because they understand that those activities are important for a more comprehensive learning and a quality learning experience. According to the interviewed teachers, those informal activities are essential for quality learning, as they contribute to the development of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills of the students and are important elements of learning at school. The informal activities should be taken seriously by the teachers, since children between 6 and 7 years old assimilate the content better in a more relaxed way with the ludic learning.

#### APPLICABILITY OF RESULTS

The results show that the four public schools in the city of Santa Vitória do Palmar developed the ludic learning model as reinforcement to the traditional institutionalized model. There are differences among the schools concerning the methodology developed for the elaboration of activities and the application of those activities to the students.

The results obtained in each school contribute to the development of an extension project linked to the public schools in the city of Santa Vitória do Palmar, which will be supported by the Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG) in the elaboration of activities related to leisure and education in a relaxed way. The project aims to support the public schools in the study to develop new ludic activities based on leisure. Those activities aim to develop the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills of the students of the first grade in the public schools in the city of Santa Vitória do Palmar.

The project to be developed will contribute to the public schools in the city by supporting the teachers who are responsible for the first grade classes in the development of activities related to formal learning. In this way, formal education will be complemented and reinforced by the activities that will be carried out at the end of each content presented to the students. The activities will be elaborated together with the teachers who already teach in these schools. At the end of each month, the project managers will meet with all teachers who are responsible for the classes to discuss ideas and exchange information. In this way, teachers will be able to exchange information and improve their non-formal teaching methods.

This research needs further development; the subject does not end here. New research should be developed, including the students, so that the evolution of learning can be perceived, as well as the real difference among classes that have recreational activities and those which do not. It is intended to include or enable trips and/or sightseeing as a form of recreation and learning.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Informal learning activities are fundamental elements of the teaching process in schools, as they provide the student with a fun way to learn. Besides learning the content that is taught in class the students have access to the full development of their personal and social

interaction skills. At Schools 3 and 4, it was not possible to photograph the activities, as the teachers who were responsible for the classes did not allow authorization.

It is concluded that the various informal activities that were identified in teaching can also be used as a form of distraction and, at the same time, of learning for the students. For further studies it is suggested a deeper approximation with the classroom activities and the formulation of the interviews table in order to collect more complete data about the activities with the students.

It is also suggested the creation and development of an extension project together with the public schools that were studied to develop new forms of learning linked to playfulness and, with this action, to make education more efficient and also to contribute to the formation of citizens who are more lucid of their creative and transformative capacity in society.

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