

The creation of oneself in free time: educating for leisure**La creación de sí en el tiempo libre: educar para el ocio**

NIEVES-CHÁVEZ, Mayra Araceli, ORTEGA-MARTINEZ, María Cristina and PÉREZ-CASTILLO, Pablo

Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, México.

ID 1st Author: *Mayra Araceli, Nieves-Chávez* / **ORC ID:** 0000-0003-3934-8090

ID 1st Co-author: *María Cristina, Ortega-Martínez* / **ORC ID:** 0000-0002-6188-4677

ID 2nd Co-author: *Pablo, Pérez-Castillo* / **ORC ID:** 0009-0005-1569-0715

DOI: 10.35429/JPDL.2023.24.9.6.12

Received January 20, 2023; Accepted June 30, 2023

Abstract

The building of itself is an act moved from the hopes and dreams of becoming. Dreams project a future that can be, and hope is the force required to achieve them. The life project is an exercise in awareness that begins with imagining what you want to be and be aware of the relationship with the world. Leisure is lived from internal motivations and is auto-condicionated to seek the opportunities realization of dreams. Education for Leisure must recover the ideals of life, learning to live the leisure, and spark the imagination for the realization of dreams. This paper presents the research results on what you want to be and how to realize them in their free time; this is a descriptive case study investigation with the phenomenological method.

Leisure, Self-creation, Imagination, Dreams, Hope

Resumen

La construcción de sí es un acto movido desde los sueños y esperanzas de llegar a ser. Los sueños proyectan un futuro que puede llegar a ser y la esperanza es la fuerza necesaria para alcanzarlos. El proyecto de vida es un ejercicio de la conciencia que comienza con imaginar lo que se quiere ser y ser conscientes de la relación con el mundo. El tiempo libre se vive desde motivaciones internas y es autocondicionado porque busca las posibilidades de realización de los sueños. La educación para el tiempo libre debe recuperar los ideales de vida, enseñar a vivir el tiempo liberado y despertar la imaginación para la realización de los sueños. La presente ponencia presenta los resultados sobre la investigación de lo que se quiere ser y cómo realizarlos en el tiempo libre; es de corte descriptivo, con el método fenomenológico y bajo el estudio de caso.

Tiempo libre, creación de sí, imaginación, sueños, esperanza

Citation: NIEVES-CHÁVEZ, Mayra Araceli, ORTEGA-MARTINEZ, María Cristina and PÉREZ-CASTILLO, Pablo. The creation of oneself in free time: educating for leisure. *Journal of Philosophy and Daily Life*. 2023. 9-24:6-12.

* Author's Correspondence (E-mail: mayra.araceli.nieves@uaq.mx)

† Researcher contributing as first author.

Introduccion

This text is the result of educational research, with internal resources from the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, addressing the need for comprehensive training of the students of this university. The study is aimed at understanding the ideals of formation and life of the students and this makes the present research important because it focuses on how personal and professional life is given meaning, it takes up the experience of life and how those activities that are to the liking and chosen in freedom contribute to consolidate the meaning of life. The studies of free time focus on the measurement and social distribution of time, in this work we recover the lived experience of how one enjoys and enjoys what one does and how it gives meaning to one's existence.

How does the construction of the self take place in free time, what activities lead to being what one wants to be? This paper shows the reflective work of a group of students of the Bachelor's Degree in Educational Innovation and Management at the Autonomous University of Querétaro, on the importance of the use of free time and the construction of a life project. The group of students identified their aspirations to become, as well as the actions they need to take to fulfil their dreams. Free time, in its various activities, brings together the dreams and hopes of being, hence the importance of educating for their experience.

One of the aims of education in free time is to guide people to seek pleasurable activities that lead them to experience happiness and physical-mental balance; but this search must be based on the life project in order to take responsibility for the act of creating oneself. The construction of the self is based on dreams of being and on the hope that leads to their realisation.

Next, a conceptual framework on free time and education is developed, as well as the weaving between dreams and hopes that give direction to free time practices. Next, the methodology of systematisation of classroom experiences is presented, which was carried out using a qualitative methodology, with the phenomenological and hermeneutic method.

The following section presents the results of how childhood dreams are gradually becoming a reality, and one of these possibilities is to care for and attend to leisure time activities. Finally, the conclusions in which it is noted that attending to the human aspect of dreams is what makes it possible to give meaning to life in all its dimensions.

Concept of free time

Everyday life is characterised by the hierarchisation of time and activities, which seem to oppose work and rest. Marx (2012) and Heller (2002) argue that everyday life involves producing the world that leads to earning a living, but that time is also needed for activities that are not forced, but liberated and expected in order to rest the body, mind and nourish the spirit. Munné (2004) offers a classification of social time that includes work, rest, commitments and personal time, these times are: socio-economic in which one works and earns a living; psycho-social that seeks to satisfy human survival needs; socio-cultural is the time to fulfil social, family and civic commitments; finally free time in which self-created needs are satisfied.

The social time used in the individual and social reproduction of the subject, the activities are moved and oriented by the need for survival and compliance with social conventions that imply moral or legal sanctions, hence the origin of the need is external and with a sense alien to the person. These activities are highly heteroconditioned by the nature and social organisation of time. Free time has an internal motivation with its own meaning that suspends need and seeks transcendence of the material world, hence they are self-conditioned and disinterested activities (Heller, 2002 and Munné, 2004). The subject conditions him/herself to carry out the activities, feeling free to stop or change them whenever he/she wants. Menchén (2011) states that it is a time to dream, to make projects, to prepare, to look for possibilities and to realise desires. It is a time that not only focuses on the present, but also projects the future.

Free time for Marx (2001) is a time for free work, for free creativity and development of skills; personally available for distraction and higher activities that overcome the monotony of work. The richness of these experiences lies in the fact that they transform work and the person him/herself. Marx (2012) sees free time as a space for the construction of the self, as it is self-conditioned, free of necessity, obligation and social sanction, its purpose is enjoyment, which is conditioned by the use of imagination and creativity.

Dreams, hopes and free time

Everyday life may seem as Heller (1982) mentions the environment and the spontaneous appropriation of habits and techniques that gives rise to the deployment of pragmatic behaviour; in these concrete forms of integration where the active subject emerges, Freire (2013) argues that implicit in nature is the act of knowing, inquiring and transforming; it is possible to move from a given world to a world of giving (Freire, 2005). What drives the move from the given to the being-given is the sense of incompleteness and the need to be more; this possibility of being more is fuelled by dreams and driven by hope.

Desires for change are driven and sustained by hope, which is nourished by the gratuitous love of life. The longing for a dignified life entails knowing how to love, to read the world and the word, to overcome fear, to believe, to create, to work, to rest; saying yes to a happy life means humanisation (Freire, 2012). Dreaming is the route to the realisation of feasible things, breaking the dam of disenchantment and uncertainty. It is impossible to think of transforming life without dreams, without a viable future. Dreaming denounces an unpleasant present and projects a better future; imagining better conditions forces us to draw up actions that make it possible to achieve utopia. The unpublished viable is the capacity to make a dream come true, the future to be built (Freire 2001, 2005, 2013), utopia is possible because the subject is capable of constructing his own history, has the capacity to know his limit situations that challenges him to transformation and drives him to hope. The unpublished viable implies reflection and action, it is a dialectic between thinking and acting.

The founding moment of utopia is imagination. The act of imagining begins when one recognises the possibility of searching and finding, of identifying possibilities, paths and opportunities. To seek, says Greene (2005), is to move towards a contemplated future, traced by the imagination that seeks to break with the inertia of habit, to move from the boring, repetitive and uniform to the adventure of the unknown. The miracle of the new begins in consciousness, which is when the person puts distance with the environment and begins to build his or her own history, giving meaning to life as well as being master of oneself and living one's own historicity (Freire, 1981). Freire (1985) argues that the critical perception of reality does not mean transformation, but that it is necessary to go through history reflecting and doing, in order to overcome the simple passive adaptation to the world and create one's own reality (Menchén, 2011).

Hope is a substantive element that keeps dreams alive, drives and concretises the humanisation of the subject, it is a necessary force to transform the world (Freire, 2009); it is the point of departure and arrival of life. For Bloch (2004), hope is an internal desire, necessary efforts to realise dreams, energy that provides will and a vision of the future that resinifies the uncertainty of the subject's future. Freire (2009) mentions that in order to begin the struggle for transformation, hope is necessary; dreams are the seed of utopia, but hope is essential to achieve it. Believing that hope alone transforms the world and acting on this illusion is naïve and leads to despair. Hope must be based on concrete actions to make human ethics a reality, without actions the essence of human ethics is denied; only actions can make dreams become concrete history (Freire, 2012).

Free time and the act of self-creation

The act of self-creation is a choice. The past is enough material to devise utopia. Yesterday has the goodness to give us space for choice and human action, Bauman (2010) mentions that it is not possible to build a future without choice, even non-choice means choosing to let oneself drift. The possibilities of creation of the subject are a vast range according to the inner search; but it can also be a creation of oneself to the sway of the market; what is certain is that for every person the future is a "not yet", with uncertain results.

The act of creation, according to Menchén (2011) is to bring to life what is inside, it has to do with a capacity to creatively see reality in order to transform it, to build a new future full of values and meanings different from those that prevail in the present. Free time activities are a creative and educational process with the desire for change. Being oneself implies being clear about what one wants to be, this is achieved through the exercises of putting distance from the world and accessing the awareness of one's own commitment to live. It is to be aware of one's inner gaze, rather than living under the social gaze (Touraine, 2007). When we manage to know who we are, we go through a process of individuation, which is to recognise what we are and what we want, it is the construction of the individual in relation to others, it is to manage to be for oneself, it is to recognise oneself as a self that loves certain things and rejects others, which requires a certain degree of self-love that helps to create and recreate (Touraine, 2006). The construction of the self emerges from the deepest part of the self, in order to transform, to deploy talents and to live in the novelty of building the future.

The free time activities that unfold from creativity and freedom lead to signifying life and experiencing transcendence, which means breaking with routine and suspending the reproduction of the given world to make way for the construction of the new and to dedicate oneself to activities proper to the human race such as science, art, politics or religion. These activities are oriented and motivated by feelings, that which drives transcendence is love, generosity, humility, nobility, trust and altruism that make up harmony and self-love (Heller, 1970, 1993 and 2002). To achieve the suspension of needs, in free time, it is necessary to concentrate, i.e. to be contemplative, to relax, to enjoy the activity, to stop worrying about the world, to be comfortable and to give oneself and the other (Heller, 1970 and Calvino, 1979). To envision a better future means to be hopeful, hope implies generic affects such as love, generosity, trust, nobility and altruism.

When free time is oriented by lovelessness and hopelessness, the subject projects distrust and vileness in relating to himself and to others. For McLaren (1997) the predatory culture comes from a dehydrated imagination stripped of the possibility of dreaming, giving way to a subject who considers the only alternative to adopt or accommodate to the given world, and to have a lackadaisical attitude to building a lifestyle of his own, assuming the logic of domination that moves him particular feelings of safeguard and self-preservation. This situation indicates the absence of living free time from internal motivations, falling into routine, boredom and lack of autonomy to draw up a history project, but rather drifting and swaying in the logic of a given world.

Free time can be a space for the creation of oneself that favours individuation and being a being for oneself that leads to the constant search for being more and to the feeling of gratuity and harmony of personal and social life, and a time that moves from dreams and hope in search of balance. It can also be a space that nullifies the social subject and the death of imagination that leads to the assumption of the determination of historical conditions.

The road travelled for the study of leisure time

The research was descriptive, with the group of 4th semester of the degree in Educational Innovation and Management, composed of 14 women with an average age of 20 years in 2014. The empirical information supporting the research was obtained through a semi-structured interview. The group of students is not a reliable sample, but a case study that allows to approach the reality and that is representative to gather important data and extract data of originality in the forms of appropriation of the world, but also of some valid generality (Stake, 2010 and Girardi, 2011); being a case study there are no generalizations only a sample of how leisure time activities are oriented and move.

The questions that guided the interview included the dreams of what they wanted to be, the present as the actions they take to achieve their dreams and the future as a long-term projection of life; they also asked about the activities that make them happy and that they choose freely. The answers obtained were combined in forms of valuing that presented the greatest similarity of meaning, according to the methodological support of Weber's (2000) ideal types, which is a theoretical construction that maintains a consistency of meaning, which does not exist in reality but which allows us to identify what the actions would be like if they were to be followed in accordance with the theoretical construction.

By asking what activities make people happy, we sought to describe what is essential from the phenomenological point of view. It was proposed to discover the motives that guide leisure time practices, that which gives meaning and drives us to be more; to identify the internal things that give meaning to existence. It meant the opening of being, contemplating the person from dreams, imagination, hope, feelings, uncertainty, capacity to act and choose; it allowed us to go to the very things that make being to be. Heidegger (2014) defines phenomenology as that which is shown, bringing to light, making something visible in itself, that which can be shown, in itself and by itself in various ways. Everyday life is the immediate and spontaneous sphere of human existence; it is in this space that being reveals itself. The data obtained were grouped according to the tendency of free time: activities of humanisation or melioration of the subject, according to dreams, feelings and hopes.

Teaching and love: dream of childhood and construction of the present

In the studied group of female students, the foundational dream of the project of self-building is oriented by the generic feeling of love, they project themselves by donating their lives in favour of processes of humanisation of the other, of themselves and of the ultimate goal of personal and social life. This ideal they intend to realise in the teaching profession, as wives, mothers, friends, active members of a large family and social group.

The dreams of personal and professional fulfilment are inspired and reaffirmed by the teachers they have had in the first years of schooling and by the example of their mothers.

Teaching and family life is visualised in commitment and solidarity, actions that are nourished by generosity, because they are moved by the desire to be people who help to build spaces for harmonious coexistence, which also implies the donation of oneself, a generic feeling of nobility. The construction of being a teacher is based on awareness and the will to assume the responsibility of educating; for this it is necessary to be patient, cheerful, close, to be in constant training and open to learning, as well as being brave and determined women-teachers, who not only want to exist but to live through reflection and transformation of the world. They see the ultimate goal of being a teacher as a means for others to read the world and adopt new, fairer forms of social relations. Dreams that are motivated by the generic feelings of nobility and altruism.

Free time: practices from the I to the we

The life project begins by imagining the future, awakening feelings of joy that lead to the search for forms of concreteness; with the passage of time, the dreams of childhood are consolidated, sometimes by example and other times by spaces for reflection that help to put distance from the world and recognise personal needs to humanise oneself by humanising. Free time becomes a space to search for, guide and nurture the happiness that one wishes to achieve; because in this free time it is possible to build those paths that make the dreamed life possible.

This group of women students recognised that in order to be what they want to be, it is necessary to study, research, work, read, rest, have fun, socialise, reflect, know themselves, be informed, and do things they enjoy. In their free time, they identified that they can read (recreational or professional), write, travel, volunteer, participate in organisations, socialise, go to cultural and artistic spaces, dance, go for walks, sing, play with their pets, listen to music, watch films, as a way of nurturing personal and professional dreams.

They also identify the need to foster spaces for contemplation, solitude, meditation or prayer, as viable and necessary means for introspection, a life in balance, achieving and preserving joy, approaching the virtues of strength, perseverance, intelligence and empathy. A life oriented by confidence and humility is what their dreams relegate.

The dream that this group of women students in education seeks is a happy, fulfilled personal life, dedicated to their teaching work and to form a community in the spaces in which they move, as well as learning to enjoy life and grow in their capacity to love by being teachers and loving companions. They also wish to preserve their capacity for imagination and curiosity in order to continue investigating and building a self-giving world. Free time is presented as a space for the construction of self, for the meaning of life, to get to know oneself in order to unfold and potentiate capacities and to live always renewed, and the future is awaited with joy and less uncertainty.

When we are moved by particularity, free time loses joy and projection

When lack of affection and hopelessness arise and settle in, free time is lived with boredom, and the future is uncertain. Particular feelings are oriented towards safeguarding the individual, hence the fear of knowing oneself and the distrust of personal capacities leads to withdrawal from the world, and free time becomes a search for adaptation to the world. It is a reality that some of the students live with the need to free themselves from those sensations that subdue (fear, insecurity, meaninglessness) in order to enjoy life, but that they do not have, or do not look for ways to know themselves and begin to live in plenitude.

The particular feeling of hatred can lead to particular projects of fulfilment, which seek to satisfy particular needs such as the desire to earn money through a career or to study for prestige but not for love and service. Feelings of envy and vanity can lead to not enjoying everyday activities and free time is not used to trace an original path of life, without reproducing the ugliness of dehumanisation; a mirror of the unconscious relationship with the world.

Acknowledgements

Attending to the integral training needs of the students of the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro is a priority in the University Educational Model, and for this reason this work of teaching reflection was funded internally. We would like to express our gratitude to our university.

Conclusions

The research carried out in the group of students leads to the following challenges for education: 1) teaching practice is an example that potentiates or dilutes desires of dedication and openness to others during the training of future educators; hence the need for the humanisation of teachers. 2) There is a beauty that radiates hope, such as being a teacher in order to transform; there is a desire to be and to share oneself in teaching practice and in the activities that comprise the complex web of everyday life. It is still a utopia to bet on the rescue of the subject, education must keep in mind to educate for happiness. 3) Teaching work as humanisation must educate to be happy in the conditions and circumstances of life in order to transcend the everyday. 4) Gender and family experiences condition the life project and the ways of living leisure time; it requires teachers to be aware of teaching practices. 5) Educating for introspection and to value free time as a space for self-building.

The first challenge of education for free time is to bring out from within the person the dreams that live there and that only identifying them and thinking about them are a reason for complacency. The first step in the experience of leisure time is to awaken the imagination as a means of creating a self, which involves different forms such as listening to music, conversing with joy, looking at the usual from the unusual; imagination is the gateway. When the person's consciousness opens the way to the world, when the person encounters his or her imagination, he or she has found the way to emancipation and begins to extend outside himself or herself as something intentional, as the understanding of the appearances of things; by means of cognitive, emotional or playful acts.

A second aspect of education for the experience of free time is to know how to use one's time (leisure or free time) well in order to realise one's dreams and to prepare oneself to live according to activities that lead to fulfilment. It is important to recognise what one wants to be and then to prepare the experience, to learn to sow and to take care of the activities as a consequence of assuming the commitment to become. Free time should be the space for activities that lead to rest, fun, joy and balance in life; it is not only necessary to know what one wants to be but to choose a path and style that gives meaning to life; to educate it is necessary to know the interests, needs and expectations; as well as to understand and help the person in the search process.

Finally, the educator must have the ability not to let people get carried away by the ups and downs of whims, sensations and the ephemeral desires of life, but to develop strategies so that everyday life surprises, and so that people want to investigate and admire in order to crown the creative act of self.

References

- Buaman, Z. (2010). *Libertad*.
- Bloch, E. (2004). *El principio de la esperanza I*.
- Calvino, I. (1979). *Si una noche de invierno un viajero*.
- Freire, P. (1981). *Ação cultural para a liberdade*.
- Freire, P. (1985). *Virtudes do educador*.
- Freire, P. (2001). *La importancia de leer y el proceso de liberación*.
- Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogía del oprimido*.
- Freire, P. (2009). *Pedagogía de la esperanza*.
- Freire, P. (2012). *Pedagogía de la indignación: cartas pedagógicas en un mundo revuelto*.
- Freire, P. (2013). *Por una pedagogía de la pregunta. Crítica a una educación basada en respuestas a preguntas inexistentes*.
- Girardi, C.I. (2007). *Investigación cualitativa. Estrategias en psicología y educación*.
- Greene, M. (2005). *Liberar la imaginación. Ensayos sobre educación, arte y cambio social*.
- Heller, Á. (1970). *Historia y vida cotidiana. Aportaciones a la sociología socialista*.
- Heller, A. (1982). *La revolución de la vida cotidiana*. Barcelona: Península
- Heller, A. (1991). *Historia y Futuro ¿sobrevivirá la modernidad?*
- Heller, A. (1993). *Teoría de los sentimientos*.
- Heller, A. (2002). *Sociología de la vida cotidiana*.
- Heidegger, M. (2014). *Ser y tiempo*.
- Marx, M. (2001). *Manuscritos de economía y filosofía*.
- Marx, K. (2012). *El Capital. Crítica de la economía política I*.
- McLaren, P. (1997). *Pedagogía crítica y cultura depredadora. Políticas de oposición en la era posmoderna*.
- Menchén, F. (2011). *La riqueza del tiempo libre. Cómo activar tu creatividad en el tiempo de ocio*.
- Munné, F. (2004). *Psicosociología del tiempo libre. Un enfoque crítico*.
- Stake, R.E. (2010). *Investigación con estudio de caso*.
- Touraine, A. (2006). *El mundo de las mujeres*.
- Touraine, A. (2007). *La mirada social. Un marco de pensamiento distinto para el siglo XXI*.
- Weber, M. (2000). *Economía y sociedad*.