

ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES DURING SCHOOL BREAKS:

STUDENTS' PLAY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF POINT FORTIN, TRINIDAD

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In the pursuit of understanding children's behaviour this study utilized the medium of play because play allows one to examine how society shapes the behaviour of children. The study also serves as an instrument for further conversations about the capacity of play to reveal youth interaction and culture and its reflections of behavioural and societal norms in contemporary Trinidadian society. Additionally, the study complements and augments the existing literature on society's influence on children's play and the impact of play on children's behaviour.

The research attempted to discover the games that children engage in during their school break periods. It also sought to highlight how society's norms and practices could be recognized through their play. These objectives were stimulated through the precept that play imitates society, a belief postulated by numerous theorists across academic fields. The study focused specifically on how children's play expressed competition, cooperation, creativity, racial interaction and gender.

The investigation used questionnaires, observation and some textual and discourse analysis of the material gleaned from these sources. The investigation was conducted in five primary schools in the South-Western Peninsula of Trinidad in the Point Fortin area.

The results of the project can be summarised as follows: Children and the games they play are innately competitive. Children however are striving to be the best in particular skills of each game. Though cooperative play was limited, it was noted that children shared some aspects of their play. It was also revealed that though children were not seen to be creating new games, they were adding creative dimensions to the existing ones. Finally, the impact of race and gender on children's play were among the noteworthy revelations within this study.

Keywords: Kiza Maurisa Felix-Roberts; Children's Play; Children's Games; Play and Society; Competition in Games; Cooperation in Games; Creativity in Games; Gender Awareness, Race Awareness; Point Fortin, Trinidad and Tobago.