



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open Access

## Secured attachment and the socialisation of single parent children

Ndje Ndje Mireille Ph/D<sup>1</sup>, Fungatuh Edequine Mangwi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Clinical and Pathological Psychology, Department of Psychology University of Yaounde I, Cameroon

<sup>2</sup>Masters in Developmental Psychology, Department of Psychology University of Yaounde I, Cameroon

### ABSTRACT

Both parents are needed for the proper socialisation of a child and the development of the child's responsiveness to societal demands. Parent-child attachment has as function: the promotion of social interaction. Some children from single parent homes socialises equally, despite the phenomenon of acculturation. So, we could ask ourselves the question: what could be the drives of their socialisation; if the quality of attachment instigates/arouses the social development of children in single parent homes? We opted for the qualitative research, used the clinical method, making use of drawings, observations and interviews to collect data. We made use of the characteristics of analysis of the family drawing. The analysis of the speeches of the different interviews was done with the aid of the technic of analysis of content. The findings obtained beside the 11 participants of our research and their parents and teachers were interpreted using three theories: the attachment theory, emphasising on the qualities of secure attachment. Findings revealed that, all the children were securely attached and had an attachment figure who provided for their basic needs (sensitive response, attention, communication) which served as drives for them to adapt to environmental changes, have the spirit of initiative and socialised despite the draw backs of acculturation and single parenting. Despite the loss of some traditional values which favoured socialisation of single parent children in the past, secure attachment facilitates the socialisation of single parent children.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received July 05, 2020

Accepted August 15, 2020

Published August 20, 2020

### KEYWORDS

Socialisation; childrens; parents;  
Language

### Introduction

The meaning and the worth of man's live is according to the ties and connections he has with other human beings around him. Meaning, the outcome of one's life, the level of joy he finds in living and interacting with others depends on the type of society in which he is found and how that society moulds him up. Those who remain good are those who's immediate environment favoured it. As years go by, man has made many attempts to better up his environment to make it more favourable for the development of the child who is born good. With the progress in scientific research and analysis, some psychological problems have been solved and ameliorated, while some aspects of the psychological wellbeing like socialisation is not yet totally achieved. Asocial behaviours are increasing, human interactions are reducing with the oncoming of phones, applications, video games, visual reality games; hence, demanding lesser need for social adaptation (respect of rules of one's community, ethics and morals) and social interaction.

Socialisation is a life time process, it is particularly important in childhood when the society is represented by (and through) a child's parent and the rest of his family [1]. As Wallon [2], rightly said: man is a biological social being; the success of ones live is

linked to his level of socialisation and the influence of others from his early childhood; likewise, his mental and physical health and wellbeing. Meaning, the complete wellbeing aimed by researchers, states men, diplomates and humans in general, can be achieved through socialisation. According to the psychoanalytic theory, most psychic disorders and behavioural disorders originated from this 3-5-year period. They are liked to how this period was managed by parents or care givers. It is the critical period of language learning, social and emotional learning. During the age 3-5, children learn how to become self-sufficient, how to relate and interact with peers and more; the preschool years are a magic time in development, they move from being entirely dependent on their parents, to be somewhat independent beings in the world [3]. The ego of the child is manifested through the progressive detachment from parents, the relationship of reciprocity and of the child's initiative. During this age range, their knowledge base of competences is growing at an exponential rate: cognitively, affectively; psychosocially and emotionally [4]. Language is a privileged socialisation tool; it permits to communicate one's thoughts, act on another, to adapt to the group (to receive traditional and social values), to value oneself, to make yourself be known by someone else, it permits to liberate internal tension (via

**Contact** Omoyemi O. Ogwumike Department of physiotherapy, College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

© 2020 The Authors. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial ShareAlike 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

insults, confining, confidence, confession or psychoanalytic cure). It equally permits to anticipate personal experience and becomes a source of knowledge [5]. The 3-5 years period is very important both for language acquisition, cognitive development and social development. In psychosocial level with the theory of Erikson, the 3-5 years old child lies within the initiative versus guilt stage of 3 to 7 years. Here, children have to, develop a sense of initiative which will provide a sense of purpose in life. A sense of guilt may otherwise dominate the individuals' personality and may lead to the lack of self-worth.

Affective domain with Freud [6], the 3-5 years period, the phallic stage and is the base of adult psychic equilibrium or disorder. He believes children's experience of letting go their love can have a permanent effect on their latter personality. The 3-5 years old have skills in the cognitive level, social level (APA Act, 2019). They have many mental skills: they have already the notion of object permanence; although less than before, they still think they are the centre of the world and have troubles seeing things from someone else's perspective, they are more able to use words to express thoughts and feelings and to share experiences. They equally have social skills like: can read and interpret emotions of others; can understand abstract emotions like pity, greed and gratitude, can make use of varied ways to control their emotions (like closing their eyes and ears, remove themselves from situations; sometimes, they can resist temptation to respond to whatever is disturbing them). They understand social rules and can act according to them. By the age of 4, they begin to develop a sense of their ethical identity and the way their social group is perceived in the society. They have an increase capacity to use imagination: they can imagine that terrible thing may occur which can lead to fear or nightmare; they can also do "fabulation". They understand that praises or blames are link to their actions, are eager to take some responsibilities and can offer help.

Play is very vital in understanding children, it also leads to their psychological, social and physical blossoming. At the age of 3, they typically play near friends, find it difficult to take turns and share things. At the age of 4, they begin cooperative play, still find difficulties to share, but, begin to understand turn-taking, begin to offer things to others. At the ages of 5, they enjoy playing with other children, often cooperate well, have special friends (APA Act, 2019).

The personality of an individual, likewise his intellectual, moral, social development is the result of the characteristic of the social structures he passes through. The first welcoming structure at birth is the family, next the school and then the living community of the individual or the society. The family has a great role to play in the psychological blossoming of an individual, reason why, many research works aiming the to ameliorate the socialisation of individuals including our current research work is been undertaken. According to Winnicott [7], we can't consider the development of the child without considering the external environment. The foundations of a child's health (physically, psychologically) are laid down by the ordinary mother (or substitute) in her ordinary loving care of

the baby; central to this, was the mother's attentive holding and handling of the child. He brought up the concept of good enough parents to mean: the normal sound instinct of parents in responds to their child's needs, building of true self, hence, assuring the stability and health of their families.

### Portrait of single parent hood

Family structure plays a great role in the blossoming of an individual. Single parent homes are negatively tagged in this light. Ntoimo & Odimegwu [8], says in Cameroon, Nigeria and the democratic republic of Congo, a great proportion of children aged below five who die of chronic diseases and suffer from malnutrition are those of single mothers aged 15 to 49 years. Most cases of juvenile delinquency and anti-sociality are linked to single parent homes. Past researches in western countries show that, single parenting has a lot of drawbacks to the total blossoming of a child. Anneke [9], says, children whose parents are absent, usually have a feeling of inferiority and a difficulty of conscience of their own values. They frequently have depressive affects and are generally less satisfied with their lifes. Ellis, et al. [10], through their study shows that, we find a greater percentage of children presenting androgynous behaviours in children of single parental families, mostly single mother ones. Johnson [11], shows that girls from single parent homes mostly have a low self-esteem and a difficulty to develop sentimental relationships. These girls have a high risk of premature pregnancies and marriages, divorce, remarriages and the setting up of another single parent home. Parenting in Africa was the concern of the whole community and was considered as the responsibility of the social group or community. Child bearing was meant to be done within the context of marriage, out of marriage, it was considered as a taboo and as shameful and disgraceful act. Despite this African conception of out of wedlock children, a child was always welcome as a gift from the gods. His education was still done by all the members of his community just like that of single parent children due to death of one parent or due to the separation of parents. The education, upbringing and success of a child was a community affair. Uncles, aunts, grandparents, cousins, mother, father, brother, sister, elders of the community all worked for the blossoming and socialisation and success of an individual.

In Africa, single parenthood is more feminine than masculine. 70-90% single parent homes are managed by women [12]; In Cameroon, 76% of single parent homes are headed by women. This is due to the differences in mortality rate between males and females; leading to high rate of widows than widowers, hence, high rate of feminine single parenthood [13]. Masculine single parenthood is also low compared to that of women due to the fact that, many men in case of the loss of their partners, easily and quickly remarry or replace the missing parental figure than women. Traditionally, the man confines his child/children to another spouse, to his mother or sister, delegating the maternal functions to a woman/female of his family (maternal substitute).

The number of single families has greatly increased these last decades compared to the 1970's. The judiciary law of

most countries regarding the family, favours female single parental hood. Single mothers now have exclusive rights on their child/children than the father or the father's family [13]. The Cameroonian legislation only permits parental guard to the father when the child is above 7 years. Reason why most single parent homes for children aged 3-5 years are headed by women than men. According to Cameroon National Institute of Statistics: N.I.S (2011; p,13), one out of every four home is headed by a woman (26%), this proportion remained relatively stable from 2005-2010, having its highest peaks in the western region and its lowest in the northern region probably due to social and cultural reason and believes. Given the disproportion of females and males in the recent demographic growth, there is a disequilibrium in the marital market [13], there are more females than males (according to the N.I.S, 2011), the sex structure of the population shows that, there are 49.6% of male compared to 50.4% of females in Cameroon); so despite the positive influence of modernisation on the psychic (human rights, female empowerment, gender equality, laws on woman and young girl protection) of Africans, and Cameroonians in particular, everybody cannot have a partner to marry. Also, with this female emancipation, women are less tolerant in bearing marital tortures and frustrations as our mothers lived in hypocrisy in those days, while dying in silence; divorce rates increases, single parent homes too.

Single parents are face with problems of finance, personal availability, as most of the them, with the oncome of modernisation they are economically active, are engage in small and medium size enterprises, or are civil servants; all these are very demanding in time and energy as they have to give out the best of themselves in order to meet both ends. The link between the quality of the family structure and children's wellbeing is becoming more and more a call of great concern to specialists of developmental psychology. The quality of care giving at childhood is crucial in fashioning an individual's level of social adaptation and interaction. Freud talked of the role of the quality of parental care and the personality development of an individual and his responsiveness to societal demands. So according to Freud [14], all humans of the same age, having matured enough sensory and phonatory organs and other humans around them ought to automatically be in the same level of social development. The observations made in a nurse school in Yaoundé show that those of the same age range (3-5years) were not all in the same level of social development compared to the standard stages of personality development. We noticed some variations in children of the same age range. Some were rebellious, aggressive, antisocial, asocial, disorder, urinating on their bodies, precocious while others were neat, respecting school rules, friendly, polite. Swaminathan [15] says, most children are being brought up in a home or within a family; who provides for their basic needs in a satisfactory manner or not. This family socialises the child and helps him to achieve the maturity of adult age. The category which interest us most was that of single parent families. According to Freud, the identification and socialisation of the child at the phallic stage is thanks to the contribution of a motherly and fatherly figure. Meaning, the absence of one of the parental figures

leads to an ill development. This goes in line with the theory of Mead which says that, the self develops and leads to the socialisation of an individual thanks to what Mead called the significant other; that is those who play an import role in the development of our identity especially our parents of both sexes. single parent families who are becoming more and more nuclear along with its challenges disfavours the socialisation of a child in his early years.

Beginning as a child, humans begin to define themselves with in the context of socialisation. Marie-Eve [16] says parent-child attachment has as function: the promotion of social interaction. Meaning the degree of one's social interaction is a reflect of the quality of the parent child attachment he has received. The early years of a child's life presents a unique opportunity to foster and lay the foundation for healthy development. It is a time of great growth and vulnerability. To Winnicott [17], the way to a better society begins in the nursery. Meanwhile, we have noticed that some children from single parent homes have a feeling of secured attachment and socialise equally.

## Methods

The research we are undertaking is a qualitative research. Here, we wish to understand how secured attachment drives successful socialisation in the case of single parents. The sites of this study are Government English nursery school of Mfou town and Ecole Bilingue Primaire les Prestigieux de Mfou The accessible participants of study are single parented children aged 3-5years found in nursery schools and their parents who will accept working with us and whose institutions will also permit us to work (in the district of Mfou).

Participants should be Cameroonian; be aged 3-5 years; be registered in the school; have no sensory or phonatory malfunctioning or deficiency; those whose institution and parents accept working with us; be a resident of Mfou town; those who are of good mental health; live in a single parent household; and parents whose children are aged 3-5 years.

We constructed a questionnaire of identification. Which took into consideration the characteristics of our research. Two distinct ones were drawn up; one to be passed on parents and another for the kids (also materials for the drawing of their family by the kids). We first seek and obtained authorisation from the Head teachers of the two schools selected. The parents also granted their permission. Hence, we went to the nursery one and two classes along with our questionnaires and drawing materials. Eleven subjects took part in this study. Our targeted age range was 3-5 years, but after the selection procedure, no child retained was 3 years old. Hence, we worked only with the 4- 5 years old. As instruments, we used the family drawing test, the interview, and observation.

We made used of two technics of data analysis; one which is essentially for the graphical aspects of the data collected and the other for the verbal aspect. Hence, we shall use the characteristic of interpretation of the family drawing by Louis Corman to facilitate the analysis of the kid's drawings and the technic of analysis of content for the analysis of the various interviews (those with parents and teachers).

We respected our participants by seeking their consent before collecting any data from them. Though, we didn't have a consent sheet, we ensure the respect of our participants by not hiding from them the theme of our research, we also allow our contacts for them if they wish to know the outcome of the research at the end.

### Findings

We worked with 11 participants aged 4-5 years different from our target age range of 3-5 years, since we were unable to meet any child regularly registered who was 3 years old. As the school strictly respects the legal age of entry into nursery schools in Cameroon: 4 years. As such our participants were rather aged 4-5 years. A general look at their drawings shows they are all creative, have a care giver, have a valued family member, the choice of their colour chalks shows their openness of mind. The analysis of the speech we had with the various participants of the research (parent, teachers) reveals the existence of a link between the kids and their care giver/attachment figure(s). It equally revealed the existence of a degree of social adaptation and interaction in the kids.

### Interpretation of kid's drawing in the light of the attachment theory

#### Kid 01

Interpreting the results in the light of the indices of secure attachment stated by Bowlby [18] and Ainsworth [19] gives us the following understanding. At the graphical plan, the verification of the quality of attachment of kid 01 can be done through the analysis of the hardness of the strokes, the rhythm of the drawing, the width of the lines and the location of the drawing on the paper. The intensity of the strokes of her drawing sends to suavity and boldness but not aggressiveness (too hard strokes), fulfilling one of the indices of secure attachment in a child. The rhythm of her drawing has no repetition of symmetric lines meaning she is autonomous not dependent, hence, suiting the indices of secure attachment which says, a secured child is upset when care giver lives just for a short while and returns to exploit his environment meaning he has gain autonomy. Interpreting the analysis of the width of the line equally tells the attachment type of the child; the analysis says the child is an extrovert, meaning he appreciates human contact and is constantly in search for it, at such we can say kid 01 is friendly, hence, securely attached. The location of the kids drawing on the paper at the top right hand-side tells us the child has a high sense of imagination and idealism, meaning he easily engages in play, as, play at this stage, is mostly dominated by role play and makes use of a lot of imagination; so, kid 01 drawing gives another prove of her being securely attached. The plan of formal structure equally says something about the attachment type of the child; it says, the child is sensible to environmental stimulus and adapts to its changes, testifying, the kid is securely attached. The content and psychological plan makes us understand that the child has an attachment figure who is her mother. Ainsworth [19], says a secure child easily engages into long lasting relationships, the drawing of this kid has a figure which she named "Mayeva" which is not

her family member but her quarter friend (a neighbour) which has close relationships with up still the point of including her into her family drawing; meaning, she is securely attached.

#### Kid 02

According to Bowlby [18] and Ainsworth [19]; a securely attached child has self-esteem, is not aggressive, has an attachment figure which he uses as a secure base to exploit and world and prefers to be comforted by him, easily makes friends, has best friends. The drawing of the child shows the presence of a valued figure (an attachment figure). Results of the drawing says the child has a valued figure her mother. The first person drawn is the person the child values most and with whom he feels secured. Meaning her mother is her secure base [19] to exploit her environment. The drawing also reveals that the kid is an extrovert, bold and has gain autonomy. Interpreting the drawing of kid 01 according to Bowlby [18], we can say that the child is securely attached, has an attachment figure. The child being bold is synonymous to having self-esteem hence, meeting up another indice of securely attached children. The kid's drawing shows no sign of aggressiveness or impulsiveness as the strokes of her drawing are not intense. Ainsworth [19], says a secure child easily engages into long lasting relationships, the drawing of this kid has a figure which she named "Maeva" which is not her family member but her quarter friend (a neighbour) which has close relationships with up still the point of including her into her family drawing; meaning, she is securely attached figure, show no signs of impulsiveness, aggressiveness, testified by the nature of the strokes, their hardness, so we can say the child is securely attached. The width of the kid's drawing is long, meaning she is an extrovert and particularity of extroverts is that they are always in search of interpersonal interactions hence, we can say she is securely attached. Another reason which makes us think she is securely attached is the analysis of the results of the rhythm of her lines (no frequent repetition of symmetric lines; denoting the kid is autonomous), the plan of formal structure (sensorial type, curve and long lines meaning she is disciplined and sensible to the environment), and the presence of a valued figure in her drawing who represents her mother: her attachment figure; which makes to think that she used uses her mother as a secure base to exploit her environment and react to environmental stimulus and adapt to its changes. Hence, gains autonomy, is securely attached and socialises.

#### Kid 03

Bowlby [18], says, a secured child aged 4years and above can adapt to new environments, show discomfort when care giver leaves but just for a short while, understand care giver's schedule protest less, have self-esteem seek social connections, able to share feelings, have best friends, is less aggressive, easily engage in play. Through the kids the drawing, even though all of these indices can't be seen, but some vital ones are revealed. The graphical level of this kid's drawing reveals he is not aggressive, testified by the intensity of his strokes on the paper. Bowlby also said a secure child seeks out social connections and it is the case with extroverts who appreciate human contact. The drawing of this kid reveals

he is an extrovert, testified by the analysis of the width of his lines. A secure attached child is autonomous and uses his attachment figure as a secure base to exploit his environment; this kid's drawing reveals he is autonomous and sensible to the environment. Results of the content and psychological analysis of this kid's drawing, interpreting it reveals his attachment figure to be his mother.

#### **Kid 04**

Looking at the results of the analysis of this kid's drawing in the light of Bowlby's theory [18], reveals the following; she is autonomous, she is friendly and seeks human contact (drawing reveals extroversion). The hardness of her strokes could be interpreted as signs aggressiveness, but, this is excused given the fact that the child might be suffering from dysgraphia. When asked to draw her family, she couldn't handle the pencil correctly and could not draw. Given that at the end of every drawing session with a child we offer him a chalk; so, we asked her to pick out one chalk, she did happily, but, she took the paper and started drawing freely with the chalk on the paper. As such we can't tag her as aggressive base on the intensity of her strokes, hence we can say she is securely attached. The content and psychological analysis of the kid's drawing reveals she has an attachment figure, a most valued figure, her father which she uses as a secure base to exploit her environment as her drawing equally reveals her sensibility and adeptness to the environment, testified by the results of the analysis of the formal structure of her drawing (predominance of curve and long lines).

#### **Kid 5**

Bowlby's [18] theory reveals some characteristics of attachment which when verified with the indices of secured attachment stated above can tell us if the child is securely attached or not. The analysis of the graphical plan of her drawing reveals she is agreeable and is an extrovert, suiting one of the indices of secure attachment: seeking out social connections and support and being able to share feelings with others. The analysis of the location of her drawing on the paper also reveals her socialised nature (centralised drawing meaning open minded). Even though the results of her formal structure of her drawing says she is falsely socialised given the predominance of angular lines in her drawing. The results of the analysis of the rhythm of the drawing reveal the child is autonomous. Through drawing, a child projects his thoughts and feelings, this can be temporary thoughts, or it can be influence by a movie seen, a speech heard or any other external stimulus or it can be an imitation of a drawing style seen in an elderly sibling. Given that a child cannot be autonomous and falsely socialised at the same time, so, we can't use the interpretation of this kid's drawing alone to say if the child is securely attached or not. The results of analysis of the content and psychological level of the kid 05 drawing shows she has an attachment figure, her mother, and her most valued figured and the first figure she drew. Her drawing shows prove of anxiety and family rivalry and the use of defence mechanisms which might explain the reasons for the appearance of the signs of false socialisation in her drawing.

#### **Kid 06**

Bowlby [18], says, a secured child aged 4year and above is able to adapt to new environments, show discomfort when care giver leaves but just for a short while, understand care giver's schedule, protest less, have self-esteem seek social connections, able to share feelings, have best friends, is less aggressive, easily engage in play. The results of the graphical level of this kid are drawing reveals she is not aggressive, testified by the intensity of her strokes on the paper. Also, the absence of signs of aggressiveness on her paper is testified by the absence of animal figure drawings (wild animals). Bowlby also said a secure child seeks out social connections and it is the case with extroverts who appreciate human contact. The drawing of this kid reveals she is an extrovert, testified by the analysis of the width of her lines. A secure attached child is autonomous and sensible to the environment and adapts to it changes, hence socialised; this is testified in the kid's drawing with the presence of curve lines and non-symmetric lines. This kid's drawing shows no sign of an attachment figure, her only figure drawn represented herself, but, this can be excused given her age: 4 years and taking into account the explanations of differential psychology, (which says that every individual is unique and differs in behaviour and processes that underline it. Every individual has his unique rhythm of growth and development), so we cannot say the child has no attachment figure because she might still be in the egocentric stage whereby, she generalizes everything to herself. The fact that, she omitted her family members might be due the feeling of fraternal rivalry leading to a temporal feeling of being alone in the world.

#### **Kid 07**

Looking at the results of the analysis of kid 07 drawing in the light of Bowlby's theory [18], reveals the following; she is autonomous, she is friendly and seeks human contact (drawing reveals extroversion symbolised by the width of her lines; long widths). The hardness of her strokes (not weak strokes) and the absence of wild animal drawings can be interpreted as signs less aggressiveness suiting one of the indices of secure attachment of Bowlby's [18]. As said in the indices above, a secured child is sensible to the environment and adapts to environmental changes and the results of the analysis of the formal structure plan of the drawing of the kid testifies he is securely attached (it has a predominance of curve lines). The content and psychological analysis of the kid's drawing reveals she has an attachment figure, a most valued figure, the first figured drawn: her father, which she uses to exploit her environment.

#### **Interpretation of kid 08 drawing in the light of the attachment theory**

Looking at the results of the analysis kid's drawing in the light of Bowlby's [18] theory reveals some characteristics of attachment which when verified with the indices of secured attachment stated above can tell us if the child is securely attached or not. The analysis of the graphical plan of her drawing reveals she is bold, agreeable and is an extrovert, suiting one of the indices of secure attachment: seeking out social connections

and support and being able to share feelings with others. The analysis of the location of her drawing on the paper also reveals her socialised nature (centralised drawing meaning open minded). The results of her formal structure of her drawing says she is discipline, and sensible to the environment given the predominance of curve and long lines in her drawing. The results of the analysis of the rhythm of the drawing reveal the child is autonomous. The results of analysis of the content and psychological level of the kid 08 drawing shows she has an attachment figure, her grandmother, who is her most valued figured and the first figure she drew. Her drawing shows prove of no sign of aggressiveness (there is no animal drawing; wild animal) hence, we can say this kid is securely attached.

#### **Kid 09**

Bowlby [18], says, a secured child aged 36-48month and above, situated at the goal-correct partnership phase, is able to adapt to new environments, show discomfort when care giver leaves but just for a short while, understand care giver's schedule, protest less, have self-esteem seek social connections, able to share feelings, have best friends, is less aggressive, easily engage in play. Through the kids the drawing, even though all these indices can't be seen, but some vital ones are revealed. The graphical level of this kid's drawing reveals he is not aggressive, testified by the intensity of his strokes on the paper and the absence of wild animal drawing on the paper. His drawing has both weak strokes (revealing qualities of shyness, feeling of failure) and hard strokes (revealing qualities of boldness, passion and pleasantness). The width of his lines is short meaning he is an introvert. The rhythm of his drawing has no frequent symmetric lines, hence, we can say he is autonomous and has self-esteem. Results of the formal structure of his drawing say he is sensible to the environment, adapts to environmental changes hence we can say he is securely attached. Results from the analysis of the intensity of the strokes coupled with that of the formal structure/sensorial type, of the kid's drawing makes us to say that, even though the width of the kid's drawing says he is an introvert; he is not asocial because, despite his qualities of shyness, he still interacts with his environment. He has an attachment figure, the most valued person in his family live, his father.

#### **Kid 10**

Bowlby [18], says, a secured attached child is able to adapt to new environments, show discomfort when care giver leaves but just for a short while, understand care giver's schedule, protest less, have self-esteem seek social connections, able to share feelings, have best friends, is less aggressive, easily engage in play. The results of the graphical level of this kid are drawing reveals he is not aggressive, testified by the intensity of his strokes on the paper. Also, the absence of signs of aggressiveness on her paper is testified by the absence of animal figure drawings (wild animals). Bowlby, equally said, a securely attached child seeks out social connections and it is the case with extroverts who appreciate constant human contact. The drawing of this kid reveals he is an extrovert, testified by the analysis of the width of his lines. A secure attached child is autonomous and sensible to the environment and adapts to it

changes, hence socialised; this is testified in the kid's drawing with the presence of curve lines and non-symmetric lines. This kid's drawing shows an attachment figure, his mother, the first figure drawn, and the most valued figure. He omitted his sister, which may be a sign of fraternal rivalry or silent admiration. This kid's drawing responds to a greater number of indices a drawing can reveal on the level of attachment of a child, hence, at the look of his drawing, we can say kid 10 is securely attached.

#### **Kid 11**

Looking at the results of the analysis of kid 11 drawing in the light of Bowlby's theory [18], reveals the following; he is autonomous, he is friendly and seeks human contact (drawing reveals extroversion symbolised by the width of her lines; long widths). The hardness of her strokes (not weak strokes) and the absence of wild animal drawings can be interpreted as signs of less aggressiveness suiting one of the indices of secure attachment of Bowlby's [18]. As said in the indices above, a secured child is sensible to the environment and adapts to environmental changes and the results of the analysis of the formal structure plan of the drawing of the kid testifies he is securely attached (it has a predominance of curve lines). The content and psychological analysis of the kid's drawing reveals he has an attachment figure, a most valued figure, the first figured drawn: his mother, which he uses as a secure base to exploit his environment.

Drawing cannot reveal every aspect of a person's personality or behaviour reason we shall continue the interpretation with that of the observations.

Interpreting observations in the light of the attachment theory

Our findings talk of two types of observation: naturalistic and participant observation. We shall first begin by interpreting the results of the naturalistic observation, followed by that of the participant observation.

Results from the naturalistic observation showed that, they all engage in play even kid 09 who seem to be an introvert, after observing others as they play, he joined them, showing his self-closeness is not extreme (antisocial), not pathological but it's just his manner of individualization; hence, he equally adapts socially to his milieu. The respect of rules during games and of instructions during activities in class, is also another prove that secured attachment has been achieved in these kids. The sharing of food amongst the kid's is prove, they are securely attached. The kids were polite to each other and to their teachers and to us. There were also acts of sympathy amongst the kids.

Findings from the participatory observation shows that the kids have overcome egocentrism, even kid 06 whose drawing seem to show some signs of egocentrism, could pass over the cover of bottles to another, gives turns and did not keep the playing instrument captive. Their fast learning of the new songs and games rules is another sign of adaptation. The reaction of the kids on the closing day, the looks and smiles they send to their parents during the activities of the end of year ceremony confirms the hypothesis of Bowlby, which say,

a secure attach child uses his attachment figure as a secure base to interact with his environment. The behaviour of the kids beside their care givers demonstrates collaboration and cooperation between them.

### **Interpretation of interviews with the aid of the attachment theory**

There two groups of interviews; those did with parents and another, with the class teacher.

#### **Parents**

Results from the interviews with the parents, when looked upon in the light of the views of Bowlby [18], we can see that, the kids all have an attachment figure. Kid 06, whose drawing shows no attachment figure, has one, her grandmother, of whom she has sympathy, a lot of consideration. From the parent's speech, the kids interact at home with other kids, obey parents and adapt to changes like the case of kid 11 who despite the nostalgia of his grandparents left behind in anglophone region (Bamenda), he could still build up new relationships at Mfou. The attachment theory says, one of the conditions for a child to be securely attached to his caregiver relies on the quality of care (presence, attention, love) of the caregiver. As such, all the participants of our research were securely attached to their care giver and they those who lived at home with them, except kid 07 who was rather securely attached to her father who does live at home with her, who is not constantly present as opposed to her mother with whom she lives.

Hence, we can interpret such a situation by saying that, care giving, presence, attention is not enough for a child to be securely attach to immediate care giver, but rather, the quality of care giving that matters. Findings from the interview with kid 07 father shows that the interaction between the father and the child, though few and scarce, was rich enough to serve as a secure base for the child. Kid 03 parent's speech at first sight might mean her son is not autonomous and might be characterise as being a backward phase of attachment development given her expression that "he only sleeps when I do". Looking at this same speech from another angle might signify a high level of complicity, and collaboration between the mother and child.

Also, it is a sign that kid 03 understands the schedule of his care giver reason why he does less protestations and adapts to it, sleeps when care giver sleeps. The analysis of the speech of the parents of kids 01, 02, 04, 05, 07,09, 10 and 11, also shows the kids understand their care giver's schedule.

#### **Teachers**

The interviews with teachers show the kids are matured enough and less aggressive, seen mostly via their respect of school rules and regulation, no insulting of mates, sharing, sympathy. Teachers says kids 06, 10, 11 quickly adapted to school at the beginning of the school year compared to others. The interpretation of their speech at the level of kids' manipulation on their environment seems positive. The fact that, the kids could report their worries to their class teacher was also a sign of secure attachment; as they can share their feelings.

### **Discussion of Results**

The interpretation of the results of the family draw test makes us understand that the children were socialised and were motivated by some drives from their environment. The technic we used was the family drawing test of Corman. The analysis characteristics of this test had four plans: the graphical, formal structure, content and psychoanalytic plan. The graphical plan had four indices of evaluation the hardness of the strokes, the rhythm, the width and the section of the page. On the field we encountered some exceptions which made us to readapt some indices of the graphical plan before applying it on the family drawing of some kids.

The analysis of the section of the page was done taking into account the four angles of the paper; top left, top right, bottom left and bottom right hand side. There was the case of kid 09 who is a left-hand righter. some exceptions had to be made in the analysis of the location of his drawing on the page. His drawing is position on the top left- hand side of the paper which sends to a fixation, regression and obsession with the past; but with this case, given the child is a left-handed child, it can't be interpreted as such, because, left hand writers have their right brain hemisphere on the left contrary to right handed people. Being a lefty or a righty affects the way we interact with the physical environment. A righty believes positive things are on the right, while a lefty believes positive, intelligent, attractive things are the left even if their environment says the opposite [20]. Left-handed people think and feel differently compared to right handed people; their right hemisphere is more develop and have great potentials of creativity and may be fast thinkers [21]. As such, we opted to analyse the position of this kid's drawing inversely. Which then revealed that, he is idealistic and has a sense of imagination.

An exception was equally made for kid 04. The instructions for the family drawing test says, the drawing should be done with a pencil (colourless). With this kid given her psychomotor and dysgraphia problem, we considered the drawing she did with a colour chalk as her family drawing. Out of fear that the chalk might be erased before we finish collecting all our data, we ask her to redraw the figure using a plastic colour pencil which has the height and shape of a chalk. She did; reason why, at the graphical plan, the analysis of the intensity of her strokes were not considered as signs of aggressiveness.

The results obtained from the different technics we used in collecting and analysing our work complete each other and all boiled down to say that the children of our study are socialised. The drawings could not bring out all the aspects of the personality of the child given that it is face with the desires and pulsion of the child which can deform the reality or reformulate it. The information gotten from the interviews permitted to verify and confirm the family structure of the child and know if the family figure drawing the child did respected the principle of reality or not. Kid 05 drawing at the level of the formal structure of her drawing showed some signs of false socialisation, but the information gotten from the observation of this kid and the interviews with the teachers and parents shows she is socialised.

## Conclusion

This study began by looking at the role of the quality of care giving at childhood, its crucial contribution in fashioning the degree of social adaptation and interaction of an individual. Freud talked of the role of the quality of parental care and the personality development of an individual and his responsiveness to societal demands. The theory of Freud [14] on personality development lays emphasis on the role of both parental figure to the successful socialisation of a child. His psychosexual stages of development best explain the level of socialisation of an individual. He said socialization is the outcome of the interaction, conflict between the *Id* and the *super Ego*. For an individual to socialise. Marie-Eve [16] says parent-child attachment has as function: the promotion of social interaction. Meaning the degree of one's social interaction is a reflect of the quality of the parent child attachment he has received. Reason for our interest on the quality of attachment in single parent families who lack one lack one parental figure. We noticed that despite the fact that socialisation was difficult in the absence of a parental figure, some children from single parent homes have a feeling of secured attachment and socialise equally. Hence, we directed our work in searching the drives of positive socialization of children in single parent families. We opted for the qualitative research and use the clinical method, making use of drawings, observations and interviews to collect data; the application of the family drawing test respected the phases prosed by Corman [22]: the graphical and verbal phase. We made use of the characteristics of analysis of the family drawing of Corman [22] to analyse the kids' family drawing. We use the analyse of content to analyse the findings gotten from the interviews.

The analysis of the content of the various speeches relied on the level of social adaptation and interaction of the kids with their environment. The analysis of the drawing relied on aspects such as the hardness/intensity of the strokes, the rhythm of the lines, the width of the lines, the location of the drawing on the paper, the characteristics of the lines (curvy or angular, long/short), the clinical content, the psychoanalytic plan. Also, the reactions of the kids during the drawing was considered.

The different findings obtained were interpreted using three theories: the attachment theory of Bowlby [23] and Ainsworth [19], while insisting on the qualities of secure attachment; the psychosocial theory of Erickson [24], while insisting on the indices of socialisation in the initiative vs guilt stage; the motivation theory of Maslow [25], while insisting on the notion of drives for the production of any behaviour. Findings reveals that all the children were securely attached and had an attachment figure who provided for their basic needs (sensitive response, attention, communication) which served as drives for them to adapt to environmental changes, have the spirit of initiative and socialised despite the draw backs of acculturation and single parenting. Despite the loss of some traditional values which favoured socialisation of single parent children in the past, secure attachment facilitates the socialisation of single parent children.

## References

- [1] Statt D.A. The concise dictionary of psychology. (3ed), British library of congress. 1998.
- [2] Wallon H. Origines des caractères chez l'enfant. Paris. PUF. 1934.
- [3] Michele A. What you need to know about language and literacy development in preschoolers. 2019. www.scholastic.com.
- [4] Michele A. Social development in 3-5yeas old. 2019. www.scholastic.com.
- [5] Sillamy N. Dictionnaire usuel de psychologie. Bordas. 2008.
- [6] Freud A. La contribution de la psychanalyse à la psychologie génétique, Rev. Fr. Pschanal 1956; 20:356-382.
- [7] Winnicott D.W. The book of life, the school of life, www.thephilosopher'smail.com.
- [8] Ntoimo L.F.C., Odimegwu C. Health effects of single motherhood on children in sub-saharan Africa: across-sectional study. 2014. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/14/1145>.
- [9] Jodot A, Malchair A. Solo-mother families: The transition from adolescence without a father. 2010.
- [10] Ellis J.B, Russell C.D. Sex role development in single parent household; social behaviour and personality: An International Journal 1991; 19:5-9.
- [11] Johnson D.J. Father presence matters: a review of the literature toward an ecological framework of fathering and children outcomes; National centre of on fathers and families. 1997.
- [12] Tichit C. Les femmes chefs de ménage au Cameroun: entre autonomie résidentielle, monoparentalité et isolement, Thèse de doctorat, Paris X, 2002; 475.
- [13] Tichit C. La monoparentalité en Afrique: étude de cas en milieu urbain Camerounaise, 25ème congrès IUSSP, Tours. 2005.
- [14] Freud S. Group psychology and the analysis of the ego, The standard edition of the complete work of Sigmund Freud, 1921; 18.
- [15] Swaminathan M. Les trois premières années: un ouvrage de référence des Sions et le developpement du jeune enfant, Unesco-Unicef, ed-90/ws/28. 1990.
- [16] Marie-Eve P. L'évaluation de la qualité des interactions mère-enfant à la période scolaire en lien avec l'attachement de l'enfant. Thèse de doctorat en psychologie. Université du Québec, Montréal. 2011.
- [17] Winnicott D.W. The child, the family and the outside world; Addison-wesley pub. 1987.
- [18] Bowlby J. Separation anxiety. International Journal of Psycho-Analysis 1969; 41:1-25.
- [19] Ainsworth M.D Object relationship, dependency and

- attachment: A theoretical review of the infant-mother attachment, *Journal of Child Development* 1969; 40:969-1025.
- [20] Blackman C. Lefty or righty? A new hold on how we think. Stanford report. 2009. <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2009/august3/lefty-decision-study-080509.html>.
- [21] Carolyn G. How left handed people feel and think differently. 2016. <http://www.huffpost.com>.
- [22] Corman L. *Le teste de dessin de famille*. (5th edn), P.U.F. 1985.
- [23] Bowlby J. The nature of the child's tie to his mother. *International Journal of Psycho-analysis* 1958; 38:350-373.
- [24] Erikson E.H. *Identity and the life cycle*. International university press. (Vol 1). 1959. [https://books.google.com/books/about/identity\\_and\\_the\\_life\\_cycle,1980](https://books.google.com/books/about/identity_and_the_life_cycle,1980).
- [25] Maslow A. H. *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row. 1970.