



Adolescence Crisis, Covid-19 and Reorganization of the Family System

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Research Article

Volume 8 Issue 3

Received Date: June 19, 2023

Published Date: July 06, 2023

DOI: 10.23880/pprij-16000344

Abstract

This article has as interest the crisis of adolescence in a context of confinement. The Adolescent Crisis is a temporary and normally transitory situation, characterized by a set of risky behaviors, which reflect not the existence of a mental disorder, but rather a difficulty in adapting to the puberty. School runaways, consumption of toxic products, risk-taking and accidents (especially traffic accidents), violence and transgressive behaviors, eating disorders, opposition to parental authority, are part of this picture. This “developmental” crisis betrays the adolescent’s desire to assert themselves and to define a personal identity, helped by their cognitive potentialities. To flourish in this direction, the adolescent needs space for expression, privacy, a spatiotemporal universe of his own. However, the coronavirus pandemic, with the confinement it imposes, forces adolescents to rub shoulders with parental authority all day long, which they normally underestimate. Isn’t this relational promiscuity likely to exacerbate the adolescent crisis? The objective of this study is to identify the specificity of the parent-adolescent relationship in times of confinement. To achieve this, we subjected four adolescents from the city of Maroua, as well as their parents, to semi-structured interviews. The speeches thus collected, after analysis, revealed relational difficulties, which affect the balance of the family system. But the situation is far from alarming. Indeed, parents tend to seize the opportunity that confinement offers them to get closer to their child, and share new experiences with them. Confinement then becomes a symbolic space conducive to the psycho-emotional development of the adolescent, through a reorganization of co-constructed interpersonal relationships. This situation, if it is well received and well interpreted by the adolescent, constitutes a barrier measure to the possible installation of psychopathological difficulties, which will have to be managed clinically after passing the Covid-19.

Keywords: Covid-19; Confinement; Adolescence; Developmental Crisis; Family Structure

Introduction

Cameroon, like several other countries in the world, is currently suffering the unfortunate consequences of a virulent pandemic (coronavirus, covid-19), caused by a

virus (SARS-CoV-2) whose dangerousness obliges the strict observance of elementary hygiene rules, the reorganization, This is a dangerous disease that requires the strict observance of basic hygiene rules, the reorganization and even the cessation of activities in several areas, particularly

in schools (no more face-to-face classes in all cycles), as well as the adoption of containment measures, with the main slogan broadcast all day long in the media: "Stay at home, go out only in case of extreme necessity" [1,2]. In fact, in reaction to the appearance of the coronavirus pandemic on Cameroonian soil, the government of Cameroon set up, on March 17, 2020, a response strategy consisting of 13 barrier measures, which were to take effect on Wednesday March 18, 2020. One month later, on April 30, 2021, the list of government response measures was expanded to 19 in response to the economic impact of covid-19. The main implication of these government anti-covid-19 measures on the daily lives of Cameroonians is the immediate use of containment.

The main advantage of containment is that it protects us from coronavirus contamination. However, will the adolescent in his or her perpetual quest for freedom and escape [3-5] accommodate to the constraint of being home with parents more often? Is this not likely to generate parent-adolescent relationship conflicts and undermine the balance of the family system? What is the impact of confinement on the socio-emotional development of the adolescent? It is around these questions that the problematic of this study was built, which we unfold below.

Problematic

The study poses the problem of the organization of parent-adolescent interpersonal relations during a period of confinement. It starts from the observation that one of the measures of response to the coronavirus "forces" the teenager to spend entire days confined to the house with his parents, while the psychological rearrangements which accompany the pubertal transformations activate in the young person new socioaffective tendencies: the rejection of parental imagos, the rejection of parental authority, the tendency to distance themselves from their parents, the quest for freedom and autonomy, the tendency to leave the restricted family framework to seek other objects of identification outside the family. We present below some theoretical formulations focused on the psychology of the adolescent and the specificity of his or her relationship with parents.

Adolescence constitutes, from a developmental perspective, the first critical age in the life of the subject, and as such is characterized by important physical, physiological, and psychological transformations [4,6-10]. According to Guillemot, et al. [11], during puberty, the child's body changes in its morphology, in its functioning and in its appearance; in a short period of time - on average four years - it becomes an adult, sexualized body. The adolescent must adapt to these changes, integrate this changing body into his or her self-

image, assume his or her gender identity, male or female, and move forward on the path leading to adult genital sexuality.

Indeed, the physiological and physical modifications of puberty push the subject to a psychological reorganization in order to integrate and better live the changes of which it is the place. He must be able to adapt to them, assume his male or female gender identity and evolve towards an adult genital sexuality. With puberty indeed, comes to be grafted what Gutton quoted by Marcelli, et al. [4] names "the pubertal": process which accounts for the pressure exerted by the biological reality of puberty on the three psychic authorities that are the Ego, the Superego, the Ca. According to this author, the pubertal would be to the psyche what puberty is to the body [4].

Claës distinguishes four "developmental zones" in adolescence: pubertal development (which involves the body), cognitive development (which involves thinking), changes in socialization (which involves social life), and identity construction (which involves the self). It is the last three areas that are affected by the psychological rearrangement inherent in adolescence.

In the same vein, Sillamy [12] argues that adolescence is marked psychologically by the reawakening of infantile sexual tendencies, the richness of affective life, the development of intellectual potential, a specific level of development of body image, the mourning of parental imagos that leads to the desire for freedom and autonomy. It is this last developmental task that interests us in particular in this study.

The mourning of parental imagos is a determining developmental task at this age. The work of adolescence, like that of mourning, thus consists in a loss of object in the psychoanalytical sense of the term, loss of the "infantile objects" that one can schematically analyze at two levels: loss of the primitive object (...) loss of the 'oedipal object' charged with love, hatred, ambivalence: the adolescent is led to conquer his or her independence, to free himself or herself from the parental hold and to liquidate the oedipal situation [4], especially at this moment when he realizes, because of his new cognitive potentialities, the limits of the idealized parent.

Cloutier [13], in the same perspective, had shown that adolescence is always a struggle for independence, a period of affirmation and opposition to parents.

Dasen [14] makes adolescence the phase during which the subject must separate from his family and become autonomous, rebelling against adult norms and values. Because the adolescent's body has acquired adult proportions, he considers himself as such and wants to enjoy

the same rights as an adult: to decide on his comings and goings, to make decisions about his life, to have freedom of expression, of judgment, of moral, civic or clothing conduct.

Because of the sexual impulses reborn in adolescence, the subject is animated by the need to undo the infantile bonds and to form new identifications generating new values, wrote Abraham [15]. The search for the Ideal of the Self which has for function to contribute to the formation of the sexual identity pushes the subject towards an affective reorganization. It is thus that he will attach himself to the peers, people of his temperament with whom he shares the same experiences, the same aspirations, the same concerns. The relationships that bind adolescents are of several types: they are comrades, friends or buddies. The importance of friends allows the adolescent to discover another type of social relationship that is less hierarchical and more democratic; he shares values and norms with them and also creates new identifications. The principles of the groups to which they belong influence the construction of their personality and encourage the adoption of more or less noble behaviors. But the adolescent also seeks to identify with stars, with the heroes projected by the media, with some social model.

In adolescence, adds Young [3], the subject, by questioning the parental ideals, seeks to define his own values, principles, norms; to have his own analysis on the great questions of the affective life such as friendship, love, sexuality. In this endeavor, he will be influenced by the models provided by his parents, his friends and other peers, adults in his environment, and the media. Allard [16] maintained that: "Between the adolescent and the media there is a flirtation". Reality even more prevalent today [4,9].

The theoretical conclusions developed above are based on observations made in the Western context. One could say from the outset that Africa is not concerned, from the point of view of our own cultural beliefs and practices. Under the influence of authors such as Mead [12]; Mbaïosso [17]; Huerre, et al. [18] or Ezembé [19], the opinion that "adolescence does not exist" spread very quickly and still influences opinion and literature today.

Having conducted studies in a traditional African context (except for Margaret Mead who worked in a cultural context close to Africa, Oceania and Southeast Asia), these authors have come to the conclusion that African societies do not consider adolescence as a stage of development in its own right with its own specificities. Adolescence is short-circuited by initiation rites that take the young child directly to the adult stage. Puberty in Africa is synonymous with entry into adulthood. The young girl is educated with a view to becoming a "good" wife and a "good" mother. The young boy

is educated with a view to learning a trade that will enable him to become a "good" husband and a "good" father. It is as if the girl has no choice but to become a wife and a mother, in respect of this "chronological" order, first wife, then mother.

Ezembé [19] also points out that the attainment of customary majority is not necessarily synonymous with the right to speak in the same way as the parents. Thus, the adolescent does not have the opportunity to challenge or give an opinion on what parents or elders in general are saying. Moreover, even the head of the family is reminded that he or she is still a child and that he or she must remain silent in an assembly of older people. The child is definitely the one who has a limited right to speak. How can he assert himself and claim his independence in this case?

In the same vein, Tsala Tsala, referring to the specific case of Cameroon, states that speaking is governed by the rights and duties of some in relation to others. Speaking often means advising, ordering, commanding. Speech is a privilege, a right and an ethical duty; those of the husband over the wife, of the parent over the child, of the elder over the younger, of the chief over his subjects. Also, the speech of certain categories of individuals is usually disqualified (children, youth, slaves, foreigners). Unless they have a particular status that invests them with a certain power (the case of twins, homonyms, etc.).

However, with the pressure of modernity, social changes, the media, especially the Internet and social networks, cultural values tend to be weakened. The Cameroonian teenager is more and more influenced by Western models. Similarly, educational models are increasingly modelled on what is reflected on television, the internet and social media. Today, the African teenager in general and Cameroonian in particular must build a double identity: ethnic and individual. The problem for them is the difficulty of reconciling cultural values, imposed by their parents, and the demands of modernity, which seduce and attract them [7,20]. This is at the origin of generation conflicts between parents and adolescents, also called family crises. The teenager is torn between the culture of his or her ethnic group and a Western lifestyle. The problem is that the teenager will claim his autonomy because he wants to belong to his time and enjoy its components, and not to go back to the time his parents lived. One then attends on his part a pressing demand of change directed towards a new model [7]. This demand is not well accepted by the parents; hence the crisis within the family, which, moreover, functions as a system made up of interdependent elements such that the absence or change of one element leads to the disruption of the system.

Galy Mohamadou [10], in a study conducted on 250 adolescents in the city of Maroua, was able to demonstrate

the influence of parental guidance, in terms of educational style, on the emotional development of adolescents. The democratic parent is more likely to bring his or her child back to him or her than the parent who systematically tries to impose his or her authority. The latter situation is likely to lead to serious generational conflicts.

Isn't the current situation of confinement, with the untimely "friction" that it entails, likely to exacerbate parent-teen conflicts? What is the impact on the family system?

The systemic approach of the family in relation to the adolescent crisis is elucidated by Cuendet [21] as follows: adolescence is defined as a period during which a member demands new family rules and a certain autonomy. It is the passage from one system of rules to another requiring a modification of the purposes of the system, and thus a structural adaptation.

The restoration of family equilibrium for the stability of the system requires the adoption by all members of a new life model accepted by all. This often requires the intervention of a therapist. In other words, the resolution of the crisis requires individual changes within the family system in order to restore structural and functional order and ensure the evolution of the system [7].

How is the situation of confinement experienced by Cameroonian families? What are the consequences on the socio-affective balance of the adolescent? What mechanisms do parents put in place to cope with it?

A visit to four families allowed us to answer these questions. The methodology of data collection and analysis is presented below.

Methodology

We describe our methodological and operational approach in three main areas.

Participants

The study was conducted among five couples (adolescent-parent) living in the city of Maroua, specifically in the 1st district. The couples participating in the study have been selected following these criteria:

For the adolescent: between 14 and 18 years of age; in school; living with parent(s) or guardian(s); currently in a confinement situation.

For the parent: employed; currently out of the workforce and in confinement; and the parent who spends the most time with the adolescent (Table 1).

Participants Characteristics	Couple 1		Couple 2		Couple 3		Couple 4	
	Ado.	Parent	Ado.	Parent	Ado.	Parent	Ado.	Parent
Age	14 years	41 years	17 years	49 years	16 years	37 years	15 years	55 years
Sex	female	female	Male	Male	Male	Male	female	Female
Class/Profession	Form 3	Teacher	Form 5	Community Health Agent	Form 3	Teacher	Form 1	Business owner
Region	West		Far North		Far North		North	
Religion	Christian		Muslim		Muslim		Christian	
Street	Domayo		Domayo		Pitoaré		Pitoaré	

(Source: Investigation data)

Table 1: shows the general characteristics of the participants.

Collection instrument

Data were collected on the basis of a semi-structured clinical interview built around the following themes and sub-themes: Relational situation before the confinement (Activities at home, before and after school; Parenting function; Relationship with parents; Relationship with siblings); Situation during the confinement (Rearrangement of activities; Systemic structuring/restructuring; Relationship with parents; Relationship with siblings).

Procedure

The field investigation took place from June 7 to 11, 2020 in the respective homes of the respondents. Once the appointment was made with the parent, we went to their home and a space was set up, according to our instructions, for the interviews. The interviews took place separately, first with the adolescent and then with the parent, while respecting the methodological and ethical requirements of the framework and the confidentiality of the information collected. The process was as follows: briefing of the

adolescent-parent couple on the reason for my presence and the objective of the survey; interview with the adolescent; interview with the parent; debriefing. In addition to a notepad and ballpoint pen, we used a tape recorder for a more comprehensive collection of discourse. The individual interviews lasted between 20 and 45 minutes. The content analysis of the collected speeches is the data exploitation technique that we have privileged in the framework of this study. Thus, in a qualitative approach, the participants' speeches were dissected to bring out relevant elements that would allow us to evaluate the influence of confinement on the adolescent-parent relationship, on the adolescent's socio-emotional balance and on the family structure in general. In the logic of preserving their identity, pseudonyms were assigned to the adolescents: Cathia, Hassan, Bello, Ina.

Results

The elements of the respondents' discourse are presented below and analyzed in a vertical approach, i.e., case by case, contrary to the discussion of the results which will be done in a transversal/horizontal perspective.

The case of Cathia

Cathia is a 14-year-old teenager in form 3 in secondary school who lives with both her parents and her brothers. She is the third of four siblings, i.e. three girls and one boy. The teenager's mother is a teacher and her father is a judicial officer. Cathia's mother, an average adult aged 41, is more concerned by the confinement, because she stopped her professional activities immediately after the announcement of the Prime Minister ordering the closure of schools, among other governmental anti-covid measures¹⁹. The family is originally from the Western region and practices the Christian religion. The interview with Cathia lasted 31 minutes and 59 seconds.

During classes, it is routine at home. The night before, Cathia participates in the domestic activities of hygiene and cleanliness (of the plates, of the house). In the morning she just has to wash herself before going to school. After school, it's back home, eating, resting, studying. Cathia points out to us that she is under the authority of her older sister (20 years old, student in higher education) who does a bit too much, and even more since the confinement, since they see each other more often. She says: *"She's always right (...) she tries to understand others, that's all! (...). I feel like she doesn't understand me."* The teenager also seems not to appreciate the choice of her parents regarding her school orientation. They want her to go to the C series, which does not correspond to her personal aspirations. But since she has to obey her parents, she resigns herself to work more in mathematics, physics-chemistry and computer science.

With the confinement, habits changed in the family. The teenager's domestic activities have multiplied. To occupy her free time, she listens to music, practices sports and dance, her favorite activities. But the pressure of the C series, imposed by her parents, reminds her from time to time that she must rekindle the flames of mathematics in her brain. So she has put all her notebooks aside since the beginning of her confinement, except for her math notebook, which she takes out from time to time, despite herself. She declares: "I still touch the mathematics, because it is on that that I must be based, since they want me to do the C series (...) I must first understand to be able to (...) I want to do the D (which emphasizes on biology and chemistry), but they want me to do C, but well!" she concludes by shrugging her shoulders.

Cathia also finds that with the confinement and the parents at home, it is too much work, her desire for freedom is limited by the constraints imposed by the parents. She reveals that she would have liked her days at home to be quiet, without noise. But her mother in particular makes too much noise. *"When she has the opportunity to chat, she chatters too much. And she will complain that she has a headache..."*, she says with an expression of disgust. As far as her relationships with her siblings are concerned, she has more problems with her older sister who "smothers" her in a way, by trying to substitute herself for her parents. Sometimes they fight. The teenager prefers to keep her distance from her sister, as she cannot live with her sister without conflict. *"She gets on my nerves every day"*, she says, her teeth clenched with anger. As for her younger sister, she doesn't listen to her, she only does as she pleases. Because of her sister, Cathia does not have the possibility to decide on the TV programs because it is always the youngest sister who holds the remote control, and she benefits from the support of her parents. The teenager has to resign herself, in spite of herself. Sports, dance and music are activities she uses to deal with the frustrations and aggressive impulses generated by all the people around her who prevent her from expressing herself freely. She sometimes breaks things at home to express her anger. She justifies her rather violent tantrums by saying, *"I don't talk much"*. Cathia describes her dream day in these terms: *"(...) I do my chores, without anyone yelling in my ear (...) As soon as I'm done, I watch TV, I rest, and then I do my sport"*.

In short, the members of her family with whom the adolescent has always had a tense relationship, and even more so with the confinement and the permanent social proximity that it implies, are: the mother, because she permanently imposes her authority and constantly prescribes to the adolescent what she must do; the older sister (20 years old), who, following the mother, takes advantage of her right of descent to prescribe directives to which the young girl does not adhere at all. She reveals to us passively that this sister intrigues her about her weight gain and exacerbates her

complex of dysmorphophobic appearance. The third link in the family system that compromises Cathia's quest for tranquility is her younger sister, who does as she pleases and whose parents let her do so. Even more so during this confinement, the teenager has to endure her whims. The father is somewhat spared from this "infernal" circle. The reason could be that he is a father who is regularly absent because of professional constraints. This limits the risk of friction with the adolescent.

The interview with Cathia's mother lasted 27 minutes 12 seconds. From her speech, we retain that with the confinement, new rules of functioning were defined in the family. For Cathia in particular, the list of domestic tasks has been extended. Between the dishes, the hygiene of the house, the laundry and the cooking, the teenager can sulk the first three activities but never the cooking. She prefers sports, music and dance as distraction activities. She has access to the internet, but under the control of the mother. The TV programs are also controlled and selected by the mother. Faced with Cathia's adolescent crisis, exacerbated since the confinement, the mother has redefined the interpersonal relationships: more exchanges with the adolescent, more affective proximity, more dialogue. She is more interested in her, in her needs, in her behavior in general, because now she has more time to devote to the children, which was not the case during the classes and which is also not the case during the vacations because the children always travel during this period. The mother describes her new daily life in these terms:

"The confinement allowed parents to strengthen their ties with their children (...) one like me there, I go out in the morning, I come back at 1:30 p.m. I start cooking, when I'm finished I'm tired, I go into my room, I wash myself, I go to bed, that's it for the day. In the evening I just go and see if the repeater has come. Now we do a lot of things together: cleaning, cooking, eating together, sometimes we meet on my bed to talk. (Confinement) has allowed us to create a deeper bond with our children (...) there has been an advantage (to entering confinement)".

The mother states that Cathia is receptive to the new educational model that she has established in the family and is trying to adjust gradually, even though it is always necessary to ensure that "the flame stays lit", not to let down her guard. The mother is supported in this sense by the father who, even from a distance, contributes his stone to the family system.

We also note from the interview with the mother that she uses the older sister as an ally in the process of modeling Cathia. For the mother, the older sister is a satisfying example that younger children should follow in order to succeed in

family, school, and social life in general. She tends to use the older sister as an example to call out the teenager for her misbehavior. The mother's emotion shows that she is particularly proud of her.

The case of Hassan

Hassan is 17 years old, he is student in form 5, option; German. He is the fourth in a group of five siblings, three boys and two girls. He lives with his parents, his mother is a housewife and his father is a community health agent working in a private facility. He has been on leave since the alert issued by the Prime Minister on March 17. Since then, he has been confined to his family at home; a permanent presence that has led to changes within the family structure. This is why it is the relationship between the adolescent and his father, who is 49 years old, that interested us most in this study. The family is from the Far North region, Maroua I district, and practices the Muslim religion. The interviews lasted 22 minutes 5 seconds with Hassan and 11 minutes 52 seconds with the father.

Before going into the main part of the interview with Hassan, it should be noted that the young man speaks very little, has a very shifty look and gives the impression that he wants to end the interview and move on quickly. He seems to be hiding information to appear exemplary. He has difficulties in expressing his feelings about the relationship with the father, let alone judging the father's function/role.

Before the confinement, Hassan's daily life was like this: wake up in the morning, get ready for school, school, go home, eat, rest, go to mosque, study, go to bed. Hassan liked to go out to meet friends, for talks and other entertainment. This was his favorite pastime. So much so that it was sometimes necessary for the father to intervene (when he returned from work) so that the teenager took his notebooks and sat down at the study table. This is practically the only exchange he has with the father during classes.

Since entering confinement, new rules have been set by the father and the teenager has been forced to change his way of doing things, and even his way of being. The teenager is no longer allowed to escape to meet his friends as in the past. "*They tell me not to go out, not to stray too far...*". However, Hassan was encouraged by his father to start an income-generating activity (call box) right at the entrance to the family compound. It is through this activity, which he particularly likes, that Hassan can continue, in a disguised way, to satisfy the desire for freedom and escape that has always animated him and which the situation of confinement almost deprived him of. Indeed, the teenager takes advantage of his activity of manager of call box to remain as long as possible outside the family framework, with his peers. He

spends most of his time there. Hassan says he is bored at home, he finds no attraction, no reason to spend time there. Moreover, since he is not in an exam class, he finds no interest in opening his notebooks. "I put everything in order (he talks about his notebooks). At least one month or two months before the start of the school year, I'll take the notebooks of my friends from the first year to start practicing", he admits to us in passing. If he can no longer blossom with his peers at school, at least he can manage the boredom of confinement by spending time with his peers in the neighborhood, thanks to the pretext of managing the call box. Another way for Hassan to fill the relational void imposed by the confinement is the "abusive" use of the Internet at night at bedtime. He sometimes stays on it until after 11pm, he reveals. WhatsApp allows him to renew and maintain contact with his friends, whom he can no longer see because of the confinement.

The interview with Hassan's father gave us a better understanding of the teenager's behavior and choices since entering confinement. It is to avoid idleness and the risks that accompany it that the father encouraged his son to occupy his time usefully by running a call box. He says: "You know how kids are! They give up their notebooks, they start to stay outside, doing nothing...". Despite the cessation of classes, the father has always defended the study. For him it is important that the children continue to study so as not to lose their reflexes. He maintains that Hassan has adhered to this injunction. But from the interview we had with the teenager it is not so. Thus, without visibly opposing parental authority, Hassan uses the rules of conduct prescribed by the father as a means to achieve his goals. If he stays up until very late at night it is not because he is studying, it is because he is surfing the internet. If he stays out almost all day, it is not only to satisfy the requirements of his commercial activity, it is also to free himself from the parental hold, from family constraints, it is also to freely enjoy the company of peers that we know is very gratifying during adolescence.

The case of Bello

Bello, 16 years old and a student in secondary school in form 3, is an orphan who has lived with his grandmother and his paternal uncle since early childhood. The latter, aged 37, is the father figure in the home and the main guardian of the adolescent. Bello's guardian is a teacher, currently in a lockdown situation with his son. The constraints related to the coronavirus pandemic have imposed new rules of conduct within the family, which are mainly addressed to the adolescent. Faced with these rules, Bello has developed more or less adequate coping strategies, which we analyze below. The young boy is the oldest of five siblings, i.e. two girls and three boys. Bello is particularly relaxed during the interview, even if throughout the exchange, his gaze avoids meeting ours, no doubt as a sign of respect for the adult. The family

is from the Far North region, Bogo district, and practices the Muslim religion. The interview with Bello lasted 20 minutes and 34 seconds. With his guardian, we spent 27 minutes and 12 seconds.

During the classes, here is the sequence of activities that furnish the daily life of the teenager: wake up, bath, breakfast, leave for school, return, meal, rest, mosque, study until about 10 pm, then bedtime. His grandmother, with the help of the tutor, made sure that he took the lessons in his notebooks. The teenager also benefited from the pedagogical support of his tutor.

Since the confinement, here is what Bello's daily life is like: wake up in the morning for prayers, go to bed and wake up around 10 am, leave the house to meet his peers from his neighborhood, whom he calls his friends, with whom he carries out various distraction activities (soccer, basketball, television, telephone/internet), return to the house for a meal, a bath, then leave for the mosque, return from the mosque, meet his peers, with whom he spends the whole evening.

Having been sensitized by his tutor, Bello knows that despite the cessation of classes, he must not stop studying. The teenager tells us that this happens to him, but only from time to time. He says, "Now I don't study like I used to. I still study but not like before. Maybe twice a week for two hours (...) I haven't finished the course and I'm going to a new class, the 4th grade. I want to finish the program in order to understand well in the 4th grade. Except that when the adolescent describes his days since entering confinement, the activity "study" does not appear anywhere. It is only when we raise the question that he inserts this heading in his already full schedule. The last part of the above statement ("I haven't finished the course and I'm going to a new class, the 4th grade. I want to finish the program (of 3rd grade) in order to understand well in 4th grade") sounds more like a recitation than a true awareness. The adolescent gives the impression of repeating a corrective word that he would have received from a parent. The interview with his tutor will confirm this hypothesis. Moreover, what he reveals to us thereafter, concerning his grandmother, further supports this analysis.

Bello confided to us that his grandmother was unhappy with him because he had a tendency to neglect his studies since he was at home. "She gets mad because I don't read (pause) like (pause and hesitation) like I used to," he explains. This pause and hesitation mean, from our analysis and strong from the gestures that accompany his speech (agitation, head down, smirk), that what the teenager says is contrary to his thinking. The reality could be that Bello does not study at all, which logically explains the tense relationship with

his grandmother. This tense situation is not new. Already during school, the grandmother had to confiscate the boy's phone because he was spending too much time on it, to the detriment of his studies. The grandmother's motivation was the concern that he not regress in his school performance, having been the first in his class in the first term. Bello evokes this past not with sadness, nor regret (he had lost a tool that was really important to him), but with a mocking laugh whose meaning we will only be able to decipher at the end of the interview. In reality, although deprived of his phone, the teenager never gave up using this tool, nor the Internet. He "found" another one that he was using and continues to use without his grandmother and guardian knowing.

Moreover, as much as Bello resists studying hard for his lessons as his parents wish, he also resists observing the discipline related to anti-covid19 measures imposed by these adults responsible for his education. He continues to spend most of his time with his friends, in activities involving physical proximity, and he must always be reminded to wash his hands when he comes home and to put on his muffler when he leaves the house. Also, the hygiene of his nose patch is not a concern for him.

Thus, even if rules of conduct have been imposed on him since the confinement, the adolescent manages to bypass them, in a subtle and silent way, to satisfy his juvenile impulses of freedom, autonomy, escape.

From the interview with Bello's guardian, we learn that the teenager finds it very difficult to make the most of the period of confinement, preferring to sleep for several hours, remain idle, and engage in recreational activities, despite all the restrictions his guardian imposes on him. According to the guardian, Bello "spends all his time resting. In the morning he wakes up around 9 o'clock like this. It's not his habit. When there was school he used to get up early to go to school. As soon as Corona arrived, everything changed". The teenager's uncle, having tried in vain to bring him back to order, eventually blamed this "rebellious" behavior on the teenage crisis, and realized that resorting to injunctions would not change much. He says, "It's a problem (referring to the teenager's new behaviour), but since he's already a bit grown up, we can't force him to do what he doesn't want to do. If there was at least the Koran he would do the Koranic reading, but even there it was forbidden. We only see him like this, he goes in and out, he goes in and out, he does what he wants, we can't control him."

Bello became more disobedient during the confinement, he refuses or sulks more and more the commissions. Indeed, his parents, taking advantage of his permanent presence at home tend to entrust him more often with errands, something the teenager does not adhere to at all. "He doesn't want to,

you can see it on his face. It is true that he cannot refuse, he does but he does not want to", the tutor explains. Indeed, the teenager finds that they do a little too much. According to the young boy, it is not because he is now at home that they should abuse him.

Furthermore, the measures decreed by the guardian to get the teenager to protect himself from the coronavirus are poorly integrated by the teenager who does not really observe them. According to this parent, the teenager's behavior is not an isolated case. Indeed, in the locality concerned by our investigation, even adults neglect the anti-coronavirus19 measures. They all behave as if they were mere slogans with no real social or health impact. Adults do not believe in the existence of covid19, motivated by the fact that they have never had a case in their community, they have never seen a case in the hospital or on Cameroonian television. The cases reported by hospitals or NGOs are fictitious, according to local opinion. The coronavirus is an invention of decision-makers to make money. Moreover, among the barrier measures advocated in the world and by the Cameroonian government, there is social distancing and the prohibition of greeting each other by hand or kissing, two prescriptions contrary to religious and cultural principles. From the point of view of the Muslim religion in particular, social distancing is an "incongruous" practice, in the sense that "*in the mosque they say when you leave the space, it's the devil that comes between you, so it's not a question of...it's difficult then to leave free access to the devil (by practicing distancing),*" the tutor emphasizes. The tutor adds that for the practitioners of the Muslim religion, it is inadmissible to take their time to make ablutions, to go to the mosque for prayers, and they are asked to stay away from each other to let the devil through. On the other hand, they feel insulted by the anti-covid 19 measure that requires them to wash their hands when entering public places. For them, this is an implicit way of making them understand that they are dirty, even though they wash at home and perform ablutions several times a day.

Adults' disbelief in the existence of this pandemic, which is currently ravaging the world, does not encourage compliance with barrier measures. This attitude extends to the level of adolescents, who tend to take adult behavior as an example and neglect anti-viral measures.¹⁹ The parent is considered by religion and the community to be the most important person in the community. The parent is considered by religion and by the Sudanese tradition in general as the model to follow.

According to Bello's uncle, "for people to start taking it seriously, something has to happen to them, and if it happens to them they will understand.

The case of Ina

Ina is a 15-years-old girl, student in the 1st grade of secondary school, who has been living with her uncle and his wife since the age of 8, following the death of her father. Her mother lives in the village with her brothers. Ina is the youngest of five siblings to her mother and ninth to her father. In her adoptive family, she has two older brothers and two older sisters. With the confinement, Ina's tutor/uncle stopped going to work, he practices masonry. Her guardian, 55 years old, is a student in a literacy center, she goes there every working day, but since the confinement, she doesn't go there anymore. The teenager spends more time at home with her guardian, which is why we chose to pair her with Ina for this study. The family is originally from the Northern region, but the guardian is from Guiziga in the Far North. The religion practiced is Christian. The guardian is very active in her church and is part of the women's movement. It is in the religious milieu in particular that she was sensitized about the coronavirus. The interview with Ina lasted 28 minutes 57 seconds. With her guardian, we talked for 12 minutes.

Before the confinement, Ina's days went like this: waking up, washing up, bathing, leaving for school, coming back, eating, bathing, cooking the evening meal (apart from Wednesdays when the mother of the house took care of it herself, then she came back from her work earlier than usual, at 2 pm), studying, going to bed, before 9 pm. Sometimes she watched TV, but the housework prevented her from catching up on her favorite programs: series, live news from Cameroonian channels.

Since she was confined, the teenager's domestic chores were limited to washing dishes and yard work. Her uncle's wife is now in charge of cooking. Ina also takes care of the sheeps, she guides them to the pasture. This is an activity that the young girl likes, because she says, it allows her to escape a little bit, especially since currently, it is forbidden to leave the house, unless she is commissioned. Still in connection with her desire to free herself from the confined family environment, Ina would have liked her parents to have a field so that she could go and work there, not because she is fond of field work, but simply to fill the free time offered by the end of school by opening herself to the outside world. She also sometimes watches television and reads notebooks from the 5eme (borrowed from a friend in the neighborhood).

The physical proximity between mother and daughter, due to the confinement, has favored and multiplied opportunities for dialogue. Ina's tutor talks to her more often now. She teaches her religious, social and family values. She teaches her to cook certain dishes. She educates her about the dangers of early sexuality, and even about how to avoid the coronavirus. She never tires of shouting "wash

your hands (...) put on your mufflers (when you leave the house)" all day long. With the help of her tutor's awareness, Ina respects 3 main barrier measures: wearing a muffler and social distancing when she leaves the house, washing her hands regularly, and avoiding greeting or kissing people. She regrets, however, that her friends do not believe in the existence of the disease. The proof that they hold up is this: "At the westerners we show people who have corona, why don't we show them here?"

Regarding topics related to sexuality or risky behavior in adolescence, Ina confides that she listens religiously to her mother without asking questions. Ina feels that parents don't always understand their children's opinions and choices, even when they are right. Parents tend to get angry and raise their voice when the child expresses his or her own way of seeing things. That's why it's better to keep quiet when the parent is talking, especially when it comes to issues of sexuality and the girl-boy relationship. However, Ina tells us that she is able to confront her parents and to stand up to them in certain aspects of everyday life, such as certain tasks that are imposed on her. This morning, for example, she refused to split wood at the request of her guardian, arguing that it is not for children to do this kind of work.

From the interview with Ina's guardian, we note that the teenager is obedient, calm and submissive to the parents' authority. She is more affected by the fact that the teenager is rather quiet, "she does not walk". The guardian confides to us, however, that if Ina opposes her authority, she will inflict corporal punishment on her. She cannot bear to see the teenager idle in the house, so she encourages her to take out her notebooks in her free time. According to the guardian, Ina is practically blameless since they rub up against each other more than before because of the confinement.

Discussion

Confinement is a situation that brings together members of a family. People who, in general, were not always at home together. The father goes out, the children go to school, the mother goes to work. With the confinement, they have to be together. Being together, they will truly discover each other, they will truly get to know each other. Confinement becomes a revelation of behaviours, a moment when behaviours that were previously hidden are revealed, a situation in which the other is perceived in a different way.

When the child was at school, we didn't have all the time to observe him, but thanks to confinement, we have him in front of us all the time, we can observe him for longer and form a different perception of him than before. And the child himself can form a perception of the parents that is different from the one he had before. The phenomenon takes on a

particular meaning in adolescence. Adolescence is indeed the time of the body, wrote Chaby [22]. Before adolescence, the child's body is governed by a serenity that translates the silence of the organs. But in adolescence, with the physical transformations and psychological processes that follow, the body makes "noise" [4]. It is this change in the adolescent's body, and in turn in his or her mind, that developmentalists call a developmental crisis. This crisis is normally transient, marking the transition from one stage of development to another.

Indeed, each new stage of development requires the loss of a previous equilibrium, and the search for a new psychic position, which corresponds to a change of state that is not self-evident, whatever the benefits of the change considered [23]. According to these authors, any change of state gives rise to a sort of "developmental mourning", which reflects the loss of the previous state. This loss does not leave the subject indifferent and requires work on oneself to adapt to the change and to re-establish a new balance.

In the adolescent, the process of adapting to the developmental crisis involves various more or less risky behaviours: family runaways, school runaways, consumption of toxic products, risk-taking at the wheel and accidents, violence and transgressive behaviour, eating disorders, sexual behaviour, irresponsible behaviour, opposition to parental authority, with rejection of parental images. It is this last aspect that interests us in particular in this study, which examines the quality of parent-adolescent relationships in times of confinement.

From what emerges from the interviews with the participants in this study, opposition to parental authority, exacerbated by the constant presence and physical proximity to parents, is a reality among the 4 adolescents. However, this opposition manifests itself differently from one adolescent to another. Thus, the desire to break with the order established by the parents is more expressive in Cathia than in the three others. To explain this difference, we call upon cultural and religious determinants, which are more prevalent in certain cultures and traditions than in others. These include the respect due to elders, the prohibition of discussing certain issues with adults, and education in listening and submission without words [7,19,24].

In all the cases studied, the confinement has, from a relational point of view, scratched the daily life: their way of living, their way of doing, their way of being. The situation has induced a certain number of rules of conduct to which the adolescents do not adhere. Nevertheless, the latter find strategies to manage to bypass the vigilance of the parents and do what they really want and which characterizes the stage of development to which they belong: escape, freedom,

autonomy, activities with peers [4,9].

Cathia is required to do more household chores than before, she quickly gets out of it to focus on what she likes best: dancing, listening to music, playing sports. The critical presence of her mother "suffocates" her in a way; however, not being able to speak to her directly, the teenager takes out her frustrations either on her older sister (who is particularly appreciated by her mother), or on her younger sister (protected by her mother), or on an object of hers which she violently breaks. Thus, in reaction to the frustrations of which she is the object within the family, Cathia tends to react by aggressive impulses which will be supported on objects of her entourage. This behavior joins Kaës' thesis [25] according to which one observes in a subject confronted with a crisis situation sudden and decisive change in the course of a process which implies a rupture, a separation, a wrenching) a specific psychic work aiming at the restoration of the broken balance. This psychic work is built around support.

Confinement poses the problem of density on the ground. When the density in a space is high, you have the impression that you are being deprived of space, that others are encroaching on your private space. This situation alone can lead to aggression. This is clearly seen in Cathia, who develops defence mechanisms, basically aggression towards her sisters, to protect her space and safeguard her privacy.

Hassan is particularly fond of the company of his peers. But faced with the ban on coming and going imposed by his parents (to protect him from the coronavirus, but also from the risks of delinquency), the adolescent has found a strategy of circumvention. Indeed, through the call box activity that he carries out, with the "blessing" of his parents, Hassan manages to spend hours of relaxation with his friends whom he meets all day long, while staying at home (as required by the parents). For the parents, the call box is a way for the teenager to usefully occupy himself during confinement, but for the teenager, it is an excuse to escape with peers. Thus, without overt conflict with parents, Hassan conducts his social life in accordance with what theorists of adolescence describe at this age [6,8,26,27]. The young boy has difficulty expressing his feelings when it comes to the relationship with the father, let alone judging the paternal function. This general behavior of the adolescent is explained, in our opinion, and based on our knowledge in the field [23,28] by the specificity of the traditional and religious education that the adolescent received.

Bello manages to leave the house regularly to be with his friends, despite his parents' opposition. He only engages in group activities, which are currently prohibited because of the high risk of covid contamination¹⁹ (soccer, basketball).

The adolescent tends to avoid physical proximity to his parents. He comes home only for prayer, meals, or baths. His phone has been taken away from him, to prevent him from straying, but the teenager regularly uses a phone connected to the internet, without his parents' knowledge.

Ina is also forced, by her guardian in particular, to stay at home. The latter argues that she is a young girl who should not risk her future by flirting with young people of questionable morality. But the young girl, who aspires to freedom like all young people of her age, finds a way to satisfy this urge: she willingly accepts to take the oxen to the pasture, an activity innovated by the entry in confinement, which allows her to leave the confinement of the family home from time to time. She also regrets that her parents no longer have a field. Indeed, the teenager would have liked it otherwise, because going to the field would be for her a "good pretext" of escape. Ina also manages to satisfy the need to be with her peers by using a noble motive: she goes to the home of friends in the neighborhood to look for notebooks from the 5th grade class in order to prepare for the next school year. Here again, the desire to enrich her emotional and social life [12] is fulfilled by the subject. Ina is also more likely to vent her frustrations on her tutor (who is biologically closer to her, her paternal uncle) than on her tutor, who appears more severe and strict. Her guardian is thus positioned as an object of "affective support" [29] on which the adolescent releases (through vindictive words) the destructive impulses generated by the latent relational conflicts linked to the confinement situation.

Thus, opposition to parental authority can manifest itself in one way or another, depending on the education the adolescent has received, the type of relationship he or she has with his or her parents, and the support provided by the environment.

To explain the tendency of adolescents to reject domestic tasks or to become involved in them in a casual manner, we invoke the chronopsychological thesis.

From the chronopsychological point of view, the human organism adapts to situations according to age and according to their sequence in the life of the subject [30]. The student in particular tends to register and adapt to the functioning of the year as society has structured it (a time for school, a time for vacations, a time for vacations). This means that when the student, and mainly the adolescent (given his level of cognitive development), knows that it is the school year, he adapts his cognitive faculties in order to adapt to the school requirements. However, as soon as it comes to the vacations, another cognitive adjustment takes place, he becomes resistant to everything related to school and aspires rather to relaxation, so much so that the parent is often obliged to

make special negotiations to convince him to take vacation classes.

Therefore, with the confinement that forces the adolescent to stay at home during a period that he or she has already integrated, from a chronopsychological point of view, as school time, a cognitive rearrangement must take place to adapt to the new situation. It is not because he is at home that he will automatically put on the (symbolic) mantle of the vacationer and submit to parental demands related in particular to domestic chores, errands, study supervised by the parents (and not by the teacher). The adolescent considers that he or she is still in school and that, although at home, the parents should behave as if he or she were not there and let him or her move around freely. This is why in all the adolescents studied, there is this resistance to parental demands.

Therefore, one might wonder why these young people reject domestic obligations, but devote themselves essentially to leisure activities and mainly to peer activities, to the detriment of studies. Indeed, since adolescents are more inclined towards social life involving peer activities [31], school appears to be the place par excellence for meeting with peers and organizing common activities [4,9]. School for the adolescent is not limited to the teaching-learning process. It is the place of escape among peers, expression of his maturity, construction of his identity, identification, construction, and even deconstruction of the landmarks of social and affective life. [26,27,32,33].

All parents participating in the study acknowledged that the confinement provided an opportunity for them to become physically and emotionally closer to their child. They took advantage of it to redefine rules of conduct aimed more at protecting the adolescent from the risky behaviors inherent to adolescence. The situation of confinement favored dialogue with the teenager, education in taking charge of a house (for girls), education in moral values and social norms, and initiation to active life. In short, the educational model was revised and "improved", according to the parents, thanks to the entry into confinement. From the point of view of developmental psychology, the physical and affective presence of parents is restorative for the mental equilibrium of the child and adolescent [34]. Even if the latter tends to resist the parents' authority, to let them know that he is no longer a child. According to Cloutier et al. [5], adolescents may very well oppose their parents and distance themselves from them without breaking with them.

Indeed, the particularity of the adolescent is certainly to be a person who vigorously claims his autonomy and his individuality, but he still remains deeply dependent on the

family framework of his childhood. He needs, even if he refuses to admit it, to be accompanied and supported by parents on the path to adulthood, the real contours of which he does not know [4]. Thus, the success of the transition process towards the structuring of the adolescent's adult ego depends on the parent. Still, it is necessary that the parental function is well conducted [5,8,35]. The theoretically recommended model is one that includes the adolescent, with his or her needs, with his or her interests, in the process of rearranging the educational model and the family structure as a whole [4,7,9]. The adolescent should not be a spectator of the process, but an actor, a partner with the parent. At the same time that he or she is called to listen, he or she should be listened to in turn. True parent-adolescent dialogue is not a vertical relationship but a horizontal one [28,33]. Also, parents should be role models for the adolescent in the way they do and be. For example, the parents in the study tended to impose the anti-covid-19 barrier measures on the children without strictly practicing them themselves. Yet, formal intelligence provides the adolescent with the ability to evaluate, assess, and judge the actions of his or her parents [36-37].

Conclusion

The objective of this article was to measure the influence of confinement on the socio-emotional balance of the adolescent, and, by extension, on the stability of the family group to which he belongs. Through a case study, carried out with four adolescents and their parents, eight participants in all, we have established that the permanent presence of the parents, with the constraints it induces, is accompanied by a more or less manifest relational conflict. This situation tends to reinforce the adolescent's desire to distance himself from his parents, to seek, outside the restricted and "oppressive" family framework, spaces of expression, escape and fulfilment. The company of peers is the most sought after, in accordance with what is theoretically established. If it is impossible, because parents are opposed to it, to meet friends, friends of the same age with whom he shares the same aspirations, the same interests, the same way of doing and being, the teenager will tend to join his peers in the audiovisual media (telephone, tablet, internet, television).

From the point of view of the parents, the confinement is an opportunity of meeting with the child, of dialogue, of redefining the way of functioning of the family, of (re)modeling the behavior of the young person, in order to preserve him from the risks of contamination to the coronavirus, on the one hand, but especially from the deviant social behaviors. Confinement gives parents the opportunity to discover their child from an angle they were unaware of. A new facet of their child comes to light, and what the parent discovers can be shocking, hence the need for parents to mobilize a certain number of actions.

However, the structural and relational rearrangements engaged by the parents, in sign of adaptation to the situation of confinement are not always well received by the teenager. The latter, if he cannot express his thoughts to the parents, because of cultural barriers, always finds strategies of circumvention to escape the vigilance of the latter and to satisfy his desire for freedom and autonomy. How can developmental psychology help?

With reference to theoretical and empirical data on adolescent psychology, we propose that in a project to reorganize the family system, the parent must involve the adolescent as a partner in the process, by instituting a true vertical dialogue with the latter, which takes into account his or her needs, interests, beliefs and ideas. The parent must also position himself as a role model for his child, who constantly observes him and tends to judge his actions.

What we heard from our participants certainly didn't reveal all the secrets of adolescence as it grapples with the violation of its "space", but it did make us realize that behind what adolescents show us about themselves lies a vast unsuspected field to be discovered as soon as the opportunity arises. Confinement or anything that resembles it, holidays, etc. are opportunities that parents and professionals working with adolescents can seize to capture episodes in the lives of our young people that deserve to be highlighted, explored and taken care of.

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