17
Review paper
Doi 10.7251/stp2024081S
ISSN 2566-4484

Diana Stupar, University of Banja Luka, diana.stupar@aggf.unibl.org
Maja Milić Aleksić, University of Banja Luka, maja.milic-aleksic@aggf.unibl.org
Ivan Živanović, HRTB Arkitekter, izi@hrtb.no

AUTOTELICITY AS A CAPACITY OF ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT: ARCHITECTURE OF CREATIVITY IN CHILDREN'S SPACES

Abstract

This paper explores the intricate relationship between architecture and creativity, with a particular emphasis on the concept of autotelicity. Autotelicity, defined as a state where an individual fully immerses themselves in an activity within a spatial context, is examined as a crucial element in the creative process and appreciation of architecture. The investigation revolves around how autotelicity can form the basis for architectural concepts and how architecture, in turn, can encourage user creativity through this lens. Through case studies of children's spaces, this research aims to illuminate these concepts and provide fresh insights into how architecture influences our spatial perception while fostering creative thought and behavior. The emphasis on autotelicity underscores architecture's potential to inspire creativity and enjoyment in everyday spatial use.

Keywords: autotelicity, architectural concept, creativity, children's spaces

АУТОТЕЛИЧНОСТ КАО КАПАЦИТЕТ АРХИТЕКТОНСКОГ КОНЦЕПТА: АРХИТЕКТУРА КРЕАТИВНОСТИ У ПРОСТОРИМА ЗА ДЈЕЦУ

Сажетак

Овај рад истражује сложен однос између архитектуре и креативности, са посебним освртом на концепт аутотеличности. Аутотеличност, дефинисана као стање у којем појединац потпуно урања у активност унутар просторног контекста, испитује се као кључни елемент у креативном процесу стварања архитектуре. Истраживање се окреће томе како аутотеличност може формирати основу за архитектонски концепт и како архитектура, заузврат, може подстицати креативност корисника. Кроз студије случаја простора за дјецу, ово истраживање има за циљ да освијетли ове концепте и пружи свеже увиде у то како архитектура утиче на наше просторно поимање док подстиче креативно мишљење и понашање. Нагласак на аутотеличности истиче потенцијал архитектуре да инспирише креативност и уживање у простору кроз свакодневне обрасце кориштења.

Кључне ријечи: аутотеличност, срхитектонски концепт, креативност, дјечији простори

1. INTRODUCTION

The overarching research question posed in this study is how the concepts of autotelicity and flow, as central elements in Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's theory, can influence the fundamental principles underlying architectural concepts and, ultimately, spatial design to discover optimal user experiences, satisfaction, and creativity in everyday life [1]. This inquiry builds upon conceptual frameworks from previous research, particularly concerning the concept of autotelicity in architecture, observed through the lens of the relationship between concept and percept in the broadest sense [2]. The fundamental inquiry revolves around how the engagement in activities within a space can foster the emergence of the 'autotelic self.' This leads to the pivotal question of how to integrate daily creative activities, through experience and mediated by space, into architectural concepts so they become an integral part of the design process.

This study particularly focuses on examining the concept of autotelicity in spaces intended for children, aiming to explore through embodied architectural concepts the elements that stimulate creativity, engagement, and satisfaction among children in their daily use of space. In other words, the study will shed light on the architectural dimensions that encourage processes of identification through creative behavior. Children, as users, represent the prime example of active space utilization. Through engagement and creativity, facilitated by nonverbal modes of communication, they acquire direct spatial experiences, where space itself is perceived as a venue for intense interactions. It's worth emphasizing that the exploration of the concept of autotelicity in architecture is not exclusively tied to spaces for children and their imagination. However, the mechanisms and elements identified in children's patterns of creative space utilization can serve as a significant basis for integrating such concepts into everyday architecture.

The underlying hypothesis of this research is that autotelicity, as a capacity within architectural concepts, stimulates involutive processes that enable the manifestation of creativity in users' everyday lives, thereby creating a sense of satisfaction and enjoyment in architectural experience. It starts from the assumption that architecture, through its concepts, principles, processes, and elements, shapes users' forms, spatial relations, and characteristics, and by means of activities in certain spaces, can activate and stimulate flow processes and the "autotelic self" in users, thereby integrating with space and fostering identification through creative behavior.

The primary objectives of this study are to theoretically explain the concept of autotelicity in architecture, as well as the key terms relevant to this discourse. Subsequently, through a case study methodology, the study aims to examine architectural concepts and strategies that promote autotelicity and contribute to the creation of architectural spaces fostering creativity, user satisfaction, and particularly focusing on spaces designed for children.

The methodological approach in this study is based on theoretical research and case study investigation. The first part of the study establishes the theoretical framework of key concepts and draws conclusions as elements and procedures for establishing a theoretical platform for further investigation within the case study in the latter part of the study. Furthermore, through provided examples, the study identifies the principles of architectural concepts that lead to the emergence of autotelicity, practically demonstrated through the analysis of architectural examples, including those specifically designed for children. This exploration aims to illustrate how architecture can shape our everyday experiences and contribute to the quality of life through creativity and architectural innovation.

The anticipated outcomes of the discussions in this study are summarized in the conclusion, focusing on a better understanding of the role and practical application of the concept of autotelicity in design strategies and implementations in contemporary design methodology, particularly in the context of spaces catering to children's needs and imagination.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

„Throughout our day, whether at home or at work, we humans adapt and innovate, improvise flexibly, at times acting from our ”*gut feelings*”, at times from options we imagine and systematically try out, one after the other.“ [3]

Autotelicity, as conceptualized by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, lies at the heart of understanding creativity. According to Csikszentmihalyi, autotelicity refers to the inherent satisfaction derived from engaging in an activity for its own sake, independent of external rewards or goals. This concept emphasizes the intrinsic motivation that propels individuals to immerse themselves fully in challenging and enjoyable activities, leading to deep concentration and

fulfillment [2]. It is necessary to be able and mentally engaged to incorporate pleasure into everyday life. The intensities produced by the flow are a challenge for the individual. Csikszentmihalyi speaks about „the autotelic Self“ which implies the ability of an individual to translate potential dangers into challenges of pleasure and thus preserve inner harmony [2:209]. Within this state, the "autotelic self" becomes the driving force, urging individuals to engage in activities purely for the experience, thereby experiencing complete engagement and enjoyment. Csikszentmihalyi's theory extends beyond psychology, finding applications in various fields, including education, arts, sports, and beyond, offering insights into how individuals can achieve optimal experiences through total immersion and commitmentHere, it is necessary to pose the research question: Can architecture, through the intensities it brings together, effectively activate this type of individual capacity?

In contrast to art, architecture is imbued with utility, necessitating a distinctive perspective on creativity. Here, creativity transcends mere observation; it becomes inseparable from the activities it enables. Kevin Lynch's insights underscore the active role of observers in shaping their perception of the world, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between observation, imagination, and creativity [4]. By producing such transitions within high-intensity locations, it is possible to let things happen, including what was not originally intended: „Created by and for humans, these interventions arose both intuitively and rationally; They are inspired by both the physical context (place, location) and the social context.“ [4:13]. The experience of architecture encompasses more than just physical structures; it embodies a complex interplay of sensory perceptions, emotional responses, and cognitive interpretations. At its core, the architectural concept serves as the blueprint for this experience, shaping spatial qualities, defining functions, and evoking meanings [2:73]. Contrary to passive observation, architecture prompts active engagement, inviting individuals to interact with and interpret their surroundings. This interaction fuels a continuous dialogue between the built environment and its inhabitants, where each influences and enriches the other.

The manifestation of creativity, whether by individuals or groups, is profoundly influenced by the environment. Exploring the dynamic interplay between architectural concepts and spatial experience unveils how the creative energies embedded within architectural works—products of authors' ingenuity—can catalyze reciprocal creative processes in daily usage [2:110]. This dynamic interaction underscores the dual nature of creativity in architecture, where design intent converges with lived experience. Innovation within architecture involves a delicate balance of embracing and challenging past experiences. Resistance to conventional norms serves as fertile ground for imaginative leaps, allowing true creativity to flourish. This perpetual quest for novelty underscores the intrinsic connection between creativity and everyday existence [5]. Central to this exchange is the notion of creativity, which permeates both the conception and utilization of architectural spaces. The design process, driven by creative exploration and innovation, gives rise to tangible manifestations of ideas and intentions. Yet, equally significant is the creativity inherent in everyday activities within these spaces, where users adapt, personalize, and reconfigure their environments to suit their needs and desires.

The intensity of architectural stimuli can catalyze creative responses in users, prompting them to experiment, improvise, and reimagine their spatial interactions [4;5]. This reciprocal dynamic between design intent and user experience underscores the multifaceted nature of creativity in architecture, where innovation thrives on the interplay between intentionality and adaptation. In essence, the architectural concept serves as a catalyst for creative engagement, fostering a symbiotic relationship between form and function, intention and interpretation. By nurturing an environment conducive to exploration and expression, architecture not only shapes our physical surroundings but also enriches our lived experiences, imbuing everyday life with meaning, significance, vitality and pleasure.

Bernard Tschumi explains architecture of pleasure as a moment when conceptual ideas and spatial experience unexpectedly coincide, when the rules of architectural culture are deconstructed, and when the usual boundaries of architectural design are crossed [6:77]. What makes architecture so desirable is the difficulty of its discovery, with revelation being part of the pleasure of architecture. However, every interaction between architecture and its users can be perceived as a form of violence because the use of space entails the intrusion of the human body into a particular space, i.e., the intrusion of one entity into another. This idea of violence is not literal but metaphorical, indicating the intensity of the relationship between people and the spaces surrounding them. On the other hand, when De Landa speaks of "intensive properties" through "critical thresholds," he is essentially describing processes in which there is a "transition from quantity to quality" at any given moment. This implies moments of change [7]. From the perspective of architectural concept, this raises

another research question: Can we call this threshold a point at which architecture fosters creativity in everyday use, and if so, what defines this threshold?

The actualization of concept-percept relations points precisely to the aforementioned critical thresholds of architecture intensity [2:76]. By producing such transitions within high-intensity locations, it is possible to let things happen, including what was not originally intended: „Created by and for humans, these interventions arose both intuitively and rationally; They are inspired by both the physical context (place, location) and the social context“ [4:13]. The intensities that enable the pleasure of architecture are thus related to the conceptual-perceptual potentials - high energies that enable the formation of intensity nodes.

Thus, architecture of creativity entails a dynamic process, where pleasure becomes an integral part of everyday activities. Regardless of the repetitive characteristics of certain activities, the experience of space can always be differently stimulated by the architectural concept. The actualization of the concept and experience of space points precisely to the mentioned critical thresholds of architectural intensity.

Representation of the principles of autotelicity through direct experience in architecture implies simultaneously placing the architectural concept on par with experiential interpretations, which are not necessarily the author's intention on one hand, but are a consequence of the openness of the concept and the dynamic interplay between concept and percept on the other hand [2:76]. The context in which the concept-percept occurs is a key condition for the possibility of the mechanism of experiential knowledge transfer. Therefore, a good example on which this relationship can be analyzed are spaces used by children, namely kindergartens, for two reasons: 1. because children have specific perceptual mechanisms, 2. because the mechanism itself occurs in the everyday real environment in the relationship between space-teacher-child.

Children perceive space in a specific way, characterized by concepts such as sensory impressions, affectively colored relationships, concentration/identity, materialization of space/awareness of time, symbols/over-words, wholeness/humanity and space (affectively colored relationships, visual fields, games of fields, previous constancy of perceptions) [8]. Starting from the fusion of mental and physical boundaries of the body and environment, Bloomer and Moor call for the necessity of experiential interweaving of perception and experience through various activities [9]. Perception of space in this case can manifest as an "embedded" experience, which involves immediate, sometimes uncontrolled reactions of children to their surroundings, stemming from an accumulated sense of semi-conscious ego, rather than from subjective consciousness. Such a state arises from the unity of "proto-me," sensory impressions, perceptions, and reactions, which will be differentiated into intentional perception through later stages [10].

On the other hand, adults, in direct interaction with space, exhibit more complex mechanisms that are predominantly culturally conditioned. Therefore, the intensity of activity and the transition of the critical threshold are more dependent on rational relations. In the case of children, through subconscious learning, accumulated in the body and memory, and carried out through play and creation, the potential for activation of conceptual-perceptual nodes is intensified. Unlike children, where stimuli are most often directly translated into pleasure, in adults, such a feeling is very often deliberate and conscious, channeled through individual senses and culturally conditioned.

Creative architecture in this case, considered in children's spaces, reveals itself within the everyday pedagogical practices of kindergarten spaces. Relying on Malaguzzi's theory, where the space itself within the children's environment is actually the "third teacher," placed in the center of the constructivist dialogue of the child (student), teacher (parent/educator/school), and the environment itself, we can point out the importance of architectural concepts that, in conjunction with immediate children's experience, represent a crucial potential for realizing the autotelic self [11]. Expressiveness, but also what it produces through different types of opposition / unification of body-environment intensities, indicates a positive tension that can be an indicator of auto telicity. Palasma, connoting "an experience that summarizes combinations of the individual and the collective, the conscious and the unconscious, the mental and the physical" [12:55], speaks of erasing body-space boundaries by constructing activities and atmospheres that encourage engagement in space itself. Running, peeking, crawling, lying down and sitting in the space of the "children's street", therefore, can be indicators of the self-sufficiency of the space itself.

Realizing the autotelic self implies the necessity of intertwining everyday surroundings with imaginary layers and processes, through which the intensity of experienced interpretations can be achieved. Therefore, the ways in which creativity will manifest and to what extent depend on the characteristics of the space itself, immersed in the everyday kindergarten activities (pedagogy),

which through engagement and purposefulness has the potential to produce flow and stimulate internal motivation through intrinsic satisfaction produced by the knowledge transfer process.
In order to explore the dynamics between architectural concepts and the realization of autotelicity in everyday experiences, a qualitative case study approach is employed. This methodology allows for an in-depth examination of specific cases to uncover underlying patterns and insights. The selection criteria for the case studies are twofold: first, the architectural projects must exemplify innovative design approaches that actively engage users in creative activities; second, they should represent diverse cultural contexts to capture the nuanced interactions between space, culture, and creativity. The chosen case studies include three preschools: Njiric + architects – kindergarten Medo Brudno in Zagreb, 2008; ATG kindergarten by Hibinosekkei in Niigata, Japan, 2021; and Nordtvet Farm Kindergarten by Morfeus Arkitekter in Oslo, Norway, 2019. These examples offer distinct architectural interpretations and pedagogical philosophies, allowing for a comparative analysis of how different spatial environments facilitate creativity and the emergence of the autotelic self. The analysis will focus on four key dimensions: 1) the architectural concept and its integration with pedagogical principles; 2) the cultural and educational context informing the design process; 3) the spatial organization and its impact on user behavior and experience; and 4) the ways in which the space fosters creativity and the autotelic self. By examining these dimensions across the selected case studies, this research seeks to shed light on the intricate relationship between architectural design, everyday experiences, and the realization of autotelicity in educational environments.

3. CASE STUDY

Spaces for children, where pleasure is derived from the process of activity itself, independent of external goals and rewards typical for adults, provide a good spatial framework where the connection between space-activity-user is intense and immediate. The children's "autotelic self" is placed at the center of the spatial relation concept-percept and is manifested through children's immediacy, engagement, and satisfaction immersed in the creative activities of everyday life. In spaces of creative architecture, those that invite play and engagement, children attribute new meanings to spatial elements and actively use them through the creative potential of play, making space not only a participant but also an initiator of specific events. Preschool spaces point to those dimensions of architectural concepts which, through the relationship of space-activity-user and through specific architectural elements, encourage processes of identification through creative behavior.
Therefore, children's spaces represent a prime example for exploring the concept of creative architecture, one that stimulates autotelic processes through its embedding in real space. Regarding spatial characteristics, everyday practices, and children's experiences, the next section will discuss the spaces of three preschools that, through creative architecture and architectural concept, stimulate the realization of children's autotelic selves.

3.1. NJIRIC + ARCHITECTS – KINDERGARTEN MEDO BRUDNO, ZAGREB, 2008

The Medo Brundo Kindergarten, designed by the architectural firm Њ и р и ћ+, represents an intriguing example of incorporating real-life experiences into the architectural concept. Built in Zagreb in 2008, this kindergarten embodies the concept of acquainting individuals with real-life activities and fostering creativity and engagement.

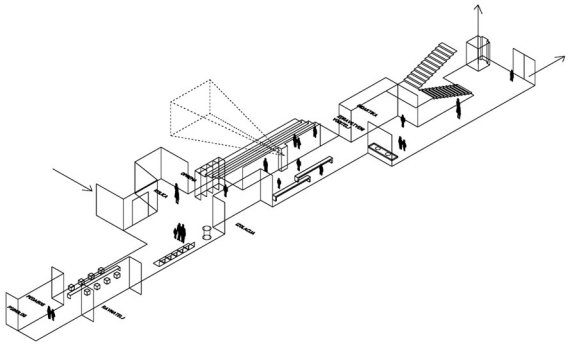

Figure 1. Njiric + architects – kindergarten Medo Brudno, Zagreb, 2008: Children street

The architectural concept revolves around introducing and mixing various activities to promote interaction and engagement through visibility and boundaries. The design repeats the local urban matrix on a micro scale, transitioning functional units within the interior space and courtyards. At the heart of this micro-urbanism lies the "Children's Street" [13], around which different spaces such as courtyards, dayrooms, administrative offices, kitchens, and administration areas are arranged. " Transparency of the partition to this street, allows constant exposure of units, as well as their interaction with each other. The dynamic flow of this street "and the multitude of interspaces, supported by intense transparency and color coding, seek to create a scenario of a true urban experience for children" [13].

Figure 2. Concept:"Introduction to real life"

The concept is based on a kind of "introduction to real life" through open exposure to various kindergarten activities., fostering creativity through open engagement. The expressive nature of these activities, along with the intensity of the interaction between body and environment, indicates a positive trend towards autotelic tendencies. The atmosphere of the "Children's Street" serves as a unique collage of activities, promoting diversity within everyday activities and stimulating creativity by provoking a new layer of environmental perception.

Pleasure is thus not made possible by conventional use but is provoked by a concept that gives a new layer to the perception of the environment by activating creativity [2:80]. For instance, children actively engage in building displays that become part of the administrative space atmosphere, allowing them to compare and present their work with children from other areas. Similarly, activities in the kitchen, sewing rooms, and workshops are exposed, creating a unique atmosphere defined by the architectural framework that enables the production of diverse events intertwined and contained within each other. The experience of ordinary every day stay in the kindergarten is enriched by such unpredictable factors, and the dynamics of such internal intensities give architecture and experience an autotelic dimension. Creativity in this case is not a mere creation characteristic exclusively for kindergarten and children's imagination.

Figure 3. Creative Architecture- Enjoying Understanding Everyday Processes

The experience of everyday life within the kindergarten is enriched by unpredictable elements and dynamic internal intensities, giving the architecture an autotelic dimension. Creativity is encouraged at all levels, fostering an atmosphere where intense differences contribute to internal harmony and stimulate creativity. Children, administrative staff, teachers, educators, and parents are exposed to a form of autotelic potential through their involvement in everyday activities, contributing to the creation of a diverse atmosphere. This integration of creativity into everyday activities becomes an integral part of the architectural concept's identity, where change becomes an integral part of repeating characteristic daily activities.

Moreover, this analysis sheds light on the negative aspects of indirect learning through observation and virtual involvement in processes, emphasizing the importance of direct physical engagement in daily creative activities, particularly focused on children's activities. In essence, the autotelic experience in Medo Brundo Kindergarten is not merely about the activities themselves but rather the profound sense of fulfillment and satisfaction that individuals derive from their immersion in the present moment. It is a testament to the transformative power of architecture in shaping environments that inspire joy, creativity, and self-discovery.

3.2. HIBBINSEKKEI+YOUJI NO SHIRO-ATG KINDERGARTEN, NIIGATA, JA, 2021.

The concept of "Participation in Real Life" at the ATG Kindergarten, designed by the architectural duo Hibbinosekkei, exemplifies architecture where the potential of creative architecture is realized through direct participation and enjoyment in activities, specifically children's involvement in real-life scenarios. This concept is deeply rooted in Japanese culture, emphasizing children's participation in adult activities. In relation to the concept, the author himself states: "In Tokamachi, there is a traditional event called 'Honyara-do' that has been passed down from generation to generation. 'Honyara-do' is a place where everyone gathers to eat, play, enjoy, and learn, a scene that has continued in this area for a long time" [13]. According to that, kindergarten's design is based on the principles of autotelicity, where the space itself embodies the process of collective-individual engagement.

Figure 4. Hibbinsekkei+Youji no Shiro-ATG kindergarten- Niigata, JA, 2021.

The architectural concept emphasizes openness, accessibility, and participation in all activities, embodied in a massive cubic volume structure that houses community gatherings under one roof. Despite the spaces being organized within a simple spatial form, there is a duality of content manifested through interaction with the environment, achieved through a rich entrance foyer and an artificial-hill slide connecting the ground floor with the outdoors. And as Hibbinosekkei says: “We designed an environment where children can practice and challenge various play activities harmoniously with the external environment throughout the four seasons” [14]. The kindergarten features numerous integrative spaces, both indoors and outdoors, designed for spontaneous exploration, play, and creative engagement.

Figure 5. Concept - Children's Participation in Real Life

The kindergarten consists of spaces of various sizes, purposes, and atmospheres, offering a multifaceted potential for daily enjoyment in creative processes. For example, the entrance leads to a significant foyer with dominant steps leading to the dining area on the upper floor, serving as a central space for multifunctional integration. The foyer integrates various semi-scaled functions suitable for children's work and play, materialized through natural elements such as wooden flooring, shallow water pools, sand, available for all inhabitants of the house. Internal shared spaces such as cloakrooms, pocket libraries, mini playgrounds are accessible to children and adapted for their independent exploration and progress. However, the most significant place is occupied by the dining room and kitchen, where children participate daily in meal preparation and serving, also used as a studio or space for physical activities, performances, etc., all in constructive collaborative action between children and adults, where children are considered equal function bearers.

Children participate in daily interactions through work and play, for example, in the kitchen, where they participate in cooking, setting the table, and washing dishes. But the challenge of instrumentalization of children's learning, strong emphasis on group activities according to social norms suppresses individual creativity in terms of producing new meanings. Anyway, Creative behavior is manifested through design, emphasizing participation in real life. Despite these challenges, the concept of autotelicity fosters an environment where children engage creatively with their surroundings, promoting genuine participation in everyday activities. This integration of negative aspects highlights the importance of continually reassessing and refining educational approaches to ensure that children's creative potentials are fully realized within the kindergarten environment.

Figure 6. Creative Architecture-Pleasure in Engaging in Everyday Activities

3.3. MORFEUS ARKITEKTER-NORDTVET FARM KINDERGARDEN,OSLO, NO, 2019.

The concept of the Nordtvet Farm Kindergarten by Morfeus Arkitekter is based on the principles of contemporary pedagogy, known as the Reggio Emilia approach, which at its core embodies a constructivist standpoint that space itself is the "third teacher" in children's learning and development. Through an appropriate spatial framework, a relationship is established between the known and the unknown, upon which the potential for children's abstraction rests. Therefore, the authors themselves state: "We wanted to appeal to children's imagination and understanding of the world and design a kindergarten where the building itself is a mentor" [14]. The space that invites play and engagement is enriched by children with new meanings of spatial elements, actively using them through the creative potential of play, making the space not only a participant but also an initiator of particular events.

Figure 7. Morfeus Arkitekter-Nordtvet Farm Kindergarden, Oslo, NO, 2019.

Functionally, the ground floor of the house houses kindergarten units that could be described as undersized compared to Central European standards but are in line with Norwegian pedagogy, which emphasizes children's outdoor activities. Therefore, the emphasis is on integrating and intertwining outdoor activities, as well as users, which are not only children but also locals who have embraced this house as an extension of the local community. Design and availability have ensured that the kindergarten functions as a popular public urban space, becoming a favorite meeting place in the neighborhood.

The appearance of the house with its emphasized roof volume, broken up into a series of gabled roofs, contributes to an architectural relationship with the farm buildings. The materialization of the house stems from the principle of sustainable wood construction, and 3D-based prefabrication has facilitated the realization of a building with complex geometry and a varied sequence of rooms. The compact form of the ground floor and the split roof, which is connected to the ground floor by a circular connection, form a series of multi-scaled spaces adapted for various activities and games that can take place simultaneously. In this way, the house itself is perceived as a toy, a place that abounds with variable spaces, including hiding places where children can play unnoticed by adults, and places for growing food and caring for animals such as chickens and rabbits.

Figure 8. Concept - Children's recreation of The Real Life

In the case of the Nordtvet Farm Kindergarten, daily activities are delegated to the children themselves, giving them the capacity not only to interpret but also to invent spatial and material qualities and processes that translate their dreams and fantasies, simultaneously making them more real and better. The space that offers hiding places provides real potential where children, through internal motivation and creative engagement, by intertwining bodies, space, and activities, transition into a state of Flow, building an autotelic self. Thus, the kindergarten space becomes a place where children recreate everyday life, offering new patterns of active everyday creation. Recognizing spaces that offer new creative patterns, and production of imagined meanings stimulated by play in a specific location, can be marked as genuine creative architecture.

Figure 9. Creative Architecture-Pleasure in the Integration and Creation

4. DISCUSSION

The discussion of the analysis of various approaches to architecture in kindergartens has explored how creative architecture can stimulate autotelic processes in children, providing them with the opportunity to fully engage in everyday activities.

In Medo Brundo kindergarten, we observed that creativity is encouraged through exposing children to real-life activities, creating a dynamic atmosphere that promotes various forms of play and creative expression. The design of the kindergarten facilitates continuous interaction between children and space, encouraging their ability to create new layers of meaning in the environment.

On the other hand, ATG Kindergarten in Niigata emphasizes the importance of children's participation in real life through the integration of various activities within the architectural space. Through open and accessible spaces, children are encouraged to explore, play, and participate in daily activities, thereby stimulating their creativity and independence.

Nordtvet Farm Kindergarten in Oslo represents an exemplary instance of modern educational philosophy, where the kindergarten environment is embraced as the "third teacher" in children's development. Through seamless integration with the natural surroundings and an emphasis on sustainable practices, the kindergarten transcends its role as merely an educational institution, becoming a hub for community engagement and fostering a profound connection between children and nature. Encouraging outdoor play devoid of adult supervision, the kindergarten nurtures children's independence and creativity, allowing them to immerse themselves in unstructured play that mirrors the rhythms and experiences of everyday life. This emphasis on nature and outdoor play not only promotes physical activity and exploration but also instills in children a deep appreciation for the natural world, enriching their learning experiences and fostering holistic development.

Through these examples, we see how different design approaches can foster creativity and engagement in children's everyday environments. These case studies illustrate the importance of integrating real-life activities, promoting participation, and creating multifunctional spaces that encourage exploration and expression. Through these examples, we observe how various architectural designs embody the capacity for autotelicity, fostering pleasure derived from immersion in everyday activities. This embodiment of autotelic capacity through architectural concepts encapsulates the essence of enjoyment, thereby facilitating optimal engagement and self-expression in children's daily experiences.

5. CONCLUSION

Autotelicity as a capacity of architectural concept represents a complex interplay between autotelicity, architectural design, and the experience of everyday activities. This research delves deeply into the theory of autotelicity, exploring its application in architecture through concepts such as the experience of pleasure through engagement and flow state transition. Special attention is given to the autotelic self of children, their specific mechanism that propels them into a state of flow, and how architectural concepts can stimulate this state of creativity and satisfaction.

Drawing from Csikszentmihalyi's concept of autotelicity, the study illuminates the intrinsic motivation driving individuals to immerse themselves fully in activities, irrespective of external incentives. Since the "autotelic Self" implies the inner harmony of the individual, it is necessary to point out the instability of the concept of autotelicity. As previously noted, the tension is that state of condition for actualization, in this way becomes a field of instability of autotelicity: "Most enjoyable activities are not natural; they demand an effort that initially one is reluctant to make" [2:68]. This intrinsic drive is not only relevant to psychological phenomena but also finds resonance in architectural experiences, where the design of spaces can either hinder or encourage the attainment of a state of flow.

The insights derived from theorethical platform underscore the active role of perception in shaping spatial experiences, emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between observation, imagination, and creativity. This perspective informs architectural practice, prompting designers to consider how users perceive and interact with their surroundings, thereby influencing the potential for creative engagement. The exploration of "intensive properties" and "critical thresholds" within architectural experiences highlights moments of change and discovery that are integral to user engagement [7]. Bernard Tschumi's concept of architecture of pleasure further elucidates how architectural interventions can evoke profound emotional and sensory responses, transcending conventional boundaries to foster meaningful interactions between individuals and their environment [6]. Innovation within architecture necessitates a delicate balance between honoring tradition and challenging conventional norms. By embracing this perpetual quest for novelty, architects can create environments that not only reflect the dynamic interplay between creativity and everyday existence but also inspire users to explore and adapt to their surroundings.

Spaces for children, such as kindergartens, provide fertile ground for exploring the manifestation of creativity within everyday pedagogical practices. Integrating principles that can foster autotelic capacity into the architectural design of these spaces encourages children's engagement and self-expression, creating an environment where creativity and satisfaction spontaneously manifest.

In conclusion, the research of examples such as the Medo Brundo Kindergarten, ATG Kindergarten, and Nordtvet Farm Kindergarten highlights the importance of creative architecture in fostering autotelic processes in children. Through proper space design and integration of real-life activities, architecture can become a catalyst for children's creativity and independence, providing them with the opportunity to explore, learn, and grow in a stimulating environment conducive to autotelic experiences. By creating spaces that inspire intrinsic motivation and engagement, architects play a vital role in nurturing children's innate curiosity and imaginative faculties. The integration of elements that encourage flow state transitions and pleasure through engagement further enhances the potential for children to immerse themselves fully in their activities, leading to more profound experiences of creativity and satisfaction.

The same methodological framework could have been applied to many other cases, highlighting the quality of the methodology rather than its limitation. This underscores the potential for broader applicability and generalizability of the findings beyond the selected case studies. By demonstrating the robustness of the methodology in capturing the complexities of architectural design and its impact on user experiences, this research contributes to advancing the understanding of autotelicity in various educational settings.

Ultimately, this research emphasizes the crucial role of architecture in fostering creativity and enriching everyday experiences for individuals of all ages. By embracing innovative design strategies rooted in principles of autotelicity, architects can create environments that not only serve functional purposes but also inspire and empower users to engage with their surroundings in meaningful ways. Through prioritizing user engagement and considering the intrinsic motivations of individuals, architects contribute to the creation of environments that facilitate personal growth, exploration, and fulfillment. Thus, the fusion of autotelicity and architecture of creativity serves as a cornerstone for the development of spaces that resonate with users on a deep and profound level, enriching their lives and fostering holistic well-being.

Architecture can thus become a realization of the potential of its own change. The acquisition of space through the creativity contained in everyday activities can therefore be observed precisely through the dynamics of its conquest, and not through conquest for something to be finally adopted. Autotelicity is thus the capacity of the architectural concept to encourage participatory processes that manifest the creativity of everyday life and thus create pleasure.

LITERATURE

[1] M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, Harper Collins Publishers, 2008, pp. 45.

[2] I. Živanović, "Architecture as an Assemblage of Concept and Percept", Ph.D. dissertation, Arhitektonski Fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu, Beograd, Srbija, 2016.

[3] R. Richards, "Everyday Creativity: Process and Way of Life – Four Key Issues," pp. 189-215, 2010.

[4] N. Elin, "Predgovor-uvod za knjigu pod naslovom: Nagli zaokret u gradu: ka integralnom urbanizmu," Orion Art, Beograd, 2002.

[5] D. Boontharm, "Creative Reuse Milieu life," *Symposium Measuring the Non-Measurable - Colection of pappers*, Keio University Hiyoshi Campus, 2011.

[6] B. Tschumi, *Arhitektura i disjunkcija*, AGM, Zagreb, 2004.

[7] M. De Landa, A new philosophy of society assemblage theory and social complexity, Continuum, London, 2006.

[8] D. Stupar, M. Milić Aleksić, M. Radulj, "Psychological aspects of spatiality," *STED Conference*, University PIM, 2023.

[9] K. Bloomer, C. Willard Moore, *Body, Memory and Architecture*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1977.

[10] Ž. Pijaže, I. Berbe, *Psihologija deteta*, Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, Sremski Karlovci, 1990.

[11] L. Malaguzzi, "History, Ideas, and Basic Philosophy," in *The Hundred Languages of Children*, JAI Press Ltd., London, 1998.

[12] J. Pallasmaa, The eyes of the skin, Architecture and the Senses, Wiley, New York, 2005, pp.55.

[13] Njirić+, "074 Kindergarten MB - Zagreb, 2005." [Online]. Available: http://www.njiric.com/work/chronological/2005 (Accessed: 28-Dec-2021).

[14] Hibbinsekkei+Youji no Shiro, "ATG kindergarten", Niigata, JA, 2021. [Online]. Available: https://mooool.com/en/atg-kindergarten-and-nursery-by-hibinosekkei.html (Accessed: 28-Jan-2024).

[15] Morfeus Arkitekter, "Nordtvet Farm Kindergarden", Oslo, NO, 2019. [Online]. Available: https://archello.com/project/nordtvet-farm-kindergarden (Accessed: 20-Mar-2024).