

African Indigenous Care-Giving Practices: Stimulating Early Childhood Development and Education

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Abstract

The indigenous communities in Africa, specifically Kenya, which is the focus of this article, had their own well-developed motivational systems that positively enhanced teaching and learning programmes in the community. These motivational systems were manifested in behaviours that were presented as sequential cultural tasks that demanded active engagement from children at every stage of development. The philosophical tenets of African indigenous education underscored education as preparation for life. This was a culturally based education that addressed the physical, emotional, mental and social aspects of a child's successful development. It offered the child an opportunity to participate in practical, productive and responsible livelihood activities. This article suggests that a concert of research into these indigenous motivational care-giving practices and community participation in the activities of early childhood education may offer important insights into transitioning children from life in the home environment to that of the school and its accompanying academic tasks. When these motivational care-giving practices are incorporated in the process of transitioning children to formal schooling, then their chances of success in these new educational programmes could be enhanced.

Key words: Indigenous care-giving practices; Early childhood development; Early childhood Education; Kenya

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