

Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Educatedness in an Afro – Zimbabwean Context – The role of philosophy of hunhu /ubuntu

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Abstract

This paper seeks to explore and examine the possible contributions of Early Childhood Development (ECD) on the understanding and appreciation of educatedness in Zimbabwe within an African context. This is against the background of research studies which maintain that the nature and quality of the end – product of any education system is to a large extent determined by the nature and quality of the ECD programme if any, forming the basis of that particular education system in any society. In light of the preceding, this paper therefore seeks to establish how current theory and practice of ECD in Zimbabwe can assist in the realisation of authentic educatedness within an Afro – Zimbabwean context. Accordingly, this paper shall posit that, if ECD in Zimbabwe is to play the foundational role it should, in the development of the child, resulting in his / her being educated, then indeed, it should be rooted in and informed by a relevant philosophy. In line with the preceding, it shall be contented that, ECD should be informed by philosophy of hunhu / ubuntu. By the philosophy of hunhu / ubuntu is meant a philosophy which evolves from and is rooted in the African indigenous people’s world – view and is anchored hunhu /ubuntu and chivanhu. By chivanhu and hunhu/ ubuntu is meant, the processual mental and physical dispositions of an individual characterized by humility, kindness, courtesy, warmth, empathy, understanding, respectfulness, responsibility, friendliness and consideration which manifests itself amongst others, in the manner one talks, walks, behaves, dresses and interacts with relatives and non-relatives alike (Samkange & Samkange, 1980; Ramose, 1999; Makuvaza, 2013).

Keywords: *Educatedness, early childhood education, unhu/ubuntu, philosophy, processual*