

SEARCH

Enter search terms:

Search

in this series

Advanced Search

Email Notifications and RSS

BROWSE BY

All Collections

Author

USF Faculty Publications

Open Access Journals

Conferences and Events

Theses and Dissertations

Textbooks Collection

Projects Collection

USEFUL LINKS

Psychological and Social Foundations
Homepage

My Account

Contact Us

Rights Information

SelectedWorks

Submit Research

EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Exploring Culture, Play, and Early Childhood Education Practice in African Contexts

[Link to Full Text](#)[Kofi Marfo](#), *University of South Florida*[Linda Biersteker](#)

SHARE

**Document Type**

Book Chapter

Publication Date

2010

Digital Object Identifier (DOI)<http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203839478>**Abstract**

In Africa, as in many other parts of the non-Western world, Western-style schooling has become the institutionalized medium of organized or formal education since the era of colonization. The ubiquity of Western-style schooling in Africa is problematic when measured by the criteria that education must 1) be locally relevant and 2) transmit a society's enduring values and best traditions across generations. Today, the alienating effects of schooling in Africa are a major theme in discourse on education. Cole has remarked on the large amounts of time children spend in formal schools 'where their activity is separated from the daily life of the rest of the community' (2005: 195). Serpell (2005) has lamented the absence of a connection between the Western theories that inform teaching and learning in African classrooms and the perspectives and everyday life circumstances and experiences of students, teachers, and parents in their local contexts. In the area of early childhood development (ECD), Nsamenang (2008: 142) has expressed the concern that 'western ECD services initiate Africa's children into an educational process by which children . . . increasingly gain unfamiliar knowledge and skills but sink disturbingly into alienation and ignorance of their cultural circumstances.'

Was this content written or created while at USF?

Yes

Citation / Publisher Attribution

Rethinking play and pedagogy in early childhood education: concepts, contexts and cultures, p. 73-85

Scholar Commons Citation

Marfo, Kofi and Biersteker, Linda, "Exploring Culture, Play, and Early Childhood Education Practice in African Contexts" (2010). *Educational and Psychological Studies Faculty Publications*. 96.

https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/esf_facpub/96

child working alone is still a partner with teachers, peers, and (as I will also argue) unseen others in learning and thinking. Play and playfulness are basic features in early childhood education. The elements of play are pleasure, a sense of freedom, and the co-construction of shared meaning through the use of rules or rhythms. Play and learning are closely related in early childhood. Play and learning are closely related in early childhood. But when the focus on the educational benefits of play becomes too strong, the most essential feature of play is lost: children's pleasure. Young children in group settings often have to adapt to the teachers' demands related to security, hygiene, and social norms and values. In practice, with toddlers this means many confrontations with "no," "mustn't do this," and "don't do that." Early childhood education is basically for children between the ages of three and five. It is more commonly referred to as preschool, pre-kindergarten, daycare, nursery school or simply early education. Despite the different names, they all have the same purpose - to prepare children for elementary school. Giving your children special attention before elementary school helps in giving them a head start for their future. What is the Purpose of Early Childhood Education? Early childhood education is similar to a training program given to young children. During class, children will gain the socia