

## Chapter 89

# The Use of Indigenous People's Pedagogic Way of Learning for Preschool and School Teachers: Critical Analysis Through the Lens of the Theory of Social Justice

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### ABSTRACT

*The main issue that bothers indigenous people is an unequal and unjust representation of their knowledge in relation to the formalized Western education system. Despite the affirmation of indigenous knowledge by the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Western formal education system defines what knowledge and teaching methods are authentic or not. The purpose of this chapter is to determine the value of the indigenous knowledge and their pedagogic methods for preschool and school teachers. The data collected has been critically analyzed through John Rawls' theory of social justice. There is an agreement between authors and teachers that indigenous people had education systems that sustained them for years. This chapter provides some recommendations on how these valuable methods of teaching can be incorporated into the mainstream education systems.*

### INTRODUCTION

One of the key issues that needs attention is the neglect of indigenous way of knowledge delivery to the young ones. Indigenous knowledge was affirmed by the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (Barelli, 2015). Despite this action, formal education came to define what knowledge and teaching methods are authentic or not. The marginalisation of the indigenous way of learning created division since what is learned and how it is learned at school differs with what is done in the communities.

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With the information provided above, the main question to be answered by this chapter is: *What is the value of indigenous people's pedagogic way of learning for preschool and school teachers?* The aim is therefore, to determine the value of indigenous people's pedagogic methods of teaching and learning for preschool and school teachers. The information collected from the literature and teachers has been critically analysed through John Rawls' theory of social justice. The main idea of this theory of social justice is justice as fairness. The analysis of the information will be done by critically discussing the indigenous education system, value of indigenous way of knowing, and the incorporation of indigenous ways of learning into the current way of teaching. Some African countries, such as South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Nigeria and few other countries such as Australia, Canada and India will be used as examples in this chapter.

The next section provides the literature review. It commences by conceptualisation of the important concepts followed by the value of indigenous education system and its way of teaching.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Conceptualisation of Important Concepts**

This section intends to conceptualise important concepts that form the core of this chapter. The concepts include indigenous/aborigines/natives, explicit curriculum, implicit (hidden/covert) curriculum, societal curriculum (or social curricula) and indigenous education system.

### **Indigenous/ Aborigines/ Native Peoples**

Native and indigenous are two words that are used commonly to refer to plants, animals even people. It is interesting to see these entities being referred to as native, aboriginal, or indigenous. Most writers would like to associate the concept aborigines with native people of, for example, Australia, Canada and India, to mention just a few. For this chapter, the concepts indigenous (people) will be used to include all these terms.

The term '*indigenous*' refers to the origin of things or something (for example plants or animals) that are natural and distinctive in a particular context (Msila & Gumbo, 2016, p.98). Simplifying this definition, one can say the concept 'indigenous' means to produce, grow, live or exist naturally in a particular region or environment, e.g. indigenous plants and indigenous animals. Other terms synonymous or related to indigenous are native, endemic (peculiar to a region), and aborigines – all meaning belonging naturally to a particular locality. Indigenous or aboriginal peoples are the original inhabitants of a particular country. In Africa, this entails people who moved from one part of the continent to another as hunters and gathers (Msila & Gumbo, 2016, p.99). Taking into consideration the definition of indigenous as provided above, indigenous people are ethnic groups who descended from the original inhabitants of Africa (Gumbo, 2015, p.61).

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