Culturally Relevant Parenting Education Interventions

Strengthening Child-Caregiver Relationships: Linking Evidence and Practice”,
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WHO WE ARE

The PARENTING IN AFRICA NETWORK (PAN) is a pan-African network of member organisations with a focus on promoting parenting in Africa.

PAN is non-partisan, and seeks to collaborate with organisations and individuals that support skilful parenting in Africa.

PAN draws it mandate from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) to advocate for the rights of children by focusing on specific issues that affect African families.
Strategies/programs

- **Legal and advocacy** - promote family friendly laws and policies
- **Education and training** – to promote training and support to parents and caregivers
- **Research and documentation** - to build a knowledge base for parenting programs in Africa
- **Psychosocial support** – in partnership with members implement good parenting models that improve parent and child outcomes.

Important aspects of culture

- Family composition
- Gender roles and responsibilities
- Socialisation process - language acquisition, teaching children important aspects of their culture - how and why
- Language
- Economic status
- Values, beliefs and religion
- Traditional/community leadership
Current programs
1. Group Triple P trials in African context
2. Early Learning and Family support model
3. Documentation of indigenous knowledge/practices from several African cultures that inform positive parenting and strengthen families

Towards cultural relevance in parenting programs

Aim
To assess the efficacy of Group Triple P as a parent training approach in the African context.
1. Would the strategies be culturally acceptable and relevant to parents in Africa?
2. What aspects of the program would require changes to be relevant to the needs and context of local parents?
3. What resources would be required?
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Components

**Initial trials:**
Kenya
- 30 parents (Fathers and Mothers) participate in 2 pilot deliveries of group Triple P
- 51 Parents (Fathers and Mothers) participate in a cultural assessment exercise

Namibia
- 45 Parents (Fathers and Mothers) participate in cultural assessment exercise

**Initial Indications**

- Parents were receptive to access help and motivated to learn new skills
- The strategies for parenting skills were perceived as relevant and useful to parents
- Most of the strategies were culturally acceptable to the parents with suggestions for adaptation of some of them according to culture and context: demonstrating affection, time out, quiet time.
- Follow up through questionnaire and group
Challenges noted

- Low attendance by parents in focus groups, thus limited qualitative analysis - Namibia
- A number of potential socio-cultural and contextual barriers that may impact ability to implement positive parenting strategies were identified - Both Kenya and Namibia
- Relevance of tool to identify cultural barriers for semi-literate audience - Both Kenya and Namibia
- No observation for kinship caregivers was done – a very common occurrence in Namibia

Concerns for onward programming

1. Knowledge gained, new/positive parenting practices and behavior change.
   - *Did the parents learn new skills in relating with their children?*
   - *Did they feel confident to practice each of the interventions learnt?*
   - *Are these new skills easy to work with in raising their children?*
2. Methods and approaches of training: the strategies are delivered through video clips, discussion and an accompanying parent’s workbook.

- **What is the potential of the method of delivery vis a vis the obvious differentiation in levels of literacy that characterize many families in Africa?**
- **Should PAN and partners consider an alternative training approach as an adaptation?**
- **How could we adapt certain aspects of the program but still maintain the quality and intended outcome of the training program?**

3. Sustainability for continued implementation to benefit as many parents as possible

- **The program has very expensive components to sustain (parent’s workbooks, use of video clips, practitioner training program, follow up strategy) vis a vis the number of parents that would finally benefit.**
- **Referral for complex issues identified requires support from trained psychologists.**
This was an intervention after outcomes of a 2012 research that explored parental involvement and participation in early formative years of children - observations.

1. Although parents knew what it means to parent skillfully, majority lacked time to learn and practice this within their families.
2. Teachers were regarded as having valuable responsibility in nurturing children since they spend a lot of time in school with them.

With these observations, PAN in collaboration with one of its member (ACDT) sort to involve parents and teachers in design of a culturally relevant family support program.

Integration of Parenting education and ECD:

1. Parents, Caregivers and ECD teachers acquire skills in raising children of ages 0-8.
2. Parents, Caregivers and ECD teachers work together in learning and socialisation for child wellbeing.

Highlights:

- Parents have contributed to the program by making learning and play materials for children from locally available materials recognised as part of the community.
- Contribute to curriculum by teaching traditional crafts, songs, games, proverbs and stories.
- Parents visit the centre on a regular basis to observe and participate in children’s learning and play activities-enhancing attachment.
- Parents sharing personal experiences with peers and forming support groups.
- Voluntarily attending education sessions where they learn the importance of parent-child attachment- aspects of child development, needs along each stage, how to enhance interaction at each stage, importance of play, toy making, reading to children, health and safety.
- Linking the centres to other providers through a referral mechanism.
Parental involvement in ECD

Playing and learning materials made by parents
For the ultimate protection of children

Thank you!