Effects of Working Mothers on Child Development in Kenya

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More women have entered the job market than ever before. With the current socioeconomic changes and with more women attaining education, the number of working women is going to increase rapidly. Most of the working women are of childbearing age and have both preschool and school-age children. While women have to work, it is becoming rather difficult for them to get good substitutes for child rearing. Poor child rearing has been associated with poor child development. The effect of the current child rearing practices has not been questioned in Kenyan society. Its effects should be of major concern not only to parents but also to employers, educators, and the society at large if children are expected to grow normally. Erikson's stages of psychological and cognitive development have been used as a yardstick to illustrate the effect of the current child rearing in Kenya. Kenyan women are being encouraged to enter the job market by current socioeconomic changes and by the education system and this is not expected to change. The role of housemaids, day care centers, and other forms of child rearing will remain dominant. It is important therefore to explore all possible compensatory measures that would limit the possible ill effects associated with current upbringing of children to ensure advantageous and purposed child rearing. (Author/ABL)