

Elderly african americans and education research paper example

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



Introduction

Key Words: Education, African Americans, Minority Groups, Society

Historical Background of Education for African Americans

It is argued that education is a very important factor to success. This statement is true now and back in the days of slavery. Back then, schools were segregated along the lines of race. The distribution of public money was not done equitably. White schools received more public money than the black schools. This translated into the quality of education offered in the schools. Even more impeding was the fact that fewer African American people were enrolled into the schools. Black children were pulled out of school often to work on farms with their parents. Many of the parents worked as sharecroppers. In order to plant and harvest sufficient crop, sharecroppers had to work with their children. This was at the expense of their education. This is the generation that grew up into elderly uneducated people. Historically speaking, this issue was addressed using civil movements. For instance, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People performed national campaigns to champion for equality in schools. Even though racial segregation was a still an issue then, the civil movements focused in equality in separation. Today, the issue of African American education is viewed and addressed different. Unlike the earlier and mid years of the previous century where the civil movements championed for the equality in education, the approach today is more proactive. There is an exponential increase in the number of older African Americans attaining education. In 1970, only a mere 9% of African American people aged over 65

years had attained high school diplomas. This is very minuscule compared to the 60% reported in 2008. In the same year, over 12% of African Americans aged over 65 years had at least bachelor's degrees.

Impact on Minority Elders and Their Families Today

As espoused earlier, education is very important to the success of any individual. The rudimentary education that the minority elderly received impacted the kind of jobs that they could get. This is the case in the contemporary society where educational qualifications are important determinants in the labor market. Since most elderly African American were semi-educated or uneducated, they could only get blue collar jobs where only vocational skills were required. These jobs were their only solace because they did not have any other skills, and blue collar jobs allowed apprenticeship and on-job learning. The impact in the individual and their families is felt today. This is because it affects the kind of schools that their children attend, and their ability to access quality medical care. More precisely, owing to the jobs that they did, most elderly African Americans cannot afford medical insurance. This affects the quality of medical care that their families can access (Frierson, Pearson Jr. & Wyche, 2009).

Impact on Society

The impact on the individuals and their families in turn impacts the society. This is because a family is the smallest unit of a society. Due to the many elderly African American people who did not obtain education or who are semi-educated, there is an entire generation that relies on financial aid in order to provide for their daily needs. Additionally, this group is largely

unemployed because the labor market in the society today requires formal skills and certain academic qualifications that they lack. This has an effect on their social economic status

Significance of Understanding the Experiences of Minority Elders

It is important to understand the experience of minority elders. This is because it helps build a context from which other services can be offered. For every situation, there are the immediate factors, basic factors and underlying factors. Understanding the experiences of minority elders helps unearth both the basic and underlying factors towards their problems. It gives an understanding of the precipitating factors for various. As such, understanding the experiences of minority elders helps in development of appropriate solutions. This is because it gives the proscribed solution sensitivity towards the problems that elderly African Americans face.

Conclusion

The importance of education on the kind of life that people lead cannot be underestimated. Most care providers are young and may not have experienced the dynamics of the life that elderly African Americans led. In order to build sufficient context to enable the formulation of proper solutions, it is important to familiarize with experiences of minority elders. As espoused in the discussion, this helps create a context, information that is important in problem resolution.

References

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