Cultural and ecological factors in the education and socialization of african-ame...

Politics, Democracy

ABSTRACT

All practitioners in the fields of education, social work, and youth and family services should be aware of the cultural and ecological factors that affect the development and education of African-American youth, and adolescents in other minority groups that have traditionally experienced stereotyping and discrimination. This article considers two culturally-sensitive methodologies for improving educational and developmental outcomes for youth in these groups: Cultural Modeling and the Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST).

Adolescence for all groups of youth involves major life stresses caused by a number of factors, including biology, sexual identity, relations with family, caregivers and peer groups, and decisions about life goals, which all professionals in education, social work and family services must be aware. These pressures are even greater for adolescents for African-American and other minority youth who have historically suffered from discrimination, negative stereotyping, low incomes and limited social and economic opportunities. Practitioners in fields like education and social work, as well as academic theorists, have traditionally shared in these stereotypes " based on the limited understandings of culture and its pervasive role in human development" (Lee et al, 2003, p. 6). Children of subjugated minority groups in this society do not necessarily follow the same development and educational paths as more privileged white youth, although many researchers in the past have concluded that their problems are mostly caused by failings in their families and communities, or even in themselves and individuals, rather than by the effects of racism.

REFERENCES

Lee, C. D. et al (2003). "'Every Shut Eye Ain't Sleep': Studying How People

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