THE IMPORTANCE OF EXTENDED FAMILIES IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS USING SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

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ABSTRACT

Since the beginning of time the concept of a family has changed dramatically, especially in the African American community. The family is the most important institution that makes up a society. There are two main types of families: (1) an extended family consisting of multiple generations- aunts, uncles, grandparents etc., and (2) a nuclear family that consist primarily of a mother and father figure. The concept of an extended family arose as economic troubles began to occur. Slowly over time, the concept of extended families began to vanish. The problem with this is that children are starting to lose the true value of family benevolence. The Social Learning Theory states that people learn behaviors based on the action of people around them. Using Social Learning Theory, this paper hypothesizes that if more African American communities start to utilize the extended family rather than the nuclear family, then they will have more of a sense of togetherness in their families. Using the extended family concept is beneficial in a plethora of ways. Economically, for instance, the extended family raises more money to provide for the family rather than other forms of families. Collecting qualitative data through the use of the document analysis technique and conducting interviews, my hypothesis found to be tenable that extended families are more beneficial and should be the ideal view of a family.

KEYWORDS

Extended Families; Nuclear Families; Community

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REFBACKS

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