From shack dweller to home owner: The power of the MBOP, Africana womanism, and self-help housing among the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia

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Abstract

Africana womanism holds that African women hand down generational wisdom, think and act communally, and routinely confront issues of race, class, and gender exclusion. This ethnography uses data gathered during a seven-month field study in 2010 from a little-researched group of nearly 300 female members of the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN) to explore how Federation membership develops leaders and converts shack dwellers into homeowners. Organizational challenges, accomplishments, values, and beliefs were used to measure Federation women’s knowledge, politics, and practices. Overall, findings suggest that a combination of factors, including the membership-based organization of the poor, Africana womanist ideologies, self-help housing, and communal leadership practices, help poor women catalyze women’s rights, develop leadership skills, and reduce poverty by converting Federation shack dwellers into Federation homeowners. Those dwellings, in turn, stabilize and make more secure the economic, social, and political lives of Federation families. Results have academic and applied importance to illumine how Africana womanist and self-help practices are occurring in severely impoverished spaces, as well as how ideology translates into praxis.
From shack dweller to home owner: the power of the MBOP, Africana womanism, and self-help housing among the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia. 2016 in Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture. Angela Cowser, Sandra L. Barnes. Estimated H-index: 10. Africana womanism holds that African women hand down generational wisdom, think and act communally, and routinely confront issues of race, class, and gender exclusion. This ethnography uses data gathered during a seven-month field study in 2010 from a little-researched group of nearly 300 female members of the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia. Shack Dwellers news, news sheet. Windhoek: NHAG/HRDC. Falola, T., & Teboh, B. (2013). The power of gender, the gender of power: women’s labor, rights and responsibilities in Africa. Trenton: Africa World Press. Hishongwa, N. (1983). Women of Namibia: the changing role of Namibian women from traditional precolonial times to the present. Sweden: Forlaget By Oct Bygd. Iipinge, E., & Lebe... The students and community carried out a situational analysis as part of the studio. The Kanaan C planning studio follows the successful planning and design of the freedom square layout for Gobabis, for 2014-2015. Community, students, lecturer, and a Municipal official held a meeting to introduce the students to the community and have a discussion around the development needs of the community and completed a settlement profile through a focus group discussion. First Lady hands over houses to members of Shack Dwellers Federation at the coast.