

BOOK REVIEW

SAVICKI, V. (2002). BURNOUT ACROSS 13 CULTURES: STRESS AND COPING IN CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORK. PRAEGER PUBLISHING: WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT

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Burnout across thirteen cultures: stress and coping in child and youth care work offers a combination of theoretical foundations of child and youth care work, and cultural and cross cultural research on the complex issue of burnout and practical implications. The book is divided logically into five sections, which include subsections as chapters.

Part one introduces readers to the three themes of the book. The introduction offers a background on past and present issues in child and youth care work and highlights future trends such as specializing with different populations, and challenges in the professional recognition of the field. The introduction also offers a foundation in concepts related to burnout including a brief history and clarity on definitions and terminology. The introduction closes with a section titled "culture as a lens to examine burnout" where concepts, terms and definitions of culture are introduced. Readers are given some techniques and methods in order to research cultural differences. The introduction offers a brief overview and is a good starting point for readers to understand the different elements of the book.

Part two titled "process, practice and cultural comparisons" includes three chapters which highlight the research and descriptive results with regard to cultural variability and characteristics of the research sample. The end of part two discusses child and youth care work in different countries. This section of the book is informative for students or practitioners who are interested in working in different places. The chapter highlights the differences across thirteen cultures in terms of the organization and practice of child and youth care work.

The third section of the book addresses research related to culture and burnout. The results link burnout to work environment, working conditions, demographics and personal styles of coping with stress. The two chapters in part three offer a clear explanation of the method and findings. These chapters would be useful to anyone in the human service field examining different cultures and useful as a teaching tool for research methods for students in the field.

Part four examines cross-cultural comparisons by highlighting the significant differences of different cultures in child and youth care work. The results indicate that each culture is unique and must be considered when looking at issues related to burnout in the work environment. This section examines specific cultures and regions.

Part five provides a summary of the findings and identifies themes, conclusions and recommendations concerning burnout and culture. The final part of the book discusses how to design environments to avoid burnout. The last chapter ends with an introduction of a practice model for individuals or organizations that integrates both personal and environmental factors to address burnout.

Burnout across thirteen cultures is well written and clearly organized in useful sections for practitioners. Since practitioners and clients in the field of child and youth care come from all different backgrounds, it is important to recognize and understand cultural differences when addressing burnout in the work environment. This book is relevant in all areas of human service faced with issues of staff burnout and turnover.

This book is different from others because it introduces readers to a variety of research methods and offers cross-cultural explanations for variance on the topic of burnout. The book would be relevant as support reading in a professional issues course in any human service discipline. The book would also be useful for any practitioners facing issues of burnout in multi-cultural environments such as large urban areas.

The author does a thorough job of integrating research findings with practical strategies for child and youth care workers. Research is presented in a useable way with tables and practice models to show how findings from the studies can guide practitioners in addressing burnout. The book provides information on cultural differences, which has been excluded from previous research in the child and youth care field. Methods are clearly explained, so replication of the research approach to examining cultural differences could be applied in many sectors of human services. The book is a useful resource for teachers and practitioners working in child and youth care.