Teaching Physics to Students Placed at Risk

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Ensuring racial and socioeconomic equity is crucial in affording equal opportunities in our society. In Brazilian high schools, although it is a mandatory part of the curriculum, quality physics classes tend to be accessible only to middle- and upper-class students, due to the lack of qualified physics teachers. There are strong ties between race and socioeconomic class in Brazil; this means that Black students are disproportionately affected by this fact. As a consequence, they stay behind as an untapped supply in fulfilling the scientific and technological positions available in society. Thus, a mixture of social and economic forces threatens the ability of minority students to profit from their educational opportunities, especially in physics. Students placed at risk (SPR) are those with high probability of failing to fulfill their education with the all the skills demanded to persevere in our modern society. One factor typically associated with students being at risk includes minority groups, for instance, black students. In this work, we try to understand the problem by studying how poverty and race, result in decreased learning and motivation, offering some suggestions for helping SPR.

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References