

Introduction within a community and leads to social



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Introduction

Racism is a destructive form of discrimination. This is because it devalues other people's identity and denies them their right to exercise power.

It destroys the unity within a community and leads to social divisions. It violates the democratic right of equality and the fair treatment of all people. One has to understand the nature and form of racism that exist if he has to succeed in countering it. It is a world wide phenomenon that has been experienced in many countries and it mainly results from economic, political, and social factors. This paper gives a brief overview of three forms of discrimination (Lynching, Segregation, and Jim Crow Laws) practiced against African American in the United States.

Lynching

Lynching can be defined as the illegal killing of an individual by the mob. It is defined as " any act of violence inflicted by a mob upon the body of another person which results in the death of the person" (Barry 218). A mob is defined as a group of two (or more populace) congregating as one without authorization of the relevant powers that be, for the premeditated intention and objective to commit an act of cruelty against another being.

It is a practice that was common among the white and the African. The African were normally executed by the white simply because of the white superiority. However, the whites who protested against this execution were at very high risks of being executed. Lynching is normally carried out by execution, setting a blaze or shooting the alleged individual in order to discipline, scare, or take control over a certain populace no matter its size. It

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is a means of social control practiced by the superior community against its minors (Niels 201).

The governing populace used to employ lynching, especially in times of fiscal pressure, as a means of tyrannizing those that opposed them. The vice was also a widespread norm in cooling (social) tensions. For instance, in America, lynching was used against the African Americans after the American civil war when the Africans were given the right to participate in elections. In 1980s, violence was high especially after the southern Americans regained their political power. More than three thousand African Americans were lynched towards the end of the 19th century (Niels 202). Towards the beginning of the 20th century, new constitutions were created in America with provisions that disenfranchised most of the African Americans. They were not permitted to vote or to serve on juries.

They were also excluded from participating in political activities. However, the Africans resistance to lynching increased significantly with the intellectuals encouraging them to protest against mob lynching. Various organizations and clubs were formed to raise funds that were used to protest against lynching. They were successful in their petitions, campaigns, and demonstrations since they helped in combating lynching. Today, lynching has been made illegal in many states including the United States. People who are found executing individuals through lynching are charged in a court of law.

Segregation

Segregation can be defined as the separation of persons into racial groups.

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It may apply in various activities such as attending school, shopping in the departmental stores, taking meals from a restaurant, or in the purchase of a house. Segregation is a practice that is forbidden but may be permitted by social norms. It is a kind of discrimination common in employment and in the purchase of houses. Certain races are discriminated against when purchasing a rental house or when seeking for employment. In America, legal segregation was permitted in many states especially in matters related to marriage. The blacks or the minority races were not allowed to intermarry with the whites. The law also prohibited interracial marriages even among the minority groups (Fireside 47).

However, with time, some of these activities have been permitted. For instance, close contact (such as allowing people from dissimilar races to work for each other) is tolerable. Human classification into spatial segments is what is termed as segregation. In this arrangement there are those (educational) establishments as well as hospices that are for the whites and the African Americans should attend the same. Some races are allowed to use these institutions while blacks are discriminated against their use. This extends even in the business operations where people perform businesses with people from their own race or the preferred race.

Social norms prohibit people from interacting with other races and this normally results in racial discrimination (Massey 20). This occurs in social or political institutions. This occurs when these institutions discriminate the Africans from exercising their rights. These people are expected to conform to certain cultural assumptions which are deemed to reflect the dominant

group. This form of discrimination is normally difficult to identify and also to counter, especially when the perpetrators view themselves as non-racist.

The attitude, way of life, and behaviors of the white are extensively discussed over the media because they are seen as being reasonable and common although they do not exhibit the cultural diversity that is evident in America. Through the media, ideologies concerning racism are articulated and later armored through group relations thereby forming a popular culture. As the government takes measures to address the discrimination imposed on the African American, racist beliefs are given first priority. The discrimination on the minority group (the African) is seen as being positive and confirmatory measures are seen as partisan treatment of one group by another rather than harassment by a popular group of people.

Jim Crow Laws

These were state laws enacted (1876-1965) in the US. The phrase Jim Crow is derived from “ Jump Jim Crow”, a song about the blacks that was performed by a white actor. Later this phrase was used to refer to the African Americans and that’s how laws pertaining to racial segregation were given the name Jim Crow laws (Barnes 7). These laws allowed racial segregation in most of the public facilities.

This resulted into inferior treatment of the African Americans by the whites. The white Americans received most of the public facilities in terms of education and access to social amenities. Jim Crow Laws are based on differences that are quite evident in values, customs, color, religion, perception about the world, and how people live.

It also extends to the use of language where a certain group of people have negative attitudes towards the language used by others. Jim Crow Laws were applied in social or political institutions. This occurs when public institutions discriminate some groups of people from exercising their rights.

These people are expected to conform to certain cultural assumptions which are deemed to reflect the dominant group. These laws were not related to the Black codes (1800-1866) which inhibited communal rights and liberation of the blacks. In 1954, the Supreme Court declared segregation in public schools as unconstitutional and the remaining part of the Jim Crow Laws were rendered unconstitutional in 1964 by the Civil Rights Act (Harvey 50).

Conclusion

Although law recognizes the cultural rights of different races and gives them the right of speech, the media still recognizes the dominant group whose culture forms the norm to be emulated by other cultures. The government recognizes and appreciates the diverse cultures and allows them to enjoy their rights. However, it has not put strong measures to ensure that they are not discriminated against by the dominant group.

These cultural rights are not included in the constitution making it hard for the blacks to fight for their rights.

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