Race theory thesis example

Defining race as a political sociological theory

Race remains one the controversial topics that raise a heated debate among scholars and members of the public. For many years, the debate has revolved on whether the term race is effectively used in promoting diversity, cohesiveness and regional integration or not. Some people hold the view that the term race has been misused by political leaders in dividing people along ethnic and tribal lines. Another section of people believe that leaders have used the race to promote peace, diversity and regional integration. Based on these assertions, most people prefer not discussing issues related to race in the public because such issues create tension, anxiety and fear among members of the community. Depending on the sensitivity of this subject, researchers have also refrained from studying topics that are race related because such a move fuels racial discrimination, prejudice and stereotype (Marger, 2008).

The term " race" cannot be defined using a single word because it is a multifaceted concept with different meanings. Despite the complexity in defining the term, scholars have managed to define it using scientific, political and sociological perspectives.

Scientific meaning

Veil (2010) defines the term " race" as a sub-set of human species classified in a given taxonomic unit. Human species classified under one the taxonomic unit share similar biological characteristics, traits and other biogenic components. Scientists have used this model of classification to group humans in their respective taxonomic units. The model enables scientists to

group humans in different taxonomic units based on their geographical/ecological environment location and biological characteristics, which are haematological, and immunological in nature (DeSalle & Tattersall, 2011).

Sociological meaning

The term race refers to a group of people with inherent and homogeneous biological characteristics. The society holds the view that biological characteristics have a social significant aspect attached to them. Margret and Taylor (2007) argue that people do not use biological characteristics to judge others, but instead they use social significance assigned on biological characteristic. Michael (1983) echo similar sentiments by arguing that race is a social constructed concept where people define and judge others on basis of social constructs.

Political Meaning

The term race conveys a different meaning in the political scenes. Politicians have manipulated and exploited the term race in order to push for certain agendas and attain their personal interests. Simon and Berg (2011) argue that politicians utilize the concept of race to segregate communities along tribal and racial lines; an idea that fuel enmity among the communities. This aspect in evident during the political campaigns where politicians encourage their supporters to vote along racial and ethnic lines. Voting along racial lines is grounded on the idea that electing a leader from a given ethnic community will benefit the entire community. Hall (2004) refutes this assumption on the ground that it undermines realization of democracy and

lower economic development in the region. In his analysis, Hall (2004) urges politicians to refrain from misusing this term and instead encourage people to embrace diversity.

Racism as a modern political concept:

In the recent past, racism has dominated in the political arena and has changed course of politics in the region and the world at large (Gissi, 2008). This is not a new phenomenon in the political arena because history points it clearly that racial politics emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Western nations, and has spread to other parts of the world (Nobles, 2000). Today, the issue of racial politics has become a common phenomenon in the society as political leaders use it during their political campaigns. Politicians use racial politics in their rallies with the aim of winning trust and loyalty of their supporters (Love, 2004). Politicians encourage their supporters to vote along ethnic and racial lines during the electioneering period; an idea that hinder realization of democracy in the region. The concept of racial politics was evident during the 2008/2012 presidential elections campaigns, in America where Democrats and the Republicans maintained certain voting patterns, which were inclined on racial constructs. This trend has existed for centuries and it is anticipated to continue, unless politicians refrain from using racial politics in their campaigns.

Is the term race still relevant?

Globalization has played a pivotal role in enhancing economic development in the region. Over the years, nations across the globe have recorded an

increase in gross domestic product (GDP) following the introduction of globalization in 1980s. The concept of globalization provides a favourable environment where states trade, exchange ideas and foster for technological advancement (Miller, 2007). This provision enables countries to trade freely in the international trade affairs; an idea that boost regional economic development. Although globalization has played a key role in economic development, it has also enhanced international integration through expansion of social relations (Nayak, 2003). Globalization has enabled people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds to embrace diversity and appreciate culture. This move promotes peace, coexistence and reduces conflicts among the communities. In a nutshell, race remains a relevant and imperative concept in the society as it promotes globalization, international integration and cultivates peace in the region. Thomas and Clarke (2006) argue that race provides a platform where globalization will thrive and attain high echelons.

Inter marriages:

Race holds a central position in interracial marriages. For many years, people from different ethnic communities have intermarried and this practice has helped reduce community conflicts (Nadine, 2010). Previous studies affirm that interracial marriages provide a favourable environment for raising children who embrace diversity. This move enable the children appreciate and value culture of other people in the society thus promoting cohesion among members of different communities. Interracial marriages help in diversification of cultures as people from different racial and ethnic background share their cultural practices with other communities; an aspect

that help in promoting regional integration. Ethnographical studies affirm that interracial marriages create stable families with strong values and moral codes because they experience minimal divorce cases. Whenever a family dispute arises between the couples, dialogue is embraced to resolve the matter amicably and restore peace in the family. In a similar vein, interracial couples value and appreciate their cultural diversity and utilize this chance to learn, exchange ideas and opinions with each (Stefancic & Delgado, 2012). It is imperative to state that race play an integral role in interracial marriages as it creates stable and cohesive families.

Multiculturalism:

The issue of race plays a fundamental role in promoting multiculturalism in the region. This goal is achieved because different communities have distinct cultural values, norms and traditions. As a result of cultural diversity, people tend to value and appreciate cultural practices of other communities and work towards preserving their cultural heritage. Race promotes inter-culturalism that enables people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds to integrate, relate and associate with other people. This goal is realizable through the socialization process where the involved parties learn a few cultural aspects from each other. Despite the cultural diversity in the society, people still acknowledge the fact that they need to respect and value their cultural diversity and value one another as brother and sister (Reitz & Raymond, 2009).

Multiculturalism creates peaceful and stable nations as members of the public embrace diversity and appreciates culture of other communities (Templeton, 1998). Race enables each community to value and safeguard its

cultural heritage and utilize its diversity in pooling resources together for sustainable economic development (Robert, 2001). Based on these assertions, it is obvious that race promotes multiculturalism, inter-culturalism and regional integration in the society.

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