

Racism: theoretical perspectives and research methods research paper

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



Racism is the act of disliking, oppressing, and discriminating people of a particular ethnic group because of their inferiority or marginality. Black Americans are the main people who went through brutal acts of slavery and hunger assault in the ancient days. Indeed, human beings do not have the power to choose their races, and neither do they have the power to choose their background. Unfortunately, African Americans became victims of slavery, and they were not happy about it. Through tireless struggles, they opposed racism and fought to gain self-pride and identity.

From a general point of view, racism has reduced significantly, but one cannot rule out that people have eliminated the innate trait of creating boundaries when interacting with people of different races. Although people in the contemporary world regard racism as an ambiguous and outdated subject, the reality is that non-native Americans still experience some form of discrimination in their daily lives. This paper will give a brief literature about racism and the various methods used to carry out the research. Thereafter, the paper will base its discussion on the interviewees' answers to address the issue of racism through different perspectives.

People living in the enlightened era can only imagine of the brutality and prejudice that was present in the past. Slave trade was a common business, and Africans would undergo major sufferings besides going for days without sufficient food. Caucasian Americans could always feel superior to the blacks, and they coached their descendants to act in the same way. Since prejudice is a learnt behavior, the Caucasians would adapt the habits of their

ancestors and behave in the same way. Children learnt to distinguish colored people at a tender age, and they could always feel superior to them.

The question on whether America has achieved racial equality is unanswered to date. Some people would say that America has indeed achieved racial equality; however, a significant number of people feel that racism still exists because of the illusionary laws that literally discriminate against non-white people. To some extent, public education laws, criminal laws, and laws regarding the voting rights are wanting, as they do very little in rectifying racism (Finch 309). It is discouraging to note that African Americans are always the first suspects of crimes regarding drug trafficking. Although some Caucasian Americans are great drug traffickers, the law enforcers mostly arrest, sentence, and impose harsh penalties to African American suspects instead of acting fairly.

Various scholars have done researches to identify ways to diminish racism. Apparently, introducing a curriculum that supports equality in all educational programs would play a great role in reducing racist behaviors. Open discussions about equality and the possible dangers of discriminating people because of their color would play a great role in enlightening students at an early age. There is a need to educate the youths and ensure that the environment in which they operate supports equality and racial tolerance. It is worth noting that the current youths will form the future generation; therefore, educating them to stop stereotyping colored people would play a significant role in minimizing racism in generations to come.

Over the decades, civil rights movements have tried to improve the situation to ensure that Africans have equal rights to access public utilities. However, there still exists a modern trend of incidental racism in America, where, some races use certain elements to justify their racist behaviors (Tehrani 830).

Sociologists have analyzed racism from various perspectives to explain the behavior of the racists. Conflict theory, symbolic interactionism, structural functionalism, and postmodernism are some of the commonest theoretical approaches to explain phenomena in the social world.

Conflict theory tries to explain the disagreements that occur when two parties compete for scarce resources. Conflict arises when the elite people desire to control the poor, weak, and inferior people in the society. Racism occurred because the Caucasian Americans wanted to live comfortably at the expense of the powerless African Americans (Tolnay 221).

The few cases of racism in the current generation occur because of the desire to have the best at the expense of feeble people. The domination affected the Africans to the extent that a conflict arose between the oppressors and the oppressed. For that reason, various racism activists are on the ground fighting for equal rights.

Structural functionalism explains the interdependence that exists between members of a particular society. In any society, people must work and pay taxes to the government. In return, the government offers healthcare, education, and other public services. Unfortunately, cases may occur where

there is unequal distribution of the public resources. In this case, racism occurs when people can only access public resources according on their race.

Symbolic Interactionism tries to explain the fact that people attach meaning to what they can see, touch, and feel. For that reason, Caucasian Americans discriminate the African Americans because of their skin color. Caucasians associate the colored people with poverty, slavery, and evil. Therefore, the blacks will always be the first suspects in case of crime. Similarly, postmodernism explains that images and symbols influence the social life of human beings. For that reason, identity comes in and people are able to create reality out of the rational choices that they make. The Caucasians identify themselves as superior to the African Americans, and they desire to demoralize the blacks because of their inferiority.

Racism is a very delicate subject, as it deals with personal matters that affect people in different ways. Therefore, it was very necessary to find appropriate research methods to collect accurate data that would produce decisive results. Personal interviews were among the commonest research methods used to obtain in-depth and comprehensive information from the respondents. The researcher took sufficient time to have a one-to-one chat with the respondents with the aim of obtaining particular answers. The interview pamphlet contained a number of questions to guide the interviewer towards obtaining the needed information without discussing matters that were out of topic.

Firstly, the researcher inquired for information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents before proceeding to the main questions about racism. The questions sought to inquire about the knowledge that the respondent had about racism. The respondents would then describe how racism has affected the United States of America, as well as their opinion on how to punish racists. Although formulating focus groups was sometimes difficult, the few groups that happened to be successful proved to be helpful in exploring the respondent's ideas and attitudes.

Observational research method was also important, as the researcher was able to observe the state of affairs without interference. During the observations, the researcher was very keen on noticing any unusual behavior that happened whenever people of different races interacted.

The entire research was quite comprehensive, as it required submissiveness while handling the respondents. It was very important to employ the highest level of ethical considerations for the successful completion of the research. Firstly, it was very essential to ensure that the respondents had informed consent before taking part in the study. The researcher handed the respondents a statement that described the main purpose of the research and what it involved. Although there were limited risks, it was very essential to inform the respondents that their responses would be confidential, and in any case, participation was voluntary.

The participants of the study comprised of people of different ages, genders, and races. The researcher selected 10 respondents from various

communities in the study region at random. The random selection and inclusion of different kinds of people was very efficient, as it played a great role in achieving randomization. It was very necessary to intermingle with the respondents during the real study to collect observational data.

At some point, the researcher would sit in a strategic viewpoint and observe the target respondents' behavior without causing any interference. It was very important to be keen about any unusual behavior that could show any signs of racism. The following questions were very helpful in guiding the researcher to obtain the necessary information from the respondents during the face-to-face interviews.

The researcher approached the data collection procedure in a very professional manner. After ensuring that the respondents had informed consent, the researcher proceeded to the data collection procedure. Whenever time allowed, the researcher would carry out face-to-face interviews with the respondents. As the respondents proceeded with their busy schedules during the day, the researcher would sit in a strategic viewpoint and collect visual data as well as observational information. Focus groups proved to be efficient at some point, as they helped in collecting data regarding the respondents' ideas and attitudes towards racism. After completing the data collection procedure successfully, the researcher was able to obtain the following data from the 10 respondents.

Racism is the act of discriminating people because of their skin color and their ethnical background.

Racism is bad because it causes the affected people to have low self-esteem, which reduces their productivity.

Racism affects the United States society by creating classes, where, the immigrants feel oppressed while the Caucasians consider themselves powerful.

Racism can be dangerous if the Native Americans molest the immigrants, and the government takes no action.

I can explain racism to a child as the act of classifying people according to their skin color, and denying them some rights because of their race.

The only way to diminish racism is to advocate for equal rights regardless of the ethnical background of a person.

Racism varies depending on the affected people and the way they perceive the racists.

The society can punish racists by imposing harsh sentences on them.

I can eliminate racism at work by empowering the minority ethnical group and encouraging other employees to treat them with respect.

In my opinion, global racism is getting better because people can now mingle with others regardless of their ethnical background.

Racism is discriminating black Americans and white Americans.

Racism is bad because it brings unfairness in the society.

I do not have an idea of how racism affects the society.

Racism can be dangerous if physical wars arise between the blacks and the whites.

I can explain racism to a child as the act of treating colored people unfairly.

Diminishing racism would require the whites to intermarry with the blacks.

Racism varies from one place to another depending on the population of the blacks and whites.

The society can punish racists by imprisoning them for more than ten years.

I can eliminate racism at work by firing racists.

In my opinion, global racism is getting worse because the whites are still powerful than the blacks.

Racism is an evil spirit implanted in the Native Americans, as they will always view immigrants as less powerful than the white Americans.

Racism is bad because it encourages unequal distribution of resources.

Racism affects the United States society by reducing the productivity of immigrants, who feel overwhelmed because of discrimination.

Racism can be dangerous if the state takes no initiative to ensure that there is equality.

I can explain racism to a child as the classification of people according to their color with ill motives.

Imposing harsh rules charges against racists would play a great role in diminishing racism.

Racism varies depending on level of discrimination accorded to an individual.

The society can punish racists by rehabilitating and educating them that all people are equal regardless of their color.

I can eliminate racism at work by encouraging employees to interrelate with all their coworkers regardless of their race.

In my opinion, global racism is getting better, as the American society has accepted to have non-native leaders who are fighting racism.

Racism is the discrimination of people in the workplace, in schools and in the society because of their ethical background.

Racism is bad because it leads to unequal distribution of public resources.

Racism affects the United States society by reducing the morale of the most productive age group, thus reducing productivity.

Racism can be dangerous if the racists have the right to deny human rights to the non-natives.

I can explain racism to a child as a selfish act that denies the minority group the right to live comfortably.

Discouraging racism from a tender age would help in diminishing racism.

Racism varies depending on the level of discrimination that a person experiences daily.

The society can punish racists by imprisoning and rehabilitating them.

I can eliminate racism at work by empowering the minority ethnic groups.

In my opinion, global racism is getting better because governments are doing their best to discourage racism.

Racism is the act of being unfair to others because they belong to different ethnic groups.

Racism is bad because it encourages discrimination and brings hatred amongst people.

Racism affects the United States society by increasing the gap between the rich and the poor.

Racism can be dangerous if non-natives cannot secure lucrative jobs because of their race.

I can explain racism to a child as an unfair act of classifying people according to their color and origin with an intention of denying them some human rights.

Punishing racists is the only way of diminishing racism.

Racism varies depending on the age and maturity of the affected person.

The society can punish racists by isolating and counseling them accordingly.

I can eliminate racism at work by insisting on justice in the entire workplace.

In my opinion, global racism is getting better because people are becoming enlightened on a daily basis.

Racism is a devastating factor that leads to discrimination of people because of their color and background.

Racism is bad because it demolishes the spirit of cooperation, leads to war, and social injustice

Racism affects the United States society by discouraging cooperation and reducing productivity.

Racism can be dangerous if people judge others according to their skin color rather than their productivity.

I can explain racism to a child as an evil act of unkindness to people of different races.

Advocating for cooperative, kindness, love, and understanding is the only way to diminish racism.

Racism varies depending on the level of injustice that the affected person experiences.

The society can punish racists by rehabilitating and encouraging them to embrace simple acts of kindness.

I can eliminate racism at work by encouraging people to exercise the simple acts of kindness.

In my opinion, global racism is getting worse because people have become too selfish to think of others.

Racism is the act of hatred that occurs amongst people of different ethnic backgrounds.

Racism is bad because it may lead to civil wars.

Racism affects the United States society by creating hatred between people and discouraging cooperation.

Racism can be dangerous if one race feels powerful to the extent of taking advantage of its superiority to assault others.

I can explain racism to a child as the act of avoiding people of a particular race.

Understanding and appreciating minor races can help in diminishing racism.

Racism varies depending on the education level of the two groups of people involved.

The society can punish racists by sentencing them according to the laws against racial discrimination.

I can eliminate racism at work by mingling with people of other races.

In my opinion, global racism is getting worse because the Native Americans are still powerful than other people globally.

Racism is an inhuman act of discriminating people because of their skin color.

Racism is bad because it prevents the progress of a nation.

Racism affects the United States society by destroying the relationships between communities and ruining the society.

Racism can be dangerous if people make no effort to understand the negative effect that it has to the society.

I can explain racism to a child as the act of avoiding to intermingle with children of different races.

Banning racism and racist insults can help in diminishing racism.

Racism varies depending on the level of insult and the hatred that exists between the affected people.

The society can punish racists by sentencing them and rehabilitating them thereafter.

I can eliminate racism at work by insisting people to be cautious of what they say about people of other races.

In my opinion, global racism is getting better because people are becoming enlightened.

Racism is differentiating students according to their skin color.

Racism is bad because the white students are powerful than the blacks.

I am not aware of how racism affects the United States society.

Racism can be dangerous if war arises between students because of their difference in color.

I can explain racism to a child as being unfair to other children because of their skin color.

I do not know how we can diminish racism.

Racism varies depending on the ethnicity background of students.

The society can punish racists by imprisoning them.

I do not know how I can eliminate racism at the workplace.

In my opinion, global racism is getting worse because there is unequal treatment of the white and black students.

Racism is hatred that the whites portray to the non-natives because of their skin color, where, the whites perceive blacks to be dangerous criminals.

Racism is bad because it ruins the trust that people can have towards one another.

Racism affects the United States society by hurting and degrading the most productive population.

Racism can be dangerous if employers hire people according to their race.

I can explain racism to a child as an unfair act of discriminating people because of their color.

People can diminish racism if they learnt to appreciate one another regardless of their ethnical origin.

Racism varies depending on the maturity level of the affected person.

The society can punish racists by rehabilitating and keeping them informed of the negativities that racism has to the society.

I can eliminate racism at work by encouraging people to work together and emphasizing on team leadership.

In my opinion, global racism is getting better because people are becoming enlightened unlike in early days where racism was evident in many nations. The fact that America has an African American president is a clear indication that racism has decreased significantly.

Descriptive statistics was very essential in coming up with a clear understanding of the entire research results. The selected sample was a good representation of the study population, as it represented males and females without bias. The age of the respondents ranged from 12-60 year to capture the opinion of people across all age groups.

As evident from the data collected during the face-to-face interview, 80% of the respondents have sufficient knowledge about racism while 20% have moderate knowledge. It is also noteworthy that the United States of America hosts a significant number of immigrants who desire to have equal rights to access public facilities. The summary of some of the key factors in the interview pamphlet is as shown in table below.

It is encouraging to note that 80% of the respondents strongly believe that the issue of racism is improving, and it may end in the near future. One of the respondents feels encouraged by the fact that the United States of America has an African American president, which is a clear indication that racism will soon end. However, as evident from the literature review, there is a need to introduce a curriculum that supports equality in all educational programs to reduce the racist behaviors globally.

This research paper clearly indicates that racism is a subject that needs serious action. I did not expect people to have strong sensations of discrimination because of their race. The fact that 50% of the respondents were immigrants is a clear indication that there are a significant number of immigrants in the United States. Although racism might be an outdated subject, the immigrants are experiencing some form of discrimination in their daily errands. In the modern age, all Americans deserve to have the freedom and power to walk as proud citizens of the American community regardless of their originality.

From the research findings, it is evident that a great percentage of people are aware of the discrimination that occurs to non-native Americans. Moreover, 80% of the respondents are aware of the adverse consequences that may arise in case racism is not controlled. Interestingly, a small child of 12 years can feel the distinction that happens in schoolchildren of different races. Therefore, it is evident that racism is a social construct issue that is omnipresent in the entire world.

Although contradictions could arise while addressing the subject, racism in real, as people will always have the innate trait of creating boundaries while interrelating with people of different races. Indeed, were it not for the strict laws concerning racism, the issue would still prevail in most states.

Therefore, African Americans and other non-native Americans should ensure that the struggle for equal opportunities in every aspect of life is an ongoing process. The racism activists should keep on reminding people that skin color is an insignificant aspect of the human being, as all people are equal in every aspect of life.

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