

# Comparison of racism in the united states and south africa term paper

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



Although the world is on its path to full cultural-globalisation, it is still dragging with racisms which can be traced since the colonial and slave trade era (Winant 14). The United States, which is the world largest economy, encourages people of different races to interact and conduct business together, it is in the forefront advocating for equality and development of a global-culture, but it has elements of racism in different sectors of the economy.

Many have interpolated election of President Barack Obama as a breakthrough from racism; however, the vice is far from over. South Africa is the largest African country by economy; however it is still trailing with the fight for racism among its different races. This paper discusses the historical sociology of race and compares racism in the United States and South Africa.

In the United States of America, the country 's population can be categorised into six main categories: Natives, Asian-Americans, African-Americans, and Mexican-Americans; in some parts there are some European Americans, all the above categories of people receive different treatment from the people and sometime the system has been blamed to favour some section of the tribe.

In the 1970 and early 1980's, elements of xenophobic exclusion were observed in Jews, Irish people, and Eastern-European-Americans and Southern European- Americans, the system was disregarding their rights and considered them inferior through not directly. Currently racism is observed in, housing, education, and government, employment, and lending; it is also obvious in social joints where some are meant for particular class of people.

The major forms of racism that are evident in the country are discrimination, and marginalization, with the African-American, Latin- American and the Muslims being the victims: the dominant people are the Native American who was the slave traders. They consider America as their country and regard other people as slaves, they are discriminated when offering government posts, employments, education system and in social joints.

South Africa is a multicultural country with many tribes that adopt their own culture and keep practicing it. Each tribe's culture is protected by the constitution. Generally there are three categories of tribes; whites, Asians and blacks. In the black side the tribes can further be disintegrated into eleven tribes.

The country also has eleven official languages. The blacks have started to slowly adopt the life style of the white and the Asians. Past political regime can be blamed for inequality distribution in the country. Resources are centred in the minority where they own capital and dominate in major businesses. The past regime (Apartheid) facilitated the whites to accumulate wealth at the expense of the locals.

The white are treated as the superior tribe where the blacks, who are the majority are seen as inferior. Economic situation is that the white has more resources than the rest. This enables them to settle in high class places like Johannesburg while the black people have settled even in Slums; the country has the largest slum in Africa; Soweto.

In the slum 98% of the people are local black people. After the end of apartheid in 1993, there is a group of white people who are living in low earning rates (about 10%); however their condition is far better than that of the Africans. Asians are the middle class (Winant 154).

Race has been in existence since humanity, it affects people's life; it is evident in local, national and international societies. It is evident in power and resources distribution; it has continued to shape modern economies. Race has an effect on social identities, cultural forms, social status and stratification.

On page seven, Winant notes that the world is still facing widespread confusion and anxiety of how racism has shaped the world, there is a general acceptance that the kind of societies, lives and communities has some elements of race that holds them.

In the United States for example, the structuring of the society can be seen along colonialism lines, slavery and in the lines of white supremacy; the current generation that have some traces on the above three societal position of the colonialism era still poses some characteristics reinforces by the positioning.

Some families have leadership running sown since the colonial times, they also enjoy an increased resources and continue to dominate societies. On the other side, there are those people who came from the slaves mostly the Africans who have continued to have limited resources, and a sense of

inferiority; they attend low class school thus they pass the sense of inferiority to future generations.

When certain people feel that they are superior to other, they tend to develop a group that has some shared norms, values and used to reinforce their felt superiority. As they grow in numbers, they get stronger and the stereotypes they hold about the other group increases, eventually they develop a territory.

They find themselves in certain location and share some culture and have a sense of identity. Capital is them distributed along the lines of superiority having the “ inferior” group in the society to suffer. Leadership and distribution of power then follows the line of superiority and can be seen in the nation building posts and allocation of resources.

The break of the Second World War was triggered by social and economic differences of the people in the region; they resulted to social movements and revolutionary upsurge. Second World War was perceived as a racial dimension that led to revulsion at racisms; it was creating more differences among the people. On page 4, Winant, credits social movements and human rights movements to the break from cold war.

Racism which had been accepted before the post war time was challenged by the movements and they were able to enlighten the oppressed on their rights. In the United States, rights and fight for civilisation was pioneered by civil rights movements while in South Africa, apartheid was under the check

of antiapartheid movements. The increased inequality and subsequent rights recognition by the people lead to a break from the war.

As people interact and develop dependency, there are tendencies that they are getting integrated and form communities without a racial or cultural discrimination; they are continually becoming aware that they need each other, this is the group of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism advocates that the rule of law should dominate and stereotype differences in the communities should be eliminated by the system (Winant 43).

On the other hand, racialization group have a conservative nature where they feel there is need to maintain the status quo; they feel that some people in the society should be treated better than other. In the United states, the natives are of the view that they are superior in the economy and should be treated better, they which to have others as slaves, a constant battle exist even in the political arena where the country had its first African-American president in 2006; all along the country has had white heads of states (Winant 62).

The stand point taken by supporter of multiculturalism differs with the one taken by racialization results into constant competition between the two camps on who will have the support of the majority. Multiculturalism considers people to be equal partners and should be given equal opportunities in resource allocation and the rule of law; they feel that society should have proper Integration despite where one comes from.

Civil rights grouped in the United States fight for formal equality where the ruling class seem to mould the legislation in the country to their favour; for example the ruling class has created some high ranking posts to be filled by appointment by people in power; they continue to indirectly support Institutionalized Racial Discrimination.

Multiculturalism feel that there should be plane field of competition where people are allowed to get resources without having a group that is favoured by the system, racialization supporter on the other hand hold the opinion that there should be Substantive Equality; for example not until the appointment of President Barrack Obama, racialization believed that the highest political office in the country could be held by white Americans, while lower political offices could be competitive, they form the libel political class while the democrats are the multiculturalisms.

In the case of Tiger Woods, he is seen as a hero who has conquered racial discrimination ceilings to compete effectively with “ pure brand” white. Companies like Nike has used him to show how they advocate for multiculturalism, the company creates an impression of an international company that does not discriminate against race. Tiger Woods is seen as a clear case of multiculturalism; an advert by Nike having Tiger Woods as the main character has people of different colours, race and classes supporting the move (Perez 405-422).

Both Republic of South Africa and the United States of America have had racism among their population since the slave trade era, elements of the

vice can be evident in the economies despite efforts taken by governments and international organisations.

Among the societies, there exist some people supporting racialization, which supports institutionalized racial discrimination and other supporting multiculturalism, which advocated for democracy, rule of law and equal division of resources. Racism has an effect on social stratification, identities, culture and influences functionalism structure of a community.

Perez, Hiram. *How to rehabilitate a Mulatto*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010.

Winant, Howard. *The World is a Ghetto: Race and Democracy since World War II*. New York: Basic Books, 2001.