

Racial prejudice in the united states research papers examples

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



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Introduction

Centuries after independence and adoption of civil rights in the United States, racial prejudice has yet to disappear completely. In spite of the numerous efforts put towards elimination of racial mindsets where majority of the white population treats Black Americans and other people of color with prejudice, cases of racial prejudice are still extant in the society. Subtle as it may be, racial prejudice leads to far reaching psychosocial, socioeconomic and even physical consequences. Modern racism is experience in various spheres of life, including legal and employment decisions, group problem-solving and normal day to day interactions in which ethnic differences are exaggerated to subordinate one's race. This paper explores contemporary racial prejudice in the US, explaining factors that contribute to the challenges and possible solutions. The writer asserts that blacks and other people of color have suffered economically, socially, psychologically and even

physically as a result of white racial prejudice and, as a consequence, it is imperative that remedial actions are taken against the issue.

Racism in America Today

In the United States, there has been a notable decline in the open expression of racial prejudice. However, this has given way for more subtle racial attitudes which nevertheless go a long way in cultivating racial biases and disdain against Black Americans and other people of color. Pearson, Dovidio and Gaertner (2009) note that racial prejudice, whether overt or subtle, have contributed to “ persistent and substantial disparities between Blacks and Whites” (p. 1). Racial prejudice is linked to the nation’s history of slavery and racial segregation and as Anderson (2013) notes, it often leads to exclusion of the minority races. To this end, African Americans and other people of color have been excluded, directly or otherwise, from economic and social opportunities such as education, employment and even political power. Recent cases such as the murder of Trayvon Martin in the hands of a clearly racist Zimmerman remind us that racial prejudice is yet to die and, while it may not be manifested in violent or obvious actions, the mindset that black people and others of color are associated with lower social status and negative aspects such as poverty, crime and drugs means that racial bias is still alive among the white population. In light of this, I think that a significant percentage of the white population have negative attitudes and racial prejudice towards non-whites, which they express deliberately. This is because, for example, Trayvon’s white killer openly stated that he could not differentiate between a criminal and well-meaning black teenager (Anderson

2013). He further said that he did not see the need to try to differentiate, clearly communicating racial prejudice against the black population. The subsequent high court ruling did not help things either.

Causes of Modern Racial Prejudice in America

The main factor contributing to the racial prejudice in modern American is perhaps the country's legacy of slavery for African Americans and racial segregation. Seeing as it is the black Americans and other people of color that served the whites as slaves, the superiority attitude remain among a considerable portion of the white population even decades after the abolishment of slavery. The notion that people of color are inferior owing to their history has been an important factor preventing the complete elimination of racism in the United States (Stanford 2013; Pearson et al. 2009). Historically, the white population has perceived the black people as belonging to a particular place in the society (the ghetto) which, according to Anderson (2013), is associated with poverty, crime and drugs.

Consequently, despite tremendous achievements with regard to racial incorporation, racial inequality -- a product of the white racial superiority -- is a real issue in an array of spheres of existence in the US.

Writing in the Huffington Post, Anderson (2013) notes that modern racial prejudice " manifests [itself] in pervasive mindsets and stereotypes that all black people start from the inner-city ghetto and are therefore stigmatized by their association with its putative amorality, danger, crime, and poverty" (par. 5). Aversive racism, described by Pearson et al. (2009) as a form of racial prejudice exhibited in subtle ways through thoughts, feelings and

behaviors of well-intentioned and apparently non-prejudiced white Americans, is a result of the legitimization of racist practices in the name of culture and ethnicity.

Moreover, the negative aspects of ghetto where, according to collective imagination is the source of crime, drugs and rap, has especially contributed to racial prejudice, with the white population treating their black counterparts with suspicion and disdain (Stanford 2012). It is also worth noting that the racial inequality has contributed to increased crime rate, poor housing and other moral issues in ghettos. Consequently, it may be argued that while it may be true that ghettos where the majority of residents are blacks and other people of color are associated with poverty, crime and drugs, these aspects are the result of virulent racial inequality which led to racial exclusions (Anderson 2013).

Effects of Modern Racial Prejudice

Modern racism affects mainly the blacks and other people of color in many adverse ways. For example, historical racial prejudice has confined the non-white population to the lower social and economic stratum (Pearson et al, 208). This is so due to the exclusionary effects of racism, in which blacks and other people of color have limited access to economic and social opportunities such as employment and education. Poor housing and limited access to social amenities has resulted to the poor living conditions in the ghettos where a majority of the population comprises people of color.

Summarizing the effects of modern racial prejudice, Brick (2008) notes that the effects are manifested in various aspects, including “ language, ideas,

schools, language policies, economic stratification social segregation, housing markets, hiring and promotional schemas, minority members' psychological issues and minority access to a variety of social services and opportunities" (par. 25). Despite the election of Obama as the first black president, it may be said that black and other people of color have limited political opportunities due to the racial prejudice which, interestingly, Obama had to fight off to win the elections. It is also interesting to note that majority of the white population are against gun control, possibly owing to the fact that guns could ostensibly be used for defense against the black population who the whites treat with suspicion, as a recent study reported (Wilkins 2013).

Countering the Racial Challenge

Racial prejudice has many deleterious effects on the society and culture, which necessitates development of solutions to the issue. To this end, it is suggested that the government makes stricter anti-racism laws in which people who are found guilty of practicing racial segregation or prejudice are punished heavily. Such laws should be designed to discourage racial prejudices in such areas as employment, social aspects and access to socioeconomic and political opportunities. The courts could play a key role in implementing such a solution, by imposing heavy fines and sentences on racial offenders such as Zimmerman (Anderson 2013). What is more, there could be an ongoing anti-racism campaign supported by the government and other interest groups to enlighten the people on the adverse effects of racism and the benefits of racial incorporation in the country. Racial

education should also be incorporated in the school curriculum as early as fourth grade, so that children understand the consequences of racial prejudice and the need to avoid it.

Emotional responses such as were evidenced in the cases of Emmett Till (1955) and Trayvon Martins (February 2013) in which majority of the population reacted emotionally to the deaths and the subsequent court rulings. Emotional interactions among people of all races, as well as reacting to racial prejudice incidences in a way that projects them as bad, unacceptable and inhuman could be used to ignite an maintain an activist agenda towards the abolishment of racial prejudice. This could go a long way in communicating the deleterious effects of modern racism and the importance of shunning the practice for the greater good.

Conclusion

All in all, modern racial prejudice is a real challenge which has had far reaching effects in the American society and culture. Blacks and other people of color have suffered under racial bias which is associated with America's painful legacy of slavery and racial segregation, confining majority of the non-white population to the lowest layer of the social, economic and political ladder. It is imperative that all stakeholders take initiatives to solve the issue with a view to reducing the adverse effects and disparities as discussed in this paper.

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