

Principle of affirmative action

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Principle of Affirmative Action Affirmative Action is a policy or a program that seeks to redress the past discrimination against women or minority groups in the society through efficient measures to ensure equal economic and educational opportunities (Fullinwider, 2010). Hence, affirmative action involves in treating a minority class or group differently in order to provide improved opportunities to obtain certain good. There are trends to associate affirmative action with two lines; one is with compulsory quotas undermining the meritorious qualification and the other is with inequality where fairness is compromised for a preferential selection process. The origin of affirmative action can best be traced back to the Executive Order No. 10925 of 1961 where then US President John F. Kennedy has urged federal contractors to take affirmative action to ensure prospective job applicants and federal employees were treated in an equal manner without regard to race, creed, color or national origin. Later on, creating a definitive affirmative action policy, then president Lyndon B. Johnson expressed the need to go further by discussing how companies should increase their efforts to ensure minorities and women would have real opportunities for employment and promotions. Thus, the aim of affirmative action is to eliminate discrimination and increase the representation of traditionally disadvantaged groups (Faundez, . 1994). For example, United Steel Workers of America, a union and Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation made a voluntary agreement to correct the years of racial discrimination against Black by reserving 50% of the openings in a training program sponsored by the corporation till the discrepancy was discarded. Several Black people were admitted to the program which ensured them to occupy high salaried skilled jobs in the company

(Fullinwider, 2010). Affirmative action as a means to Social Equality: As the affirmative action is based on the notion of equality, such measures are critical in achieving greater social equality. As a citizen every person in a country is entitled to enjoy the rights. Along with all other rights, right to opportunity is also very important. One should not be rejected of any chances or opportunities that exist to make his living a better based on his race, creed or anything of the kind. The right to opportunity is important in ensuring social justice. Reserving opportunities for under privileged groups such as women and other minority groups are a means to achieve social equality. It would ensure these minority groups get opportunities to make advances in concerned field like education, employment, etc. which would otherwise remain to be monopoly of a privileged group only. This would definitely provide them a platform for their overall development leading to bridging up the gap between the differences in the society. In the present world, many nations have come up with constitutional regulations of affirmative actions to ensure its all citizens enjoy equal opportunities in the face of law. The nation will thrive to more development when its citizens enjoy an equal status in all terms. Measures of affirmative actions are very important in realizing the social equality. Affirmative action: An unfair practice for social justice While admitting the fact that affirmative actions, to a certain extent, can ensure development of under privileged minority social groups, it should be noted that such a measure does not completely allow justice. The theory of justice suggests treating everyone in the same way or manner. The only measuring point should be the merit or quality. Justice is not to be awarded based on its minority or majority formula (Mosley &

Capaldi,, 1996). Let's take the example of admitting students to a college. In the case of adhering affirmative action, students who scored well in the admission tests may get rejected in the process as a provisional part of total seats are reserved for such minority groups and students who have scored comparatively very less could champion securing actually undeserving seats. This is definitely an injustice and rejecting opportunities for deserving one. Or we can say, it is a reverse discrimination; taking opportunity of one by rejecting his chances and rewarding the same to another in a preferential manner. Hence, measures of affirmative action would only lead to social injustices in a society which could in turn cause to rather an anarchic society.

Works Cited Faundez, Julio (1994). Affirmative action: international perspectives. Geneva: International Labour Organization. (Print). Fullinwider, Robert (2010), " Affirmative Action", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = . (Web) Mosley, A. G. & Capaldi, N. (1996). Affirmative action: social justice or unfair preference?. MD: Rowman & Littlefield. (Print)