

Sports as a way for racial reconciliation



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Interview

Person Interviewed : *Sandro*

Transcribed Portion of 8 Minute Interview:

Interviewer: Before we start with questions that apply to the purpose of this interview, can you give me a little background about yourself and certain hobbies you like to do.

Sandro: Well I'm currently a student, I'm 25 and I'm originally from San Mateo, CA. As far as things that interest me, I would say staying active by going to the gym and playing sports.

Interviewer: What's your background with sports?

Sandro: I've played soccer my whole life. I've played in competitive youth leagues, high school and Jr. College. If I may add, that is where we both meet playing soccer at Foothill College.

Interviewer: While playing sports did you ever think about race or racism?

Sandro: I did. I was part of a very diverse team when I was playing high school and Jr. College soccer.

Interviewer: What was your experience with race and racism in those teams?

Sandro: I was fortunate enough to have good relationships with my teammates that were part of different cultural backgrounds. I never came across racism or racial hatred when playing soccer.

Interviewer: Did you witness anybody else on your team that was being picked on or looked down upon because of race?

Sandro: There was an Asian American player on my high school team that would get picked on sometimes but it was the type of way teammates would should love to each other in a way. I would admit that sometimes their jokes were a little too much.

Interviewer: What type of jokes were your teammates making that crossed the line?

Sandro: It rarely happened but sometimes they would just make fun of his eyes and his height. Looking back it now I guess they were subconsciously making fun of his race

Interviewer: Why do you think he was picked on because of his racial characteristics?

Sandro: I'm not sure to be honest. I guess just because he was the shortest and quietest on the team. Everyone knew he wouldn't fight back I guess. I didn't think it had to do with race.

Interviewer: Based on that situation, how would you personally define race, racism and sports

Sandro: I would define race as your ethnic background or cultural background. To be more specific, like Hispanic or French. Racism is just the act of hatred towards a specific race based on historical history and actions

done by these specific individuals in today's society. I would define sports as one of the world's greatest inventions made by humans.

Interviewer: Now that I understand how you view and define these terms, what moves can be made to reconcile race in society today?

Sandro: One major move that can be made is just making more events in society that promote racial acceptance

Interviewer: What type of events?

Sandro: It can be business or political events. Just a major platform that can show that no matter where you are in the world a diverse group of people are working together for the better of a given purpose.

Interviewer: Do you think Sports can help with this reconciliation?

Sandro: Without a doubt.

Interviewer: How do you think sports can do so?

Sandro: As I was saying. There needs to be a major platform to represent racial reconciliation and sports is that. Examples can be the FIFA World Cup, Super Bowl or NBA.

Interviewer: What certain things can these organizations do to show racial acceptances?

Sandro: I think holding conferences at these events and speaking on racial equality and things that relate to this topic is a major start.

Interviewer: Why?

Sandro: Because the leaders of these organizations are being examples and voices to show that racism should not be allowed and that acceptance and love should be the main trait that should be showed not only at these events but in society.

Interviewer: Any other factors as to why you believe sports is a great way to promote anti-racism?

Sandro: I played soccer, so I know that race is a vital part of the sport. I would say that sports in general helps with the unity of people and allows individuals to connect and reminds people we are all the same and the color of our skin should not change that.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time and for answering these questions the best you can.

Sandro: No problem brother. Good luck on your class and thank you for reminding me about the presence of race in sports and society.

Reflection Essay on Interviewees experiences and ideas:

Share your own thoughts on their experiences and their ideas in a 3000 word essay that incorporates the most relevant aspects of your interview, relevant insights from at least 5 course materials listed on the syllabus, and 2 other academic articles or books that you find yourself.

The world has been experiencing and practicing racism since the 1440s when Europeans started calling themselves superior over other races on the <https://assignbuster.com/sports-as-a-way-for-racial-reconciliation/>

basis of their regional identity, origin, and color. Even after that, color lines have always worked to divide people belonging to different racial backgrounds (Dunne, 2012). Ideas of race give rise to the concepts of racism which are all about spreading hatred and negativity all around. Racism allows people to form generalizations about their own identities and other's identities, and then people start making categories of superior and inferior races (Sanjer). However, after all these years, now is the time when conditions related to racism are quite better than before. Many attempts have been made in order to eradicate racism from the social communities so that diversity of races could be appreciated. Many fruitful outcomes have been achieved, but still, many people hold stereotypical ideas about different races and these kinds of people spread negativity in many settings. As a result of my eight minute interview with Sandro Montes I was able to define reconciliation as racial discrimination in many academic and social environments. In the near future this will show, people will no longer hate themselves on the basis of their color and ethnicity. However, a lot of work has to be done in order to make this world a place free from racism and discrimination of color.

The Myth of Racism

Race is just an identity which is related to a person's ethnicity and geographical background. Sandro grew up in a diverse setting which led him to believe racism was a myth.

However, social connotations and attachments related to races give rise to racism because of which people belonging to one race start having negative

thoughts and attitudes towards people of other races. People who believe in racism believe that each race has got specific traits that make it different from other races. Well, this idea does not have any rational evidence.

Growing up, Sandro noticed that being prejudice was commonly based upon social and cultural stereotypes that people receive from their surroundings. Perceptions towards a target are built unconsciously and are carried in mind forever unless one takes some practical steps to change his mind set and acquire critical understating and thinking. Furthermore, prejudice can be against a particular gender, race, age, ethnicity, religion, community, color, and so on. As covered in the interview with Sandro's teammates picking on the smaller Asian athlete, people become so violent because of the hate that they carry (as a result of biased feelings) that they cross all the limits and do not think before taking severely harsh steps. After this event, Sandro was able to reflect on how a prejudice mindset played a part in the mistreatment of his fellow teammate.

Racial prejudice is one of the most common kinds of discrimination that has been experienced and is still being experienced in many areas of the world. The most famous example includes the harsh behavior of Nazi Germany towards the whole Jewish race during the World War 2. They hated them so much just for belonging to that race that they killed millions of them. Similarly, from 1948 to 1994, Non-white people in South Africa were not given many human rights and were made to live in segregated communities.

After reflecting on the questions asked during the interview, Sandro came forward to say that societies are full of myths of racism where people have cultivated and injected stereotypical ideas in their minds about races and

<https://assignbuster.com/sports-as-a-way-for-racial-reconciliation/>

identities attached to them. Blacks and whites are just biological groups and nothing else. However, it is people who have connected connotation with them. For example, blacks are known for crimes, slavery, uncivilized, and backward people, while whites are a civilized, educated, and prestigious race. People have lived with these ideas for many centuries, and these ideas have affected the victims of racism (the blacks in particular) in various harsh ways. However, with the increase in awareness and information, people are changing their attitudes now.

As a Hispanic male, discrimination in this country can be adjacent to the way blacks have lived as victims of racism in America. They had been deprived of many human rights because they belonged to an inferior race. In different fields and professions like arts, sports, and business, blacks were never allowed to take prestigious positions in spite of having skills. Black Americans of America were segregated from all other races and were treated like animals during the 1860s and 1870s. They were never allowed to live where they wanted even though they had money and skills. They were only allowed to live in some particular areas where there were never enough resources to provide them a good living. Such places are called 'ghetto.' Whites looked at such areas with dirty looks, and they could never even imagine going to those areas. People living there were known as animals to them. People living in the ghetto are deprived of all kinds of social as well as advanced human rights. They are not allowed to go out of the ghetto to obtain education or jobs. These are isolated areas which are assigned to discriminated race.

In college campuses, jobs, schools, sports, etc. the experiences of whites and black minorities are incredibly different from each other because their social skills and sufferings are not the same. People look at them through different eyes, and they look at people differently from each other (Feinberg, 2008).

As a college student, Sandro believes that their paths to achieve success in the jobs market is very much different as well as difficult compared to whites, the attitudes of a teacher at a college and policemen at roadsides are profoundly changed for both of these races, and they lack the access to position in power in various professional and academic settings (Feinberg, 2008).

However, I believe that things are improving now, and in sports, particularly, individuals of different colors are enjoying prestigious positions on the basis of their skills. In order to continuously make things better, a lot of awareness needs to be spread among all kinds of people so that they all can learn to put racial identities in the background in different social situations. People need to know that humanity has no color, no geographical boundary, and no racial identity (Fuentess, 2012).

Racism and Sports

There lies an inseparable connection between racism and sports. Sports can be used as an essential means through which the dominant race, culture, or agent attempts to dominate others (MacClancy). Since many centuries, races other than white were never allowed to take part in sports because the whites believed that this backward race does not deserve to play with them. However, individuals of different racial backgrounds have worked very hard

to prove their skills, and now things have improved. Thanks to similar improvements, Sandro and I have been able to compete at a high level on a collegiate team.

Having done my own research on sports in the current era, I was able to indicate that athletic competition and sports are one of the social settings which are usually free of racial bias and discrimination. In the USA, many sportsmen are African American and Latino in origin, and they are enjoying right places because of their skills and experience, they enjoy positions of power now. However, such positions were enjoyed by whites only in the previous era (Feinberg, 2008). However, many employers and authoritative individuals may still use stereotypes about the connection between African American and crime and may hold specific behaviors towards them. This might hurt black workers' chances of being hired. Similarly, the owners, administrators, and coaches in sports organizations may also possess negative behaviors toward black individuals because of the stereotypes they hold about them. Whites and blacks make the interpretations of such experiences and attitudes in different ways.

Many cases have been reported where black and hispanic boys, as well as girls, are bullied by team members as an outcome of racism in sports (Bell, 2018). Racism and sports have always been a serious fight. One of the reasons is that sports is a profession/ hobby where there are members who belong to different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Since racism is merged in the roots of society, this diversity of races occasionally results in racist feelings and behaviors, even during matches (Bell, 2018). This shows that

humans haven't overcome racism yet in spite of so many campaigns of awareness.

In the recent interview, Sandro who played in the Jr. College Soccer Team shared his experience while saying that he was fortunate enough to have good relationships with his teammates that were part of different cultural backgrounds. He never came across racism or racial hatred when playing soccer. He further shared that those team members who were shy and lacked confidence were always made the target of bullying, but this thing had no connection to racism because he was also colored and if whites had any problem with a colored race then definitely they would have made him a target as well. From this authentic interview, we can say that the world is on its way to becoming a better place for all people belonging to different races.

In another case, University of Southern California women's basketball player shared her experience of racism and said that whenever she passes through fans, many of them throw negative comments on her and her black teammates because of their black color (Bell, 2018). Similarly, Devante Smith-Pelly also shares that many fans have thrown racial taunts over him during his hockey game. Sometimes, these victims ignore the comments while other times they become agitated. One of the aspects we must note here is that all of these incidents are always reported to the authorities, and the authorities play their part and do the investigation. National Hockey League Commissioner Gary Bettman, after one of the similar incidents, came up with a statement condemning the fans' behavior as "unacceptable and reprehensible (Bell, 2018). This means that racism is regarded as a harmful and forbidden act and behavior in today's world, unlike before (the 1960s

and 1970s) when it was a general public act. Now, the officials are always trying to provide a peaceful and racial free environment to the sportsmen belonging to different races. However, in different social events, more awareness on the issue must be spread so people can learn to appreciate the beauty of diversity and stop thinking that black's or any other minor races. The NHL has been working on a campaign called " Hockey Is for everyone." It is a little which aims at promoting hockey as an exclusive game for everyone regardless of race, color, religion, national origin or gender (Bell, 2018). In the same, way, many cases are there where the officials themselves pass racial comments which offend the feeling of black sports players as well as their teammates. In one of the incident, Bruce Levenson, the leader of the ownership group for this city's N. B. A. franchise said that the Atlanta Hawks' home games should have less hip-hop and more music " familiar to a 40-year-old white guy. This statement offended the feelings of many blacks because hip-hop is the essential identity of blacks. This shows that the reports of authoritative officials can unite as well as divide people when it comes to working in a team (Fausset, 2014).

Research indicates that during hiring processes in sports, the minorities (blacks) experience racial discrimination in a variety of settings and whites do not (Feinberg, 2008). The racial attitudes of whites have evolved during the course of history and have changed greatly, but still, in many cases and settings, they happen to show racial discrimination towards blacks. If we look at the past, Civil Rights legislation of 1964 had put into end all kinds of racism and discrimination that arises due to the difference in races. But in present time, the traces of such feelings and attitudes are still found in many

whites of America which results in symbolic discrimination that creates inequitable access to resources, including desirable positions in the labor market including sports, business, employment, etc. (Feinberg, 2008).

Personally I believe that racial prejudice is an irrational and baseless behavior. It only cultivates hatred and negative feelings among the people of society. In my culture, hispanic people are looked with disgust and are treated like animals. We humans have to work together to remove it from our community. For that we will have to make our own self-free from these attitudes as if you want to bring a change in society, you need to start it from your own home first. The process will not be easy, and we will have to face various hardships but we ought to be motivated enough to bear all of them because we have to make our world free from racial discrimination.

Insights

After the interview, Sandro and I have reflected on ideas that touched base on how we can bring awareness to the people of our society by clearing their minds. The rotten and fixed ideologies about colored races need to be eliminated from their brains so that everyone can live on the basis of equality and spend a happy and healthy life by enjoying all the human right in the society. When it comes to sports, people need to understand that skills are most important and anyone belonging to any race deserves to participate and excel in sports if he/she has got skills and talent.

Racial Reconciliation Plan

In order to remove racial prejudices, we need to look at how such biases were born in the first place. We need to remove them by killing them from the same position which gave them birth and a place in the society. In our community, hateful attitudes towards individuals of different colors have come from the minds of certain people who might have faced harsh experiences because of them in the past. But that does not mean that all people of a specific color are same.

To make this plan is not an easy task. We are prepared to acquire and learn certain beliefs about the whole race of colored people. We have learned them so rigorously that now we perceive them as common sense. To unlearn all such ideas is a challenging task. We think that all the colored people are filthy, dirty, uneducated, nonsense and barbaric. They lack all the skills that are needed to deserve a good living. These thoughts are injected into our minds by our society so strictly that we never give these ideas personal thoughts from our own sides. We never try to look at them without own vision and critical approach.

First of all, we need to clear our minds from fixed ideologies related to color people. Then with space in our minds, we need to make other beliefs which should be based upon facts and experiences. Weir (2016) says that ties among community members are required in order to be built in order to reduce bias. We need to change the psychology of our people which is very harshly against the existence of the whole colored race. According to Lopez (2017), even simple conversations can help combat biased attitudes. He further says that people should be taught that in communities, people of different races should live diversely without having any discrimination.

<https://assignbuster.com/sports-as-a-way-for-racial-reconciliation/>

Media should also come forward and contribute in building racial equality by showing the positive image of colored people instead of making them their victims. According to Menard & Moen, the best way to combat misinformation is with positive and genuine information. We can show movies to them where colored people are shown as highly intellectual and civilized individuals.

Steps to “ Unlearn” Racism

We can follow specific steps to overcome racial anxieties. The levels are as follow:

- We need to give people anti-prejudice education by making healthy conversations with them.
- Intergroup or interracial contacts and communications are to be arranged so that they can practically get to know each other.
- We need to provide equal opportunities of education and employment to both white as well as black people so they can always remain interacted.
- The feeling of self-esteem is required in order to be built among colored people, especially among their children because they are usually more anxious and less confident as they are made to believe that they are good for nothing. We need to boost their confidence level so

They can also participate in social activities and prove themselves as active and equal members of society.

Sports as a tool of racial reconciliation

<https://assignbuster.com/sports-as-a-way-for-racial-reconciliation/>

Sports is one of the major platforms that can show that no matter where you are in the world a diverse group of people are working together for the better of a given purpose (Said by Sandro during interview). There needs to be a significant platform to represent racial reconciliation and sports is that. Examples can be the FIFA World Cup, Super Bowl or NBA. Moreover, holding conferences at these events and speaking on racial equality and things that relate to this topic can act as a fresh and a significant start. Because the leaders of these organizations are examples and voices to show that racism should not be allowed and that acceptance and love should be the main trait that should be taught not only at these events but in society. The race is a vital part of the sport. I would say that sports in general help with the unity of people and allows individuals to connect and reminds people we are all the same and the color of our skin should not change that. Color is just a biological factor while our skills, behaviors, and personality traits must be the tools to select our Worth in society (Fausset, 2014).

Conclusion

Prejudiced and biased behaviors against different races are no doubt deeply rooted in our minds, but we can make specific strategies to overcome this issue. White people need critical knowledge and education in order to change their inborn attitudes towards colored people. They are to be given spaces and grounds to know their fellow colored beings better so that they can develop new ideas and feelings about them and can remove racist attitudes towards them.

One of the reasons why white people look at colored individuals with dirty looks is that they are migrants. Natives are always anxious about migrants because they feel a kind of threat to their identity which according to them should be irreplaceable. Moreover, migrants do labor and other low-class jobs due to which, again, white people perceive themselves as more educated and superior. If the different race is also provided with same opportunities of education and employment and they are not made to think that they are not a good race, then social justice can be brought in the general society.

References

- Bell, D. (2018). Racism and sports. Philadelphia Tribune.
- Dunne, S. (2012). The Irish bifocal and American Sport: Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, 405-420.
- Fausset, R. (2014, September 10). In Atlanta, Debating Race and Sports." New York Times. Retrieved November 21, 2018, from <http://www.nytimes.com.proxylib.csueastbay.edu>
- Feinberg, M. J. (2008). Race and the NFL Draft: Views from the Auction Block. Springer Science + Business Media, LLC, 53-73.
- Fuentess, A. (2012). The myth of Race. California: University of California Press.
- MacClancy, J. (n. d.). Sport, Identity, and Ethnicity.
- Sanjer, R. (n. d.). Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology.
- Weir, K. (2016, December). <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0966369X.2014.913007>. Retrieved 5 1, 2018, from [apa.org](http://www.apa.org): <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2016/12/cover-policing.aspx>