

# The impact of inequality on personal life chances

Sociology



The Impact of Inequality on Personal Life Chances The term race can be used in several meanings. It can be equal to ethnicity, but it can also mean a broad category of people, based on the most general characteristics like the color of skin. Ethnicity is a much narrower term that describes a group of people who share the same historical and biological background as well as some cultural heritage.

Minority is a term that is used to describe a group of people that share a characteristic that the majority does not feature. In other words, these two terms are closely connected.

Prejudice is an opinion that is formed on a basis of invalid facts and urges a person to develop a particular attitude, positive or negative, towards other people or phenomena prior to experiencing them. Prejudice and inequality are directly linked: in the society that has many prejudices against the minorities, the latter is doomed to various negative outcomes.

Stereotypes primarily develop through continuous repetition of a particular idea; this generates a specific inertia that other people would not like to challenge. As a result, by being passive, they support the stereotypes about other people. The purpose that they serve focuses on conveying a certain message to the public: on the one hand they might contribute to formation of a positive image of the majority, but, on the other hand, they may also result in the negative image of the minority.

A conflict theorist would suggest that social inequality is an inevitable result of interaction of the oppressed class and the class of exploiters. On the other hand, a structural functionalist would point out that social inequality is conditioned by activity of different institutions within the society.

The poor are more subject to health concerns than the middle class since

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they may not have the sufficient amount of the financial funds to receive medical assistance if needed.

Equality of health care directly affects equality of opportunity: the better treatment people are able to get, the longer they will live and the more successful they might become in the future.

There is no doubt that racism, gender prejudice and poverty affect one's psychological health in a negative way: they put a person under pressure and make one experience panic and anxiety.

No matter how sorrowful it may seem, but it is not very probable for non white to assimilate economically, socially and politically into the white social environment, primarily due to prejudices.

Poverty is likely to lead to a sense of being out of control of one's personal life as an individual would understand that one is dealing with forces that are beyond one's control and can hardly be resisted.

The major reason why there are homeless people in such a rich society is inequality in income distribution. In other words, the rich become richer and the poor only become poorer. Of course the latter have a chance for upward mobility, but it is a rather small one since there are many factors that would go against their desire.