

Racism in America: discrimination, Disdain, and Prejudice

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Introduction

Racism is a big problem in the US, not only in the past but currently as well. This has been in existence even before the country's history began, characterized by the prominently dreaded institution of slavery that not only dehumanized and exploited millions of Africans but also prepared the soil for generational systemic racism. However, legal racial segregation remained dominant despite the abolition of slavery, thus amplifying the prominence of white supremacy. The civil rights movement has made some progress with regards to the abolition of racism, but even though it may appear in different forms, this prejudice has proved to be resilient, changing as the society does (Serchen, et al., 2020). Ranging from housing discrimination and worse access to education and healthcare to racial profiling and shootings by police, even today people of color will still face systematic barriers that keep them from integrating into society.

The hidden history of how racism has shaped the American society can be exposed by examining the specific events of slavery and segregation over a long period. In the US, the slavery institution, of course, had existed from the late 1600s up to 1865 when the Civil War finally stopped. During all these years, many African Americans managed to survive the unbearable chains of slavery but also the horrors of the worst kinds of tortures and the complete deprivation of the most common human rights. Their freedom was indeed suppressed and they were treated as mere slaves and deprived of any dignity. Even in the days when slavery had ended, racism was not extinguished; it merely took on new and more complex forms (Schwartz, 2020). The segregating laws followed the war and left behind a legacy of segregated places and institutional racism. Such ill-famed heritage is still in existence as it drags the families forward

with the cycles of disparity in education, wealth and opportunities. Consequently, disassembling the bygone practices of racism requires profound understanding of its root cause.

The community of African Americans after the abolition of slavery still had to face the persistence of prejudice and discrimination. The Jim Crow laws are the segregation laws enforced in the southern part of the US that were passed during the late 19th and early 20th century. They became the cornerstone of the segregation of blacks and whites in public facilities, schools and trains. All the enforcement means of segregation included violence, intimidation, and different legal devices to preserve the system in force until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted (Roberts, 2021). Whilst this step has taken away the legal system of segregation some remnants of segregation are still impacting American society thus making it clear that the fighting for racial equality is not over yet.

Although it was a very historical event, racism is still an elephant in the room and the whole country. Even with non-discriminatory laws, the discriminatory biases persist and this is evident in various aspects of normal living. Some of the other ways in which racism is firmly built into the system is the presence of institutional policies, practices, and procedures that discriminate against the colored people by design. It can be seen across the lines of life, for instance in education where we observe the disproportion in funding, resources and disciplinary measures; the educational outcomes are clearly divided by race (Lavalley and Khalilah, 2022). Along with employment mobility, these biases are also found in the processes of hiring and career advancement without much opportunity for economic mobility of the minority community. Housing segregation and the disparity in quality housing among people of color are attributed to the historical and current housing policies. As if that was not enough, the criminal justice system brings out the gap where people from the underprivileged racial groups are the

ones who get the most arrests, prosecutions, and sentences (Bonilla-Silva, 2021). Institutional racism cannot be eliminated if holistic reforms are not implemented in all sectors of a society which make the playing field equal for all people and offer chances to everyone.

The educational institutions undergoes the process of harsh disciplinary measures and suspension that leads to more dropout rates and lesser academic achievements among the black students. The experience of people of color in the labor market include the multiple instances of discrimination in job recruitment, entry into higher ranks, and equality in pay. In the real estate market African-Americans and other disfranchised groups meet racist mechanisms which are characterized by the denial of mortgage approvals and high interest rates for mortgage despite their ability to pay and as a result economic divide is deepened. According to Cramer (2020), the criminal justice system makes the situation worse, and black people are more likely to be overrepresented in incarcerations, convictions, and harder sentences compared to their white counterparts. This entails a multi-faceted strategy to tackle the structural aspect of racism that is embedded in different fields of society and requires joint effort to deconstruct bias and achieve actual equality and fairness.

Implicit bias and microaggression which are currently experienced by blacks is the manifestation of modern-day racism in America which can be discerned even between the lines of face-to-face interactions. Implicit bias which is deeply rooted in the unconscious cover all the unconscious attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes that we have about people of different races. Such biases that are usually imperceptible but omnipresent might manifest themselves as uninformed decisions, unfair social relationships and discriminatory practices, thus preserving the status quo. However, these are the stereotypes and the hidden messages, especially for people of color, that use the microaggressions as their carriers. These routine and profane slights, which are part of

the general social norms and cultural practices, undermine the personal dignity of individuals who belong to the minority, thus giving rise to a culture of prejudice and discrimination (Wade and Mónica, 2021). Although many blatant forms of racism are denounced with much effort, subtle instances of discrimination still prove its deep-seated existence. Therefore, more education, dialogue and institutional reforms are needed to reach real equity and fellowship within the American society

Implicit bias and micro-aggressions unfortunately are evident in everyday life such as jobs, schools, and other public settings. The corporate environment is saturated with cases where a white boss can subconsciously show more preference to a white subordinate over an equally or more competent African American employee. Again in educational settings, teachers have been unconsciously providing lower educational support to African American students through assumptions that they were not as bright as their white peers, which is wrong (Anderson, et al., 2022). Moreover, in a dialogue, people may sometimes unknowingly perpetuate microaggressions even through their subconscious comments such as a white person making a comment about hair or skin color without them being aware of the hidden racist content. These cases demonstrate the impact of the implicit biases and microaggression that require more awareness and effectively build a fairer and inclusive society.

In conclusion, the racism in the USA is a multifaceted and complex problem that still deprives the people of color of different opportunities. The legacy of the slavery and segregation has produced a deep-seated system of inequality and injustice that still alive in the society today. Such forms of racism as institutional racism, implicit bias and microaggressions are the key components of present-day American racist society. in the struggle against racism, it is necessary to identify it, to look into its past and culture. This can be achieved via education, dialogue, and

action. It also includes acknowledging the impact of racism on individuals and the entire community as well as the duty of restructuring to come up with a society which is free of any form of discrimination. As a phrase of Martin Luther King Jr. stated "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere", hence, if we resolve racism in America, we construct a just and equitable nation.

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