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The Impact of the Existence of Racial Inequality on African Americans and the Ways African Americans Respond

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Abstract: Racial inequality persists in the lives of people in the United States, and this inequality reflects, in part, the influence of social class systems and stereotypes; these influences have led to changes in the lifestyles of dominated people and have gradually disempowered minorities, including their entitlement to social benefits and the right to compete, their physical and mental health, and even their lives. These influences are present for minority youth and can even change their perceptions and ways of doing things. This likewise exacerbates the existence of inequities.Based on the method of literature review, this paper discusses how racial inequality affects the lives of minorities, such as African Americans, in their daily lives and demonstrates how this inequality has made the lives of minorities more passive and dominant. Source of materials include reports, online media, journal articles etc. The existence of inequalities in education, housing, police enforcement, and work are examined to reveal the lives of minorities that are affected.This paper examines some of the possible reasons for the emergence of racial inequality, particularly in the context of police brutality. In addition, the paper discusses how minorities are aware of these inequalities and respond to them. Through these responses, minorities are able to protect their rights.

Keywords: Racial inequality, minority, stereotype

1. Introduction

Discrimination exists in many parts of the world, including gender discrimination, racial discrimination, status discrimination, and wealth discrimination. Indirectly or directly, these discriminations affect the lives of people, both those who discriminate and those who are discriminated against. Racism is widespread in all parts of the world, and it has a long history. It has been occurring since Magellan traveled around the world and people became aware of the existence of races different from their own. As globalization began, more and more people chose to leave their homes to live or seek work in unfamiliar cities or countries. This meant an increase in regional ethnic diversity. People of different races began to join the lives of local people forcing all people to choose how they would respond when faced with different races. In America today, the effects of racial discrimination are felt in every aspect of minority life. White children are far more likely to be enrolled in higher education than any other race. This uneven distribution perhaps stems from the fact that white parents are more likely to have enough money to pay for their children's tuition. This brings

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us to racial discrimination in the workplace. Generally speaking, companies will not admit to discrimination against potential employees. They will often give all applicants the same test, but white employees are hired because they are more likely to have relevant experience. In addition, stereotypes about the status of African-Americans affect their shopping experience, especially in expensive stores, and home buying experience. Agents are more likely to believe that African-Americans cannot afford expensive products and homes. There are also inequalities in the distribution of health care resources, with African-Americans using health care services less frequently than European-Americans. Finally, police officers are more likely to use more intense searches of African Americans in law enforcement and have a higher tendency to consider African Americans suspicious. All of the distinctions and inequalities are the product of societal biases and stereotypes and cause significant inconvenience and impact on the lives of minorities.

To ensure that all American citizens are afforded their rights by nature, the government monitors the requirements of companies when hiring employees to ensure that companies are not refusing to hire applicants on the basis of race. As a result, many companies will have clear uniform requirements or standardized tests for all applicants when hiring. Companies believe that uniform standards are a way to ensure that the company avoids racial discrimination in hiring because uniform standardized exams are often given in terms of employee competencies and values and limit HR's hiring freedom to a relatively small area [1]. If a minority applicant performs well on the test, HR has no valid reason to reject that applicant to join the company and add value to the company. On the other hand, some researchers claim that this uniform standard is still discriminating against minorities and limiting their access to companies. The reason is that many jobs have historically been filled by whites, meaning they have had plenty of opportunity to learn from their experience and become more productive. Minority applicants, on the other hand, do not have the experience to make them equally competitive. Therefore, a uniform standardized test is not a fair competition from the start.

This article discusses the existence of racial inequality in the United States, how it exists in people's lives, and how it affects people. Then, some of the causes of racial inequality are discussed. Finally, the paper describes how some minorities who have been treated unequally have coped with the inequality that has happened to them. Racial inequality is an influential issue, and current policies and approaches have failed to effectively mitigate the effects of inequality and arriving at an effective way to avoid racial inequality is critical, both for people pursuing the American dream and for the future of America.

2. Literature Review

In terms of education, statistics show that 54.1% of undergraduate and graduate students in 2020 are white; Blacks, Hispanics, Indians, Asians, and Pacific Islanders together make up the remaining 45.9% [2]. And the percentage is likely to continue to get smaller, as fewer black males have entered college in the last decade, leading to a decrease in overall minority enrollment [3]. Minorities are more likely to report discrimination in health care services compared to whites, and 20% of African Americans are more likely to obtain services from same-race health care providers [4]. The study also showed that other factors play an important role in some health disparities, such as insurance and health status. In terms of housing, African-American housing reflects housing discrimination: separated dwellings, smaller average footprints, and greater residuals [5]. Keith D. Parker and Anne B. did a study on African-American attitudes toward local police. Parker and his fellow panelists concluded that these factors were actually related. Low-income and single participants were more likely to live on the edge of the city or in more chaotic neighborhoods because rents were relatively cheap in these neighborhoods, and these poor-quality dwellings were home to large numbers of blacks [6]. The police would patrol these neighborhoods more frequently and even have disputes with the residents. A person wants to have a good impression of the police if he/she is not frequently suspected, harassed

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and searched by the police. This explains, in part, why African Americans are more likely to report that police officers search them without reason and use abusive language, leading more African Americans to have a negative opinion of police officers compared to whites. Devon W. Carbado and Patrick Rock describe the high frequency and intensity of police use against African Americans as the most common form of abuse. The reasons for the high frequency and intensity of searches used by police against African Americans are grouped into four categories; Social Dominance Threat, Physical Safety Threat, Masculinity Threat, and Racism Threat [7]. The Social Dominance Threat represents the tendency of the dominant members of a social system to maintain their status and to be hostile to anyone who tries to undermine the hierarchy. Some police officers who favor social dominance tend to reinforce hierarchical views, such as racism and nationalism. As a result, they will naturally view minorities as inferior and as a group that must obey orders. Masculinity Threat occurs when Black men are more aggressive in the face of racial slurs. In such cases, officers feel threatened and respond in a more intense manner to reduce the threat of the suspect, which is the force control. From previous studies we can find racial inequalities that exist in all aspects of society. These studies have used a variety of ways to demonstrate the existence of inequality, but few have attempted to explain why people are treated differently and what means are used by minorities who are treated differently to cope with the inequality.

3. The Impact of Racial Inequality on the Lives of African-Americans

The police play an important role in helping citizens in their time of need. It is the job of the police to protect every citizen from harm and to be able to use their authority. However, there are times when police officers act in an unprofessional and disparate manner, which can be very harmful to minority people. There are times when officers will overreact and treat certain suspicious individuals. This is reflected in the fact that Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to be subjected to intense searches and violence by police. A study of fatal police violence in U.S. states from 1980-2019, in which historically recorded police violence was counted and analyzed, found that the NVSS classification of police violence was partially incorrect; approximately 55.5% of police violence deaths were not reported, and these unreported data varied by race [8].After estimates, the race with the most deaths due to police violence between 1980-2018 was non-Hispanic black, with approximately 9,540 deaths. A 2019 statistic states that black Americans are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police compared to whites. Twenty-four percent of all police killings are by blacks, which is 11 percent higher than the rate for the entire black population in the United States [9]. Or police may intentionally slow down police presence in specific neighborhoods, leading to higher local crime rates, to children who may develop incorrect legal values that eventually lead them to commit crimes. A famous example is the Hernando Washington case, where Hernando Washington grew up in a chaotic neighborhood on the south side of Chicago [10]; it was unpopular with the police because of its dense population and poverty. Many times, it took relatively longer for local crime reports to be responded to by the police. The police response to crime led Hernando Washington to believe that crime deserved less severe punishment than the law required. This misconception led to his eventual conviction for robbery, rape, and the murder of a woman, and Washington's misconceptions about crime led him to believe, even after his arrest, that the public and the courts were overreacting to his crime. It could not be said that Washington was responsible. The chaos and violence in the neighborhood where he grew up had a negative impact on his worldview, making him feel that violence was the solution to his problems; this, coupled with the lack of police containment and speed of crime made Washington believe that the punishment for crime was not unacceptably severe. It is clear from this that the special treatment of police officers has an undirected and undetectable effect on the development of children within their boundaries of duty.

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Housing segregation occurs for every African American, whether a family on the breadline or a wealthy middle class. Data show that about 17% of households in central cities have incomes below the average, compared to 3% in the suburbs. It is interesting to note that 22% of residents in central cities are black, but only 7% of blacks live in the suburbs [11]. Such a trend could indicate that income is a factor that affects housing satisfaction. On the other hand, some agents recommend cheaper and less expensive homes in bad locations to blacks because of the color of their skin, because they are influenced by stereotypes. Sometimes they even reject black customers by acting unprofessional when they ask to see a good house. But they ignore the possibility that the customer is probably a black middle-class person looking to buy a house.

Although companies are aware of the potential for racial discrimination in the workplace, it still seems to exist in many companies, especially in management. In the study by C. Elizabeth Hirsh and Sabino Kornrich, only about half of the organizations had not been formally accused of gender discrimination. In terms of employee numbers, minorities make up almost a third of the base staff, but only 13% of management [12]. Through the data, it appears that minorities have more difficulty integrating into the management of a company. For most minority employees, the company's position seems like a fixed one, with no future for promotion in sight. The stereotype of minorities makes them less likely to get the advantage of an invisible glass elevator to get promoted than whites. They must work harder. Also, blacks may not be able to gain some authority when they enter management, and white employees may be ashamed of following the orders of black management. They may be sneaky and not visibly resist orders or requests from black management.

Stereotypes of blacks prevent the black middle class from embodying the middle-class ethos as easily as whites do. People's stereotypes predispose them to believe that blacks are poor and cannot belong to the middle class. Therefore, it is easy for people to judge a person's class by his/her race. If an African American comes to the mall dressed casually, it is very common that the salesperson will not do anything to try to help the African American buy something. If the customer is a white person, the salesperson will come and serve the customer, whether the white person is dressed formally or not. It's not that the salesclerks don't see African Americans coming into the store; they are just stereotyping the African American customer as having low purchasing power, so they don't want to expend the energy to serve.

4. Problems of Racial Inequality Confronted by African Americans

The black middle class must deliberately dress and manage their image to project a middle-class image [13]. Because only then can people automatically become aware of the actual social class of the black middle class through expensive dressing and treat them with the right attitude towards the corresponding class. Just as the black middle class tend to wear formal clothes to highlight their status when they come to the mall for shopping, because only then they are more likely to avoid being treated coldly by the attendants. In addition to actively displaying their social status, some black middle-class people choose to teach racist salespeople a lesson by complaining to their supervisors. Karin R. Lacey interviewed a black middle-class woman who did this. This woman liked to come to the mall dressed casually, and sometimes salespeople would neglect to slack off based on her race to determine that she did not have high spending power. Terry regretted the idea of being served based on appearance because she might have wanted to spend $1,000 that day, but she had to keep the money and use her middle-class status to complain because of the salesperson's negative attitude.

African Americans in management find that they often face problems in companies where they are suspected of not fitting in with the company culture and the "glass ceiling". Many white employees believe that black cultural styles do not fit into a leadership position, so some white subordinates are reluctant to follow orders when a black person is the leader. But African Americans in leadership positions quickly realize that their status in the company is a powerful weapon to help them do their

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jobs. The African American leader must show his or her authority and make the employees aware of his/her dominance and power. This is because the leader's majesty makes the employees realize that the black leader is someone who is capable of managing the team.

When faced with racial discrimination by real estate agents, some African American customers choose to assert their power over the agent: they insist on the agent's service when the agent hesitates to show them a home, or refuses to show them a home they are interested in. This assertiveness puts pressure on the real estate agent and sends a message that they can afford to buy a good home. The agent often ends up compromising and allows the African American customer to successfully buy the home they want. Other African American customers choose to rely on themselves to find the right home. They will drive themselves to their favorite neighborhoods on weekends and holidays to find a home in person or stay in a friend's neighborhood. Based on this social phenomenon and interaction between real estate agents and African Americans, we can argue that racial distinctions in purchasing a home are partly the result of stereotypes. Without jewelry or clothing to prove identity, an African American can easily be identified as a working person who cannot afford a fully furnished, luxurious home in a great location. This phenomenon is also present in many service industries. Not to mention the stereotype that a cramped apartment is considered a place where African-Americans should live. African-Americans who are treated differently can easily see this reaction as insulting, so it is easy to understand why they are willing to spend more time and effort on their own to find the apartment of their choice. But the fact that most African-Americans choose to live in the same neighborhood as their friends has had the unintended effect of increasing residential segregation.

5. Conclusions

Racial inequality does not appear out of nowhere, nor is it caused by a single factor, such as class stratification by those in power; racial inequality is a social phenomenon created by a combination of factors. Historically speaking, the slave trade placed people who came to the Americas from Africa on a very low social status. For the next few decades, this artificial social status set the shackles on the minds of all people. It was programmed into people's consciousness to silently do its job. People are manipulated like puppets, manipulated by thin strings called stereotypes and classism. Historic and socially induced racial inequalities have had a significant impact on minority people, whether in employment, education, housing, and government policies to a greater or lesser extent. Some of these inequalities make minorities inherently passive in competition with the dominant white population. Some inequalities can even distort the development of minority youth, causing them to commit crimes and further reinforcing stereotypes. Inequality has a significant psychological and physical impact on minorities and limits or even denies these groups the power and social security to which they are entitled. The wave of resistance to racial discrimination has grown stronger, and oppressed people are becoming aware of their rights. They have learned to resist this injustice: they have chosen to rely on themselves or reaffirm their power when it comes to housing options; they have learned to use their power to ensure that work is done when it comes to work. However, it is not enough for the oppressed groups themselves to completely solve the inequalities that exist in society, but it is equally important for the awareness of other groups in society and government policies. Everyone is a victim of the social construction of this wrong thinking. And education is always a good way to eradicate all problems. If newspapers reported crimes based only on race as a characteristic rather than a classification, schools did not see racial enrollment as a mandate, every taxpayer was served the same way, companies only considered individual ability and productivity, and when referring to President Obama spoke of his contributions to America rather than the first black president. It would not take the idea of equality out of the children's consciousness. This article not only shows the impact of racial inequality on the lives of ethnic minorities from multiple perspectives, but also how ethnic minority people respond when faced with injustice. This information may help subsequent researchers

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to further examine whether minority responses have had a positive impact on combating racial inequality and possible ways to reduce its existence.

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