
Affirmative Action On Addressing Racism In America

In today biased world, there is always a place for many issues making people have different opinions on a problem such as racial issue. Affirmative action has been implemented in various societies for redressing discrimination that has faced minority groups, and this policy has been a contentious issue especially it is about the equal rights of minorities. Affirmative action was designed to address racism, but the question here is whether affirmative action is an effective way of dealing with racism and how much it can eliminate racism voice in society. I believe affirmative action is not the best effective way of addressing racism because it does not effect racism itself in an individual's mind and the movement may cause reverse discrimination to another race.

By definition, racism is a prejudice that causes members of a race to view themselves as better to other races. However, affirmative action only works to protect the fundamental human rights of minority groups, particularly about employment and education opportunities. However, racism is an ideology in people's mind, and affirmative action only serves to give the affected groups opportunities. The movement does not solve the problem that is deeply rooted in people's minds about racism. Giving an upper hand to African Americans or even Asian Americans as they seek jobs or admissions in colleges and universities does not ensure that they are not discriminated against while at such institutions. Educational institutions and workplaces have a good number of cases, and this indicates that the actual problem, which the view of a race being better or superior to the other, is not solved through affirmative action. The result of this is a "redesigned" racial caste system, "We have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it" (Alexander 232). The problem with such as system, especially in the contemporary world, is that it is mostly invisible making it hard for it to be identified at the first time. A critical look into this system is the increases incarceration rates, particularly of the minority races. A significant portion of the population in American prisons are black, the racial caste systems which many of the actions remain hidden.

Individuals who fight for equality, especially within the racial context would argue that it is in fact an amicable means of addressing racism. It is satiric that affirmative action was meant to create equal opportunities for minority groups while it has also contributed to inequality. In light of such action, colleges and universities in America were required to have a specific percentage of their admissions allocated to minority groups including minority races. This was viewed as a meaning of enhancing the disadvantaged students from poor backgrounds to have a higher chance to go to college since the system that existed support them significantly reduced these requirements. The requirements for African Americans to join these institutions was therefore lowered since that they came from very deprived backgrounds. On the other hand, the same need for Asian students including American Born Chinese had their qualifications raised. According to the article "Harvard sued for alleged discrimination against Asian American applicants" by the author Arwa Mahdawi, "the report found that Asian Americans would comprise 43% of admissions if only academic qualifications were considered and 26% when extracurricular activities and personal ratings were considered. Yet at the time the research was conducted, Asian Americans made up 19% of the share of admitted students" (Mahdawi, Arwa. 'Harvard sued for alleged discrimination against Asian American applicants.'). By all means, this move is against the values of affirmative action but is still part of the action, which is very ironical. All

minority groups, whether blacks, Asians or Hispanics deserve an equal chance to get into college. Having one group with lower requirements than other only functions in the same manner that racism does. This leaves Asian students at a disadvantage which requires them to put more efforts than other students, this is against what affirmative action is meant for.

Affirmative action not only destroy the process of ending racism, but it also fuels racism in itself. Giving Asian students higher requirements regarding scores encourages the stereotypical assumptions of Asians being smart. This stereotype, primarily tied to racism in America has people believing that Asian students are naturally good at technical subjects such as mathematics, engineering, and sciences. While the thought itself may not be a demeaning one, it remains to be a stereotype that promotes racism. Affirmative action, in this case, appears as a means that works against itself. That explains why it has been challenged severally in court, in fact, the controversy of affirmative action has been the subject of several legal proceedings against it.

Within the last two decades, a lot of resources and efforts have been directed by the movements towards this course. Mobilizing their resources of affirmative actions have seen the fight against racism lose some of its primary focus. Most of these actions believe that preserving things like the diversity in the best colleges in the country can only be done through affirmative action. While it might play a role in it, the bigger picture remains that affirmative actions do little to limit racism in its entirety. The public has been led to think that affirmative action is the number one strategy towards battling race relations in the country. This belief is not true at all, which is clear from the fact that American prisons continue to fill up with brown and black men on a daily basis.

Affirmative action focuses on only two aspects of the lives of minority groups: economic and educational matters. It fails to address racism as a pre-judgemental practice that judges the victims without consideration of evidence in light of their interests, abilities, personalities and so on. Improving the economic standard of a person is a commendable thing, so is developing their educational lives by giving them the opportunity to attend schools of their liking. However, these two contributions in their lives do not take into account other aspects of their lives such as the social, cultural, psychological, emotional, spiritual and physical harm that amount from racial-based prejudice. Affirmative actions are therefore very insufficient in fighting this.

On the other hand, affirmative action has had its share of progress in aiding the fight against racism. It has helped to create awareness on a problem that has been in America for centuries. By initiating affirmative action-based injunctions, the public has acknowledged that there indeed is a problem (racism) and it needs to be tackled. That includes individuals who might not even have known that they are racist, have never committed any racial act against another, but the idea existed in their minds. As it has been mentioned, racism starts in mind, and that is how it manifests itself in actions, words and even intentions. Through this line of work, a significant number of people has become aware of racism and its negativity and possibly also ceased from it as a result. That amounts to a considerable share in the efforts towards opposing racism.

The high number of students from minority races in America is almost exclusively as a result of affirmative action at these institutions. Having a rule that a certain amount of such students must be admitted in colleges and universities every year has made it possible for bright and talented students to make it into the institutions of their choice and dreams as well. Without this policy, the student population in universities like the St. Cloud University in Minnesota would

never have any Somalis, students whom the university delights in as it embraces diversity, “St Cloud State University spent 15 years to become a beacon of diversity and tolerance” (Kolowich 398). Affirmative action has paved the way for a generation of disadvantaged students to get the unique opportunity to study even in the best colleges in the country.

Based on what affirmative action has achieved so far, it has proven to be incapable of handling the real issues of racism in America. To eliminate racism voice in the society require all of its characteristics, including the perceptual and thought-based prospects of it must be addressed. Relating to only a portion of the problem does not do any kind, and this is what makes the adverse outcomes of affirmative action outweigh its benefits.

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