SOCIAL ISSUES AFFECTING AFRICAN AMERICAN RACE

INTRODUCTION

The growing literature on responses to stigmatization begin with the premise that racism, discrimination, exclusion and other form of stigmatization are critical problem in the everyday experiences of members of stigmatized groups. While countless studies document the persistence of racial inequalities, racial discrimination, and negative attitudes towards the African American race and other minority groups. We investigate African American perceives to be the most important obstacles their group faces, and the salience racism and discrimination in their responses.

Racism

Again, more respondents singled out racism as an important obstacle facing African American today than any other obstacle. They believed racism operates in many different facets of life, at both macro-institutional and micro-interactional levels. They noted the existence of institutional racism and discrimination as well as negative racial stereotypes. We explore the three most salient themes that emerge from the data: persistence of racism, racism in institutional contexts, and racist stereotypes. Both middle- and working- class respondents discussed the continued presence of racism. They tended to understand racism not as an individual distaste for a particular racial group, but a pervasive stigmatization that affects all African American over time. Because of racism, whether it’s subtle or not subtle, it tend to hold people back. You and I go in for the same job, the same qualification, unfortunately the white person will get that job before you or I will. A number of respondents also believed that white and other groups hold negative stereotypes of African American. Just over 20% of all respondents expressed this concern. They believed that racist stereotypes translate into unfair treatment and hold African American back

Solidarity

Middle- and working- class respondents emphasized African American lack solidarity, which was a modal obstacle for the group- ranking second and third for middle- class and working- class respondents, respectively. Respondents believed that lack of solidarity has negative social, economic, and political consequences for African American to “crabs in the barrel” who pull one another down in this vein, a working-class female postal worker, said:

We can moves into our own neighborhoods and we’ll be the first one to over charge each other. As soon as one of us buy a house, we want to… I call it “pillage and rape the other person of finances. You know, not thinking of helping them… sometimes we forget that we should be more unified.

In the example, respondents focused on the negative consequences of lack of solidarity among African American. Respondents were particularly concerned with class divisions with the African American community.

Family

Scholars and politicians have repeatedly described the precarious states of the African American family as a national problem (Edin and Kefalas, 2005). Suffice it to mention that in 2006, only 35% of African American children lived with both parents compared to 76% and 84% of white and Asian children respectively. Scholar link such stratification to many social dislocations including high teen pregnancy and dropout rate. Thus it is not surprising that when probed about the obstacles facing their group a large percentage of our sample mentioned the fragility of the African American family. In many ways, it is not surprising that the African American is a modal problem for working- class respondents. Fragile families are more numerous in more disadvantaged neighborhoods, similar to those which working- class respondents experience respondents believed that the weak family structure coupled with absent parenting erodes the fabric of African American family life and leads to the crippling of mobility option for future generations

Poverty

The most frequent social issues mentioned by respondents was disproportionately high poverty rate among African American. Well poverty right, yeah, poverty is one, which includes not having access to certain resources that other races might have or they are available but a lot of people, African American don’t know about it or some are just maybe too lazy know find out about… But I think, obstacles? I think laziness, ignorance, poverty is one of them. Respondents abstract poverty from it’s structural causes and framed it as the result of individual failing, which strongly resonates with American sentiments of the deserving and underserving poor. Many viewed poverty as contributing to the stigmatization of a group that was already stigmatized by race.

Education gap

African American student often face lower quality education and lower graduation rates than their peers from other races, which can limit their opportunities for success in the future. for decades, African American students in the united states have lagged behind their white peers in academic achievement. In 2014, the high school graduation rate for white students was 87 percent, according to the national center for education statistics. Research shows that compared with white students, black students are more likely to be suspended or expelled, less likely to be placed in gifted programs subject to lower expectations from their teachers

Mass incarceration

African American are overrepresented in the criminal justice systems and are more likely to be incarcerated for longer periods than other races. Though the rate of incarceration is historically high, perhaps the most important social fact is the inequality in penal confinement. This inequality produces extraordinary rates of incarceration among young African American men with no more than a high school education. The influence of the penial system on social and economic disadvantage can be seen in the economic and family lives of the formerly incarcerated. The social inequality produced by mass incarceration is sizable and enduring for three main reasons: it is invisible, it is cumulative, and it is intergenerational. The inequality is invisible in the sense that institutionalized populations commonly lie outside our official accounts of economic well-being. The inequality is cumulative because the social and economic penalties that flows from incarceration are accrued by those who already have the weakest economic opportunities. Mass incarceration thus deepens disadvantages and forecloses mobility for the most marginal in society. Finally, carceral inequalities are intergenerational, affecting not just those who go to prison and jail but their families and children, too.

Police Brutality

Police brutality has been a long-standing social issues faced by the African America race. Studies have shown that African American are disproportionately targeted by police officer compared to other races. This targeting often leads to unwarranted violence, harassment, and even death. The history of police brutality towards African Americans dates backs to the era of slavery when slaves patrols were used to capture and punish runaway slaves. In modern day, African Americans are often profiled and encountered with excessive force without any just cause. Police brutality can take many different forms, including racial profiling, unjustified arrests, physical abuse, and even murder. It creates deep-seated issues such as fear, distrust, resentment, and a sense of inequality. These issues may linger on the individual or may manifest as social issues.

Policies that will help social issues affecting African American race

Education policies

Education is one of the most important factors that can help African American overcome social issues. Policies that promote access to quality education, scholarships, and financial aid can help bridge the education gap that exists between African American and other races.

Housing policies

African Americans face challenges in accessing affordable housing due to discrimination, redlining, and other factors. Policies that promotes fair housing practices, provide affordable housing options, and address gentrification can help African American access safe and affordable housing.

Criminal justice policies

African Americans are disproportionately affected by the criminal justice system due to racial profiling, bias and other factors. Policies that address policies brutality, mass incarceration, and sentencing disparities can help reduce the impact of the criminal justice system on African American communities.

Healthcare policies

Africans Americans face disparities in healthcare access and outcomes due to systemic racism and discrimination. Policies that promote access to affordable healthcare, address healthcare disparities, and improve healthcare outcome can help improve the health of African American communities.

Economic policies

African Americans faces challenges in accessing economic opportunities due to discrimination, lack of access to capital, and other factors. Policies that promote economic development, provide access to capital, and address income inequality can help African Americans achieve economic stability and success.