Title page

The growing divide in America

Polarized politics and race-rhetoric of the American President, Donald Trump has deepened the divide among Americans. Rising ethnic tensions remains the dominant factor behind this divide. This divide has caused white European-Americans to believe that they will lose their majority by 2045. They face threats of rising populations of Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans and African-Americans. Demographic shifts have also convinced white Americans to perceive that they are loosing control over the country due to their weakened position. Entry of non-white Americans and immigrants in every field has reduced the opportunities for the local people. Such beliefs have resulted in promotion of negative feelings among white Americans towards other races and ethnicities. Issues of race and structural inequality has remained part of America throughout history.

The divide in American can be understood by considering two views. The first view is of white Americans who speak in concern of their future and adequate opportunities of survival for the next generations. They claim that the rising levels of immigration have caused negative impacts on them because today they have fewer chances of getting right jobs. The level of competition has also increased for the local people due to the hiring of Africans and Asians. Similar views are shared by Trump in his debates where he criticized the immigration and provides a deeper evaluation of how it undermined the welfare of the white Americans for centuries. This belief reflects that the majority white Americans are blaming other ethnicities for their limited growth opportunities (Padden, 2019). The American Heritage College provides a concise definition of white prejudice, “an adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of the facts”. Another way to define it is, “irrational hatred or suspicion of a particular group, race or religion” (Nittle, 2017). The classification of the racial groups during the eighteenth century relied on moral, intellectual, spiritual and other categories of superiority. In the American context, racial ideology and prejudice was a justification for against colonial violence and land appropriation that allowed whites to justify their injustices against the indigenous people. However irrespective of many changes and awareness the divide between the black and white still prevails in America. The concept of racism is still prevalent in the present and seen in the sectors of health, education and income disparities.

The second view is against the restrictive polities that limits the involvement of immigrants in different fields. Americans who are against this broader divide claims that minority populations must be given equal rights for survival in America. Their participation in different activities and job markets have benefited the economy. It s unfair to deny their positive role such as creation of diverse work culture.

Immigrant rhetoric gained more support in 2016 when Trump criticized immigration during his election campaigns. His strategy of putting blame on immigrants convinced many Americans to believe that blacks, Hispanics and Asians have are posing threats for to their future. The debates of Trump has created racial tensions between the people of different ethnicities. Trump created an unwelcoming and complex environment for the immigrants by stating that they have been thee reason of rising crime rates in America. He criticizes the Mexican immigrants and associated them with the criminal activities. The ideas of Trump depicts that he has put the blame of socio-economic difficulties on the immigrants. He also blamed Muslim immigrants involvement in terrorist attacks. Such polarized feelings have built feelings of hatred among white Americans. The position of minority groups has been threatened by the harsh and derogatory comments of Trump. This has undermined the American age-old philosophy of cultural diversity bit in fact caused ethnic divide.

Sociologists recognize race and ethnicity are complex constructs examined by scholars throughout the history. Ethnicity relies on the cultural factors including one’s ancestor history, geographical origin, beliefs and language. Historically these constructs are used to determine one’s identity individually and collectively. Ethnicity is also crucial for understanding one’s position in the society. The question that people encounter due to their ethnic differences such as where are you from? Is the result if those differences. Relating the concept of ethnicity to the definition of racial prejudice provided by American Heritage College, it is experienced by ethnic minorities in the western society. The connection between prejudice and ethnicity depicts that it leads to substantial damage to the people belonging to minority groups (Padden, 2019). The United States experienced challenges in defining multidimensional cultural and racial identity of the people. The question of ethnicity became more of a concern due to the huge population migrating to America. The long history of slavery and the movement of native people to American lands also gave birth to the concept of ethnicity. Ethnicities became important for identifying the historical backgrounds and connections of immigrants to their cultures.

Existence of different races in America remains the prominent factor behind this divide. The practical role of ethnicities became more prominent during the census of 2000 when census bureau allowed Americans to self-identify themselves as more than one race. Results of the census conducted in 2010 depict that 9 million Americans belong to a mixed-race. The census also identified 700,000 people with three or more different races. America represents a tangled history of racial identity, as the concerns are more than black-white. A substantial decline in Arab Muslim Americans was observed after 9/11 attacks who self-identified themselves as white. The debate over race and ethnicity also emerges in the discussion of sub-groups such as Cuban Americans. When discussing racial issues across diverse areas social scientists also consider the ethnicities and racial identities of the groups (Harris, Ravert, & Sullivan, 2015).

Race and racial prejudice in America lead to a never-ending problem of cultural tensions. Significant tensions emerge when people of African descent, Latinos and Hispanics view each other’s cultures in America. Cultural tensions emerge when groups hold negative attitudes towards other cultures and they become apparent in their everyday practices. These tensions become more visible in the beliefs of the minority groups that white Americans hold power to dominate them that causes inequalities and injustices. Racism and ethnicities remain one of the prominent features of American culture that causes tensions among groups. Minority populations in America suffer the consequences of cultural tensions more than whites.

The divide supported by the political leaders like Trump has worsened the situation for the immigrants because this refrains them from assimilating into the American culture. The concept of melting pot used by Trump has also questioned the loyalty and legal status of the immigrants. Adoption of the restrictive policies on immigration has further threatened their position in and reduced their opportunities of survival. Such political attacks on the minority population are actually a deviation from the ideology of Americanization. This divide has caused ethnic minorities to face criticism in public spaces. Even though they have spent decades in America but their loyalties are challenged. Today minority populations in America are undergoing significant challenges due to the growing divide between them and white American populations. This division can only be removed by removing such political sentiments against Africans, Asians and Hispanics.

References

Harris, B., Ravert, R. D., & Sullivan, A. L. (2015). Adolescent Racial Identity: Self-Identification of Multiple and “Other” Race/Ethnicities. *Urban Education* *, 52* (6).

Nittle, N. K. (2017). *Understanding Racial Prejudice* . Retrieved 03 18, 2018, from https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-racial-prejudice-2834953

Padden, B. (2019). *Polarized Politics Deepen Divide Over Who Is a 'Real' American* . Retrieved 11 02, 2019, from https://www.voanews.com/usa/polarized-politics-deepen-divide-over-who-real-american