

DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

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Disadvantaged groups

The paper aims to develop an understanding of the issues faced by the disadvantaged groups in Australia. There are various kinds of disadvantaged groups on the global scale. When the details of the disadvantaged groups are taken into account, it is seen that the term disadvantaged is more of a generic term, which is used for individuals or group of people who are identified by certain characters. The disadvantaged ones can include the ones who are mentally or physically disabled. Disadvantaged ones can be the ones who lack enough money or proper economic support. The third main characteristics include those who are deemed to live without any political support or power. In the case of this paper, the selected group of disadvantaged group includes the ethnicities and minorities living on the global scale. These include the Black communities, the Hispanics and so on (Ishikida, 2005).

Disadvantaged group can be defined as a group within a certain society that is marginalized, has a much-reduced access to resources and services that include education, finances, credit as well as power (Babacan, 2009). Thereby, the disadvantaged group can be more identified by the presence of increased barriers to self-sufficiency. These are some of the main barriers that block the proper access of individuals and groups to proper social tools. These can include unavailability of proper resources, the absence of certain level of regard by the society for a certain group, and improper access to capital and government based practices (Chiang, Low and Collins, 2013).

On the other hand, it can be seen from here that dealing with issues of disadvantaged group means the removal of barriers to self-sufficiency. There are many faces of the removal of barriers of self-sufficiency. These can include making sure that the efforts of the group are increasingly empowered where the group tries to develop tools to have better access to resources (Forrest and Dunn, 2007).

The selected disadvantaged groups: Ethnic minorities in Australia

Some of the main ethnic minorities that will be taken into account in this paper are the blacks, white ethnic minorities and the Hispanics. In order to be more aware of the level of disadvantages faced by these selected groups, there is a need that the social status of these groups is studied in more detail in the populations. When the details of various ethnic minorities in Australia is taken into account, it is seen that these communities include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, African Australians, Arabs, Turkish people, Muslim Australians, Africans, Jews, and Palestinians (Jupp, 2001). Australians have progressed in a substantial manner but the increased rates of racism remains alarming. The studies have shown that these communities are substantially disadvantaged. It has been seen that these communities are the ones who lag behind the Australians on the social and economic scales (Healey, 2003).

Much has been done and said about the level of racism that exists in Australia. However, there is a need that more focus is given to the level of racism and the effects that it has on the ethnic communities in Australia. This has been clearly identified in one of the projects of the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Challenging Racism Project. In accordance to the reports, the highest levels of racism are being faced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Mansouri and Lobo, 2011). Some of the main areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have faced racism and discrimination include justice, employment and healthcare facilities. Based on this it has been seen that these people are unable to have access to proper primary healthcare and they do not receive effective treatments (Mellor, 2003). Some of the other main communities that are known to experience racism and discrimination in Australia include Palestinians, Turkish, Jews, Muslim Australians, Arabs and African Australians. In these cases, these people have identified that the reasons of being discriminated include their color of skin, as well as different cultural and religious

practices. When the reports from the previous surveys are taken into account, it is seen that more than 78% of the Australians believe that racism is a serious issue that had led to increased difficulties in the lives of the ethnic communities. More than 20% of the respondents of the study have reported that they have faced race based hate talk, verbal abuse, racial slurs, and offensive gestures (Hickey, 2015).

A main element of racism in Australia is denialism. This is the main element that is a clear indication of the fact that there is no understanding in the racists that the act can be called as racist (McAllister, 2012).

Social processes leading to marginalization

Social exclusion is the process that has been known to occur in the process of marginalizing the ethnic communities from the rest of the population. Social exclusion, which is also referred to as marginalization, is termed as being a social disadvantage downgrading to the fringe of any existing society (Price, 2012). Social exclusion is the process in which individuals or groups of individuals are systematically blocked from having complete rightful access to basic services that include proper education, healthcare and employment. The groups or individuals are blocked from having proper access to resources and opportunities to have a better life (Pillay and Collings, 2004).

The studies have indicated that the process of social exclusion leads to disenfranchisement as well as alienation. These are often closely connected to the social class of the individual or the group, educational status, living standards, personal beliefs and religious as well as cultural beliefs.

Social exclusion is more of a multidimensional process that is more indicated and identified by progressive social rupture. This process leads to a complete detachment of the

individuals from the various social processes, social relations as well as from the institutions. This blocks the level of participation of such individual in various community based activities.

The process of social exclusion can be conceptualized by addressing the fact that this process has existed on a continuum on a vertical plane that exists above and below the social horizons. In accordance to this mode, it has been highlighted that there are ten main social structures that are known to be involved in the overall process of social exclusion. These include geographical location, race, globalization, class structure, personal habits, social issues, economics, religion, education, as well as politics (Stratton, 2006).

When the alternative conceptualization of process of social exclusion is taken into account, it has been seen that there are four main dimensions of on, which the theoretical emergence of the concept occurs. These include incomplete and improper access to the social rights of the individual as well as the group, deprivation of the most needed necessities and materials, social participation that is on a limited scale and a complete lack of normative legislation. On the other hand, it has been seen that the process is a combination of various factors that include race, gender and age. These are also inclusive of macro societal changes that include developments in the labor market, demographic and economic developments, innovation and advancements in the technology and an evolution of the general social norms. In these cases, it has been highlighted that the social policies and the government-based legislations also play important roles in the process of social exclusion (Wainwright, 2009).

The social exclusion has been seen to occur at the individual level as well. This highlights the fact that the individual is excluded from participating in the normal activities of the society. The second main level of exclusion includes community exclusion in which case certain ethnic and racial communities are excluded from the norms of the society. In these

cases, an example is that of the Aboriginals in Australia. The exclusion of this community from the normal Australian society is because of increased colonization. Because of increased rates of colonialism, lands were lost by the Aboriginals, as a result of which these communities were forced to live in destitute areas. These communities were also marginalized based on the loss of livelihoods and were also excluded from the labor markets. Forced assimilation was the main reason based on which the Aboriginals in Australia lost their culture as well as values. These are the main reasons based on which these communities also lost their rights. These days the aboriginals remain marginalized from the normal Australian communities based on the development of policies, laws and practices that gave focused more on the whites and ignoring the needs of the marginalized communities and groups (Weiner, 2014).

The issue of social exclusion is increasingly linked with the issue of equal opportunity. Some groups and communities are marginalized more than the others are. Marginalization is an issue that has been faced in even the more developed countries.

Community service response

The Australian communities and societies have an increased understanding of the fact that racism is a growing issue. The Australians are aware of the fact that they need to change their attitudes towards the ethnic communities (Chiang, Low, and Collins, 2013). However, when the attitudes of the Australians towards these ethnic communities are analyzed in detail, it is seen that they are in complete denial of racism and the racist attacks targeted towards the ethnic communities. There is no doubt about the fact that on the global scale, Australians are generally known as racists, but lesser is being done on the community and society level to stop racism and the level of discrimination faced by the Australian ethnic communities (Ishikida, 2005).

In these cases, on the community level as well as at the society level, it is seen that some steps have been taken that can make changes in the overall negative attitudes of the Australians. Some online communities have been noticed over the internet that promises to promote the fact that there are certain rights of the ethnic and racial communities in Australia. These include family, social, and access based rights that need to be respected. All ethnic communities living in Australia have the right to live in freedom enjoying their cultural and religious rights. However, in the case of these online communities, it is seen that lesser is being put in to make the desired changes. Instead, there are many online communities that are seen to promote racism and hatred based comments against the ethnic communities in Australia (Mansouri, and Lobo, 2011). When the number of online websites is compared, it is seen that the overall number of websites that promote racism are more than the number of websites that demote racism. These online communities are not the source of the change, which is needed in the case of racism. Much more is needed on the society and community level (Zamudio and Rios, 2006).

Changes are needed on the policy and the political level. There is a need that new and better policies are designed with the help of which the issue of racism can be combatted. It has been seen that not much attention is being given by the policymakers to the level of disadvantages that are being faced by the Aboriginals living in Australia. Healthcare is the main and fundamental rights of the ethnic communities in Australia. Improper access to healthcare is an important issue for the Aboriginals and Islanders that is causing an increase in frustration in these communities. On the political level, the issues of these ethnic communities are not being addressed in a proper manner. Thus, once the community based and individual needs of the mentioned disadvantaged groups are understood at the political level, the understanding can then be transmitted at the level of community (Chiang, Low and Collins, 2013).

What has been done to reduce disadvantaged groups' marginalization

The main policy that has been known to deal with racism and marginalization of the communities and groups is The International Labor Organization's Convention No 107. It deals with the integration as well as integration of tribal as well as semi tribal populations in all independent countries. The convention was concluded in 1957. It is the only convention that deals with the protection of the rights of the indigenous populations (Mellor, 2003). All Australian states have been known to ratify to this convention but Australian government has not ratified to the convention. The main explanation that has been provided by the Australian government is that there are many outdated concepts given in the convention. These concepts include integration, which as explained by the Australian government does not link with the policy of the Australian government to recognize the basic rights of the Aboriginals (Price, 2012). The Australian government has claimed that the convention is not fully compatible with the policies for the protection of the community and social rights of the Aboriginals in Australia. However, the Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination understand the Australian policies based on which complete ratification has been shown by the Australian government to these conventions (Zamudio and Rios, 2006).

The second main policy includes Article 27 of The Civil and Political Rights Covenant. In accordance to this article, the Aborigines are considered as the members of the ethnic and racial minorities who have complete freedom and rights to enjoy their lives in complete freedom. An important flaw in this article is that there are no clear indications of the positive duties that are being imposed. The article has highlighted that the aborigines have complete rights to family life, making sure that these communities can live with complete religious freedom (Ishikida, 2005).

In these cases, there is a need that a better understanding of the rights of the Indigenous communities is ensured. For this, there is a need of a more comprehensive United Nations Declaration or Covenant on the Rights of Minorities, more specifically the Indigenous populations. However, the progress in these cases is extremely slow. the current position for the suggestions of change mention that there is a need that Australia fully understands the customary rights of the Aboriginals, as the international obligations cannot be considered the reason for any lesser understanding (Healey, 2003).

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