IMPORTANT THEORIES ON RACIAL ISSUES

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Abstract
Some writers of worldwide fame handled the theme of "racism" in there literature. The eminent writers like Joseph Conrad, E.M. Forster, Ralph Ellison, Jean Rhys and Toni Morrison wrote on the different views, attitudes, concepts, prejudice and some concrete solutions.
Key words: Attitude, language, prejudice, race, group, privilege

Introduction:
Joseph Conrad is an English novelist (1857-1927) who is considered a racist because of the language and images he used in his work to describe African people. Throughout his novella *The Heart of Darkness (1902),* he describes Africans as brutes who should be exterminated. It is full of racist words, especially the word 'nigger' and actions. In his novella, he portrayed the European as the civilized species that gave themselves the right to loot and plunder the Africans. E.M. Forster is an English writer (1879-1970) shows the cruel treatment of the ruler or colonizer toward the colonized in their own homeland. In his novel *A Passage to India*, he shows different types of discrimination between the British and Indian people. For example, there are certain places in India where Indians are prohibited from entering since it is the place where the British colonizers meet each other, such as the club. The majority of the British in India believe that it is normal for an Indian man to commit a crime because they are considered as savages because of their race.

Toni Morrison is an American writer who shed light upon four issues. First, she focuses on the impact of racist practices upon black people. Second, she talks about the feelings of Africans about being different from other races. Third, she describes black people's suffering as being considered inferior to other races. Fourth, she recaptures some humiliating and inhumane experiences that black people suffer from. Her famous novels that discuss these issues are *The Bluest Eyes* and *Beloved.* In her novel *Beloved*, the protagonist still has the marks of whipping upon her back.

Discussion:
In the 19th century a whole range of theories emerged that explained all human variation on the basis of innate racial characteristics.

Critical race theory developed in the 1960's and early 1970's in a period when fresh approaches were essential to deal with new types of racism that were gaining ground. The forefather of critical race theory, law professor, Derrick Bell recognised the race dilemma and centred many of his works on racism. This theory alters the preconceived thoughts of racism by providing a fresh angle in addressing the "ordinariness" of racism and racial differentiation within a society. Racism is often regarded as a very ordinary and normal issue in society, demonstrating the usual, accepted way of life and representing the common experience of individuals in society, whether they are of colour or not. Critical race theory also examines how society has constructed and stereotyped the black individual in society.

Critical race theory further provides an account of how stereotypes develop in society and how these stereotypes can change over time.

A ***cultural studies*** theory refers to a person's way of life. Every individual deems his/her culture the best and most appropriate way of living; hence it can be offered that people view cultures as hierarchical. This cultural bias provides a basis for inequality, as it promotes the domination of one class/group over another, and also acts as a means of acquiring oppositional points of view to those in dominance.

The hierarchical relationship between the black African people and the white people can be attributed to that of puppet and puppeteer. In the *Oxford School Dictionary*, a puppet is defined as "a kind of doll that can be made to move by working it with strings and wires, whose actions are controlled by someone else" .One can immediately see the analogy: the role of the black African person was that of a puppet, as he/she was on the strings controlled by the puppeteer. Clearly, the puppeteers were the ruling power who orchestrated every political and social movement of the oppressed group, thus mediating every aspect of their restricted lives.

Ian Lopez ,in his book " *The social construction of Race: Some observation on Illusion fabrication and Choice* ," mentioned critical race theory that examines the social construction of race and tackles the wide-spread debate concerning the origins of race and its distinctions that have been the foundation of racist policies. He illustrates his point by focusing on two distinct races, blacks and whites, and how these two groups are in fact formed by the strength of social beliefs in a society rather than by natural differentiation or biological factors. In addition, research indicates that diverse races are not genetically distinct branches of humankind, therefore reinforcing the social nature of race.

Netherland theorist Teun van Dijk in his extensive work on ***Critical Discourse Studies***, advances a theory of ideology further endorses Lopez's argument and is useful to explain the dynamics of racism and the maintenance of minority white rule for the purposes of this paper.

Louis Althusser rejects the idea that the economic base of society determines the entire cultural superstructure. Althusser argues that the economic situation of individuals does not result in distinct cultures or groups. According to him, ideology is a dynamic process constantly reproduced and reconstituted in practice. Therefore the ways in which people think, act and understand themselves and their relationship to society is vital to ideologies. At the core of this theory he lays emphasis on state apparatuses such as the social institutions of media, family, the educational system, language and the political system as crucial in the reproduction of ideology. In addition, he maintains that these institutions produce the tendency for people to think and behave in socially acceptable forms.

Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of linguistic signs can further highlight these ideologies based on inequality. He pays particular attention to the *sign*, the *signifier* and the *signified.*

Althusser also emphasises the role played by social institutions and language in the construction of the individual. In order to explain these influences, he uses the terms "interpellation" and "hailing". Based on this, the first progress we make in communicating with another person is to shout or call loudly to them in greeting or to attract their attention.

Fundamental to this concept is that people "hail" each other differently, according to who they are, and their age and status in society.

Van Dijk asserts that social interaction, presented in the form of discourse and speech, takes place in every social structure in society. The social interaction is essential to this theory as the relations that people have with other members of society is then conceptualized according to a cognitive system or memory. In this cognitive system, van Dijk distinguishes between short term memory and long term memory, with each implementing a specific function in the system as a whole. Decoding and interpretation takes place in the short term memory, while the long term memory serves as a holder of socio-cultural knowledge of language, discourse, communication, persons, groups and events existing in the form of scripts.

Frantz Fanon was interested in racial differences, "and his thinking brings together insights into psychology and a concern for the effects of domination on subjugated peoples" (Fanon, "The Negro and Psychopathology" 462). He examines the effects of white authority on the subjugated black people of society by incorporating his knowledge of psychology and the working of the human brain into the argument. Fanon affirms that "there are close connections between the structures of the family and the structure of the nation" (Fanon, "The Negro and Psychopathology" 462). It is for this reason that the characteristics and qualities of the family are projected onto the social environment in which they reside.

Bessel van der Kolk and Alexander McFarlane offer an account of how traumatic experiences can damage a persons' mind, occasionally causing permanent damage to the psyche. These psychiatrists commence their argument by stating that although experiencing trauma is an essential part of being human and are an inescapable part of human life; all people are not similar in their reactions when faced with difficulties pertaining to emotions and trauma (van der Kolk & McFarlane 487). Some individuals are able to adapt in order to cope with traumatic events in an attempt to resume their lives as normally as possible. Other individuals become fixated on the trauma experienced, causing them to lead lives that are continually affected by the distress. For these individuals it is difficult to lead a healthy normal life as the trauma becomes the centre of their world (van der Kolk & McFarlane 487).

Important to this study is how traumatic experiences can change a person's psychological, biological and social equilibrium to such an extent that the memory of one particular event comes to contaminate all other experiences, causing the individual to dwell on that experience and pay no attention to the present (van der Kolk & McFarlane 488). This inability to deal with trauma has been termed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which provides a way of understanding how a person's biology, personality and conception of the world are intertwined and shaped by experience (van der Kolk & McFarlane 488). They state: the PTSD diagnosis has reintroduced the notion that many neurotic symptoms are not the results of some mysterious, well-nigh inexplicable, genetically based irrationality, but of people's

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inability to come to terms with real experiences that have overwhelmed their capacity to cope. (488)

Conclusion:
Study of racial inequality represents the true picture of social, economical and political life. It was the need of whites to have different racial groups to elevate their superior status and the advancement of their economic well being.

Cultural racism provides a basis for inequality, as it promotes the domination of one group over another, and also acts as a means of acquiring oppositional points of view to those in dominance.

The study further investigates the effect of the prejudice from the childhood which converts normal character to xenophobic character. Black characters were discriminated by the white xenophobic characters that caused them to be exposed to extreme stress and trauma.

The *Institutional Racism* upsurges whites as they have many economic, political and social opportunities available to utilize in order to be better themselves in the society as there was a white government in power. On the contrary, blacks have no such opportunities and government places restrictions on them in all spheres of their lives and suppresses their own social power and wealth in the fictional societies.

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