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**RAPE AND RACISM**

 Rape and racism are huge issues that plagues the world today. It is a worldwide issue and is not specific to any one country. First of All, I will focus on Rape in a particular before I talk about racism. Before moving on, What is Rape? There have been many definitions put out there to define rape but I will just go with a particular one. Rape is when sexual intercourse is non-consensual or in other words when a person forces another person to have sex against his or her will. Rape is not specific to any gender, age, race or country and has a huge impact on the individual as well as the society as a whole.

 There are various types of rape which include gang rape (occurs when two or more perpetrators act together to sexually assault the same victim), date rape (this refers to assaults experienced by victims from the person they are on a date with), substance and facilitated rape (occurs when alcohol or drugs are used to compromise an individual’s ability to consent to sexual ability) statutory rape (an unlawful intercourse with a minor) and so on.

According to statistics, women have the highest number of reported case which makes people believe that women are the ones who are mostly harassed or are mostly victims of rape which may be true to an extent but that doesn’t mean that men too are not also sexually harassed. There have been various myths surrounding the issue of rape which sometimes causes the survivors to feel ashamed and refuse to report the case. When growing up I was used to being told this saying “it is the way you are dressed that you are addressed. Also, that you should dress according to the place or event you are going to. Like for instance, if am going to work am expected to dress corporate or at least something casual but not exposing but that is not a good reason for any human to be raped.

 As of recent, the have been increase of reported cases on rape some which may have happened years back but have just spoken out now. In this modern age, girls who are more outgoing or bold and wear clothes that show a little bit of skin are usually blamed for sending wrong signals to men, thus making them vulnerable to rape. some people even believe that girls send mixed signals like they might say no but in reality they mean yes but that is not entirely true.

 Recently there was a case of a girl named UWA who went to church to read and was reported to have died after being gang raped and beaten by a group of guys. I actually read the news on twitter before it was said on the news on television and I came across the comment section. Some kept blaming her and saying she was not decently dressed and that what was she looking for in a church and that time. some people even went as far as to say that she wanted it and that if she didn’t she would not be there. We are a country that is growing and claims to be enlightened and we still have this mindset about an issue that might just happen in a matter of seconds but can destroy the individual’s life for a long time if not for the rest of his or her life. That’s really disappointing.

 The effect of rape on a survivor is not only physical but also psychological. Most victims have been reported to have bruises, post-traumatic stress disorder(PTSD) including nightmares and severe anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, dissociation (not being able to focus on their day to day activities), inability to trust people and may get pregnant due to the crime. They also experience self-blame for allowing the crime to happen, they start to have negative outlook to things and some may even feel used and damaged. Most importantly, they start to live in fear. For a male victim it leaves them powerless because they believe they have lost their pride, masculinity and self-worth.

 Rape is one of the most underreported crimes because most victims are ashamed and embarrassed and fear that they may not be believed. Some are afraid that the justice system would not do anything and that the perpetrator would retaliate and even when they decide to report the case it takes a long period of time people justice can be served. It even takes years for some to finally get justice.

 Rape has a huge impact on the society also. It is not good for our children to live in fear or for our girls and boys to not be able to go out without having to watch their backs or not being able to trust anyone. The world at large needs to stop believing in some of the myths surrounding rape as most are not true. The society should be able to provide emotional support for these victims and help them out in anyway instead of judging and putting the blame on them. We should also teach our kids the importance of a woman or man’s consent and also to teach them to always respect everyone despite of their gender and race.

 It is time all humans demand changes to all countries that perpetrate such injustices worldwide. it is time for us to change our mindset towards rape. It is time to provide the education and information and encourage discussions that will change society’s attitude towards rape and find ways to eradicate the intolerable and social issue once and for all. It is time for us to seek justice for every rape victim out there and finally to let the world know that a man or woman’s body is not just for pleasure but is also more than that.

 Rape sometimes can also be a hate crime which brings me to my second topic RACISM. Racism not a new phenomenon, however in today’s modern world which claims to be enlightened in so many ways, it can come as a surprise that it still exists and even thrives within our society. While many people are happy to embrace diversity and differences between those of different religions and colors, there are many others who see those of other races as threats. Before moving on, lets define racism. Racism is an act of prejudice, discrimination, antagonism directed against someone of a different race or color.

 We often see signs of racism in the society we live in. Families of a particular race or color living in poverty and poor conditions not being able to rise out of their predicament due to the prejudice of employers keeping them in low paid positions or people of a particular race being unfairly pursed by the justice system and given harsher sentences for their crime or sometimes being prosecuted for crimes that they have not committed or those from certain backgrounds being unable to attend the best schools and therefore unable to get the right qualifications to be able to advance and progress into higher jobs.

 Individuals who experience racism in their everyday life find that they become limited. They become afraid and tend to have low self-esteem. Some become aggressive and resentful and turn to criminal behaviours in an attempt fight back against injustice. It also has a huge impact on the mental health on young people who experience it which includes; feelings of sadness and anger, depression and being left out, constant fear of being verbally or physically attacked, having little or no trust in anybody apart from their families. It also reduces their desire to pursue their goals and sometimes leads to suicide.

 In a society that is culturally diverse, racism creates an environment where people don’t trust and respect each other. It affects the culture and well-being of the society, causing economic and moral upheaval. If racism is allowed to thrive in a society, there will be hatred within members of the society. Members of the society will not be able to appreciate the similarities and differences between them which will eventually lead to aggression and even violence. For instance, in the case of George Floyd who was brutally killed by a police officer who knelt on his neck for 10 minutes in Minneapolis, a huge protest occurred worldwide and also violence indicating that if racism continues to thrive within members of a society there will be violence and lack of peace.

 It is important to note that no matter how much a society tries to separate the different races within the society, it is important to know that at the end people of different races and colors must interact. For a peaceful and violent free society, people must learn how to tolerate and understand those who are different from themselves. We should start by teaching our children from a very young age to respect, tolerate, value and love everyone and anyone irrespective of their race or color.