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**RACISM**

**Racism is the belief that groups of humans possess different behavioral traits corresponding to physical appearance and can be divided based on superiority of one race over another. It may also mean prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against other people because they are of a different race or ethnicity. Modern variants of racism are often based in social perceptions of biological differences between people. These views can take the form of social actions, practices, or beliefs of political systems in which different races are ranked as inherently superior or inferior to each other based on presumed shared, inheritable traits, abilities, or qualities. In terms of political systems (for example apartheid) that support the expression of prejudice or aversion in discriminatory practices or laws, racist ideology may include associated social aspects such as nativism, xenophobia, otherness, segregation, hierarchical ranking and supremacism.**

Diseases on outbreaks have long been used to rationalize xenophobia: HIV was blamed on Haitian Americans, the 1918 influenza pandemic on German Americans, the swine flu in 2009 on Mexican Americans. The racist belief that Asians carry disease goes back centuries. In the 1800s, out of fear that Chinese workers were taking jobs that could be held by white workers, white labor unions argued for an immigration ban by claiming that ‘Chinese' disease strains where more harmful than those carried by white people. Today, as the US struggles to combat a global pandemic that has taken the lives of more than one hundred and twenty thousand Americans and put millions out of work. President Donald Trump, who has referred to COVID-19 as the ‘Chinese virus' and more recently the ‘Kung flu,’ has helped normalize anti-Asian xenophobia, stoking public hysteria and racist attacks.

There has also been anti-Chinese xenophobia attacks which is very rampant in the UK. For some Chinese who have spent their entire lives in Britain, they now feel like outsiders in the UK as racism continues to climb. Over half of the four hundred and twelve people surveyed said they had experienced discrimination during the COVID-19 outbreak. Three in 10 said they had witnessed or experienced discrimination at the workplace, while thirty seven percent said they had been victims of discrimination outside the office. The report also noted how Chinese restaurants and food takeout establishments had abusive notices hung on their windows and doors, affecting business even before the lockdown. At the workplace, discrimination was most subtle, but also common. Chinese students in the UK were shocked by the COVID-19 racist attacks and we are afraid to go outside even before the lockdown was ordered in late March.

There is racial discrimination based on color which is also known as colorism or shadeism, is a form of prejudice or discrimination usually from members of the same race in which people are treated differently based on the social implications from cultural meanings attached to skin color.

When people think of racism it is usually against people outside of their ethnicity. Colorism highlights biases that proliferate between persons of either different or even identical ethnicity. It is the belief that someone with any degree of lighter complexion is considered to be more beautiful or valuable than someone with dark skin.

Research has found extensive evidence of discrimination based on skin color in criminal justice, business, the economy, housing, health care, media, and politics in the United States and Europe. Lighter skin tones are seen as preferable in many countries in Africa, Asia and South America.

There is a current case which occurred on May 25,2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, was killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota, during an arrest for allegedly using a counterfeit bill. Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, knelt on Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes. Floyd’s death triggered demonstrations and protests in over two thousand U.S cities and around the world against police brutality, police racism, and lack of police accountability.

Why are people racist? It’s a question people ask all the time. After all, there are no biological differences between people. No race is superior or inferior to another. But then there are many reasons why people can have racist attitudes and a few would be explained.

People taking on the views of others around them: When family members or friends express racist opinions, it’s common that people will take on those views. The problem is that until something is done it can stay with one for a lifetime.

Being quick to judge others: Putting labels on people because of what they do. Not getting to know people from different racial backgrounds and find out how much we have in common.

Hanging around only people ‘‘like us'': It’s normal to want to spend time with people that have the same interests, background, culture and language. It creates a sense of belonging that is really important. The downside is that it can also set up differences between other groups and, over time, this might lead one to think that ones group is better than others.

Racism has diverse effects on us as a nation and as individuals.

Some effects of racism on us as individuals are low self esteem, physiological effects, psychological effects, lack of expression of opinions, hatred amongst one another, fighting and so on.

Some effects on us as a nation include war, disagreement amongst nations, lack of trust, loss of jobs, insecurity and so on.

Even as it has these effects on us, there are ways we could prevent racism which includes;

Not taking the abuse: Everyone, no matter their nationality or race is, has a right to live happily and free from discrimination. So when one is being a victim of racism the main thing is to ignore as there’s no need to retaliate or respond because ones safety is important.

Keeping evidence: Keeping a diary of what’s been happening and how it’s affecting oneself is another way to stop racism. So that whenever any action is taken the would be evidence to help the case.

Supporting others: If anyone around is being a victim of racism one can help to support the person. Just asking if they are doing alright and letting them know what was seen was wrong can really help. One could help report it if they want and offer to be a witness.

There are so many ways racism could be prevented and stopped because it is wrong as it is also illegal to treat people differently because of their race or culture.