

Civil Rights Act Of 1964

Posted on September 29, 2018

The pervasive augment of the American population during the 20th Century led to increased discrimination and segregation in businesses and society. A lot of people from minority groups were discriminated against and segregated in various areas, including workplaces, schools, hospitals and other social amenities. The inequalities and injustices were mainly based on race, sex, national origin, color, and religion. Activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. and other concerned parties joined forces and formed movements in the quest to pursue equality for all in the United States. The struggle continued with demonstrations, marches, and violence that always led to undesirable consequences as the police engaged the protesters. It was some of these inhumane occurrences that promoted President J.F. Kennedy to propose the Civil Rights legislation in June 1963 that outlawed discrimination and segregation of people by color, race, national origin, sex, and religion (Act, 1964). However, the president faced a lot of resistance concerning the bill from the people and some congress members who felt that they were not ready to have equal civil rights with the African-Americans concerning employment and public places. He was assassinated in November 1963 and automatically succeeded by his vice-president Lyndon B. Johnson.

Policy Description

History

President Johnson's efforts, together with the growing protests mobilized by civil rights leader Martin Luther, led to the passage of the bill to a law that was signed on July 2, 1964. However, before the signing, the concerned parties faced a lot of personal and political challenges and conflicts from those who opposed the bill, particularly the white Americans in the Congress and Senate. President Johnson was aware that he needed to be strategic and dedicated to ensuring that the legislation passed the congressional committee and the legislature because it was not easy considering the opposition from the Republicans and a section of southern democrats. Unlike Kennedy, he stood a better position to make the bill into a law successfully (Costly, 2018). First, he had been operating as the majority leader of the Senate for many years and also he had full exposure to the Congress and how it functioned. Second, Johnson is known for his compromising strategies in the administration that earned him significant close relationships with senate members and various representatives from both the Republican and Democratic Parties. He even threatened some individuals, such as Senator Russell of Georgia, of going personal with him for his continued protest against the bill. Furthermore, he used the assassination of his predecessor to his advantage by luring people to support the bill as a way of preserving Kennedy's legacy. Eventually, persistence, commitment, political strategies, and skills saw the passage of one of the most significant bills in American history into law.

The Civil Rights Act changed the history of the democratic United States. The law was based on ten different significant features where each element had its declarations. It banned all forms of discrimination and segregation in various places, including public accommodations such as hotels, courthouses, restaurants, hospitals, parks, and schools. Additionally, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act granted all races in the US equal job opportunities and employment rights and freedoms. In ensuring that the federal law was effective in the country, various features were added to enable the protection and prosecution of the offenders (Costly, 2018). However, there are those who were not satisfied with its passage, and they took it to the Supreme Court to appeal, though they were unable to provide sufficient evidence to facilitate its termination. The petitioners included the Atlanta Motel's owner. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was an opening to other federal laws, including the [Voting Rights and Fair Housing Acts](#) of 1965 and 1968, respectively.

Current Situation

The federal act is governed and regulated by the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC), which ensures there is no discrimination or segregation of anybody in the workplace or any public setting. Also, the Fair Employment Practice Agencies (FEPAs) within the states are responsible for making sure that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 declarations are followed and respected. Some of its features that are most recognized by the EEOC are Title IV that prohibits segregation in public schools, Title V that gives act more responsibilities and Title VI that ensures that there is no discrimination in the distribution of finances by the federal-funded programs and institutions. Title VII is the main feature included in the act that provides anyone with the right to file a lawsuit if discriminated against or segregated in public amenities or at the workplace due to his or her color, race, sex, national origin or religion. The EEOC is mandated with investigating and suing the employers who violate the declarations of the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act on behalf of the employees. Over the years, various pieces of legislation related to the CRA of 1964 have been enacted, including the most recent of 2015, the Equality Act. Moreover, the act currently accommodates the rights of various minority groups in society, including the elderly, pregnant women and disabled individuals in the US. Its 50th anniversary was recently recognized and celebrated in 2014 in Austin, Texas, with several former American presidents, including Carter, Clinton, Bush, and Obama, attending. Martin Luther and Coretta Scott King were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal as a way of marking the celebration.

The Rationale Of The Public Policy

Background Reasons

President John F. Kennedy proposed the passing of the Bill of Civil Rights Act after he saw the hardships the African Americans went through, including being killed by the anti-riot law enforcers as they tried to plead with the government to grant them equal opportunities as the white people in the

US. He sympathized with such situations and decided that there was a need to establish a law that enabled everyone to enjoy equal rights and freedoms in America. Also, Kennedy did not like the way the people lived in the country where others were considered to be superior to others, and he saw this as a bad impression and international embarrassment to other countries. Similarly, Lyndon Johnson followed in his predecessor's footsteps. He was more compassionate and vigorous regarding the bill since he had been attracted by the unrelenting and persistent struggle by the African-Americans to demand full recognition and equality. Hence, he was ready to battle it out with the legislation's resisters until it became law under the United States Constitution and the minority groups were granted the rights they deserved.

Basic Reasons

The primary reasons for the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were to put an everlasting end to discrimination and segregation of minority groups and citizens living in the United States of America. The fight and struggle against inequality and injustice at the workplace and social amenities had been long enough. Also, a significant number of people had lost their lives, and the concerned individuals and groups, including Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and leaders such as Martin Luther, among others, felt that it was time to end the conflicts (*The, 2018*). The signing of the bill into federal law was the only solution to these problematic issues, and its passage granted African Americans and other minorities in the US the equality they had anticipated for many decades. Although discrimination and segregation didn't end, at least the marching, demonstrations, and protests were reduced in the country.

Analysis Of The Policy's Efficacy

Experiences with various individuals, mainly the African-Americans who lived before the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its multiple statutes, including Titles IV, V, VI, and VII, it is evident that the policy has had a significant impact on the people of the United States. Most of these individuals agree that the federal law has improved the lives of people, particularly those from minority groups that could not access specific resources and amenities due to discrimination and segregation. William Walker, a retired civil rights leader, is one of the African-American individuals who can affirm that the policy has had a significant contribution to a more democratic country compared to the time before the enactment of the Civil Rights Act. During the 1950s, as a college kid, he would travel to Indiana to look for a job because he could not be offered any in the South due to the pervasive segregation that had dominated the country at the time. Today, his grandsons can freely access scholarships and internships without being discriminated against or segregated because of their color or race. John Lewis Jr. is another African-American who is now a lawyer and Chief Officer at Coca-Cola, whose mother had a chance to work in a furniture store in Texas as the only black person in the business. Before 1964, when the federal policy was enacted, Lewis' mother could not have gotten that particular job.

According to a survey conducted in 1999, only over three decades after the enactment of the Civil Rights Act, it is evident from the results obtained that the federal policy immediately began transforming the US and how the people interacted with one another (Leonard, 2018). Some of the results obtained from the study include the following;

1. African-Americans' school dropouts had significantly decreased from 20% in 1976 to 13% in 1996.
2. The percentage of African Americans graduating from high school gradually increased in the 1990s. 66% and 75% of individuals had gone through and completed high school in 1990 and 1997, respectively.
3. There was an increase of 61% of students from minority groups enrolling in colleges and universities between 1986 and 1996.
4. In the years 1972, 1992 and 1995, there was a gradual increase of 15%, 34%, and 37%, respectively of the female students in athletics in colleges.
5. There was a 48% increase in the number of African Americans that received doctorates in 1996 from 1987 when 1,563 of them were awarded.

According to other surveyors, in 2014, minority groups constituted 35% of the total private industries' workforce compared to 25% in 1996 (*Title, 2018*). Although women and people living with disabilities in the US are still under-represented in the corporate world in higher positions and best-paying jobs, the percentages cannot be compared to 50 years ago because there has been a gradual increase in their representation.

However, the [civil rights](#) legislation has not entirely achieved the anticipated expectations of individuals like President Kennedy, Johnson and civil rights leader King Jr. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics figures in 2014 showed that a woman earns 82 cents when a man is getting 1 dollar in the same job position, while in 1975, women got 75 cents per 1 dollar paid to male employees. Reports and recent occurrences illustrate situations that depict that racial segregation and discrimination are yet to be wiped out of the US. White police officers are progressively reported for killing unarmed black men or women to be later declared innocent by the courts. African Americans still go through some difficulties like those before the enactment of the Civil Rights of 1964. Three-quarters of black students still attend poor and segregated public schools. Careers that are black-dominated earn less compared to those that have white dominance. In 2010, the reports released illustrated that the black professions got 73 cents compared to 1 dollar among those of the whites.

Implementation

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 federal policy is implemented through Title VI. It is one of its major features that declares that no one should be discriminated against in matters and programs that are funded using federal finances. Everybody is equally entitled to these programs regardless of one's color, race, national origin, religion or sex. The federal agencies are responsible for ensuring that they

identify the elements that are under Title VI. Once these agencies have determined the relevant projects and programs specified by the act, they are supposed to ensure they execute their roles efficiently (Office, 2018). The justice department's role is to assist federal agencies to sufficiently and efficiently perform their responsibilities by enforcing the laws established and prosecuting the offenders of these statutes. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) of the US plays a significant role in making sure that the agencies are aware and accountable for their responsibilities regarding the Title VI declarations in the Civil Rights Act. Hence, in case of inaccuracy or unclear circumstances where the agencies are not aware of their duties, GAO has the authority to direct the Attorney General to instruct the Justice Civil Rights Division to highlight and clarify anything that the federal agencies do not understand. Hence, the policy is implemented, and its progress is tracked by various agencies that have different responsibilities regarding the execution to ensure that each party plays its role sufficiently and efficiently. In summary, the federal agencies are the implementers, the Department of Justice is the enforcer and prosecutor, and the GAO is the examiner of how the act is implemented. Concerning this, each party is held accountable by the federal government when the declarations of the policy are not fully and efficiently executed.

Evaluation

The above figures from the analysis of the act's efficacy are a small representation that illustrates the impacts the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has had in the US, mainly in the inclusion of minority groups in the various resources that are funded by the federal government. Before the act was passed, it was difficult for a woman or an African-American to acquire a job in white-dominated workplaces, but years later, this was possible, as in the case of Lewis's mother. Also, a person from minority citizen getting a scholarship or internship was a thing that was far from impossible in the years before 1964, but now these benefits can be offered free to anyone regardless of their race, color, national origin, religion or sex, as in the case of William Walker's grandsons. Further, the results from the 1999 survey indicate the efficacy of the civil rights policy since its enactment in 1964. The report indicates the significant transformation the Civil Rights has brought in the lives of individuals comprising the minority groups in the US. The figures show a gradual increase after a certain period, and it is an indication that the African-Americans and other minorities, including Latinos, took advantage of the federal policy to better their lives and obtain what they were denied before due to discrimination and segregation. For instance, an increase of 61% in black Americans' enrollment in colleges is a clear indication that they just lacked the appropriate opportunity to study and further their education. Also, women have significantly benefitted from the law as the survey illustrates that more women were college athletes compared to the earlier years. Women can access public amenities, including education and sports, following the act's directive of anti-discrimination on a sex basis. Considering that the survey was conducted almost two decades ago, it is evident that women are proportionally represented in education and sports. Furthermore, currently, everybody has the freedom to participate in any athletic game without any restrictions from any individual or agency. By this, it indicates that the country has become more civilized unlike in the early 20th century when women

were not considered eligible for certain activities such as sports and education.

Additionally, the percentage of the minority groups' participation in the private corporation has significantly augmented from almost 0.1% to nearly 50% since the enactment of the Civil Rights Act in 1964. Initially, citizens from minority groups were not allowed in private businesses because of their color, race, national origin, sex or religion, but five decades later, these sectors dominated 35% of the initially segregated and discriminated people (*Title, 2018*). This implies that the initial perception of minorities has changed over the years, and the whites, who were the segregators and discriminators, are now recognizing and respecting other American citizens and their economic and social contributions to the country. Also, the changes in the figures show that the interaction between white people and other minority groups has improved as they now can work and function together with one primary agenda without either party confronting or conflicting with the other. Moreover, it illustrates an enhanced level of civilization that has been mainly influenced by the enactment of the Civil Rights Acts, and it is an indication that with more combined efforts, the remaining cases of discrimination and segregation will be entirely eradicated in the United States.

The implementation of the 1964 federation policy has contributed positively to the transformation of the US, but unfortunately, it has been unable to bring an end to segregation and discrimination completely. Some regions are still facing the adverse effects of segregation and discrimination of minorities by white people. A significant percentage of African Americans are still living in poor and abandoned sub-urban while their fellow white citizens are living in middle-class neighborhoods. Why are the blacks and whites not living together? The answer to such a question is simple, and that is because there is still racial segregation in the country. Although there are people from the minority groups that are living luxuriously in the country, the percentage of poor people among the minorities is still high compared to that of the whites. By this, it indicates that the country needs to do more if there is to be equality as were the intentions in 50 years ago when the federal law was being enacted. Moreover, women are still discriminated against by their male counterparts in the corporate world and in businesses in various parts of the country. Why should a man be earning 1 dollar while his female counterpart in the same job position is making 82 cents? It is an illustration that equality is still lacking in America because if it existed, a woman would be earning the same as a man. Also, the justice department has yet to recognize the equality between whites and other minorities, including African-Americans. A white law enforcement officer can openly shoot a black person in front of cameras but still be declared innocent, while a Latino woman can be found in possession of a gun and be sentenced to several years in jail. Where is the justice and equality in that? Undoubtedly, there is none, and that is an implication that the country has a long way to go before the goals and objectives of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 are fully achieved.

Recommendations

Over five decades might have been a lot of time to achieve the objectives of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but that has not been done since only a small percentage has been completed. Probably, some

think that they have had enough of what they were seeking and there is no need to ask for more. However, that is not the case because the African-American community, together with other minorities, has to complete the mission given to them by the likes of Martin Luther and Malcolm X when they were fighting for the equality of the black person in America. They played their part, and the federal law that prevents discrimination and segregation of black people and other minorities was passed, allowing them the same and equal rights to whites. The modern African-American is different from the one that lived during the early 20th century. A black person now has political and economic powers that can be used to ensure that they are given the rightful places in their country. They should take advantage of this influence to completely eradicate the modern discrimination and segregation against their people by the white people.

Furthermore, there are lots of African Americans who are educated compared to the 1950s and 1960s and who have the capabilities of making further changes in the implementation of the federation policy passed in 1964. More amendments can be made to it to favor their interests and be done with the existing modern discrimination and segregation. The educated and elite in the community should be at the frontline, fighting for the interests of their fellow men and women who are still under the superiority of the white people. Thus, by combining efforts, more changes will be seen on the face of America, where there will be total equity and justice for everyone regardless of color, race, origin, sex or religion, as it was the primary objective of the enactment of the Civil Rights Acts in 1964.

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