

Social Disapproval of Interracial Marriages and the Difficulties their Children Confront

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Introduction

The institution of family can be attributed as universal due to its significance and ease. Each and every one of the world's cultural groups organize themselves into basic familial units of families. From the African tribes to American cities, the family is the backbone of the social structure. The establishment of this basic structure is based on the performance of marriage, which can be defined as the arrangement of some ritual indicating the approval of mates. Ethnic and racial groups decide how the institution of marriage will be formed. If rules exist for persons to marry within the same ethnic group, then it is known as endogamy and prohibits interracial marriage. This is mostly the case worldwide, where informal laws and norms govern marriage decisions. The most common example of this is the USA where marriage in the ethnic group is considered the norm. Exceptions do, however, exist.

Contrastingly, exogamy is identified as the norm of marrying outside the racial group. The most common reasons and channels for marriage include age, social class, education, and ethnicity. In the past years, the ratio of interracial marriages has risen to 8 %. (*Henslin, 2013*) These marriages were once considered taboo and norm-shattering that they were illegal and banned in more than 40 states of the USA. Some states even imprisoned the couple.

Exceptions did exist, but it took the uprising of the 1960s to topple the balances. The US Supreme Court struck the laws banning such marriages in 1967. But the practices of centuries are difficult to break in decades and ingrained in daily life exercises.

Interracial Marriages

The younger generation of the contemporary era is more open to inter-ethnic dating, relationships, and romantic endeavors than their ancestors. However, research has shown that adolescents experience greater risks of facing challenges and difficulties at the hands of their peers. Instances of informal sanctions have been reported when the romantic association involves a Black partner. (Baton et. al., 2006)

Such partnerships are often limited to cohabiting unions rather than marriage. The trend indicates that it is likely for Black men and White women to be together, then the other way around. The tendency of ethnic Blacks and non-White Puerto Ricans to get married is higher than that of [African](#)

Americans in the same group.

According to another study, all combinations of interracial marriages including White, Black, Asian, and Hispanic are not any more likely to end up in divorce than any other high-risk groups. Such couples face tremendous negativity and discrimination at the hands of society regarding every aspect of their life whether it be divorce, legality in the eyes of religion, violence, or inability to raise a coherent family. This tendency stoops to an ever-low in the case of White women who have married different ethnic husbands including [racial profiling](#) at the hands of peers and society, inferior servicing, and racism directed against their children. (Zhang & Hook, 2009)

Interracial families do not characterize a regular population. They vary in demographic features, social-cultural history, relational and family dynamics, and acclimatization strategies. The equation of power difference accounts for the [challenges faced by the couples and their children](#), so much so that they may develop an identity crisis. They may face difficulty associating with one particular group due to societal pressures and discrimination. The racial profiling procedures prevalent in the society included immigration laws, anti-miscegenation, segregation laws, and multi-racial activism. These incidents have contributed immensely to the power differences, resulting in social challenges for the offspring of such couples.

Acceptance of such couples has increased from 43% to 83%, but covert forms of discrimination at the school level and public level still exist. The recognition movement such as the multiracial movement and the marriage market of Latin immigrants and Asians has greatly enhanced the scenario. The election of a biracial president to the post of the President of the USA is evidence of acceptance.

Identity Development and Crisis

Identity formation is a challenge for couples as well as the children of such couples due to social disapproval of such amalgam families and the long prevalent racial stresses between majority and minority groups. The formation of identity and association is an adaptive and fluid procedure unfolding over a span of time in reaction to contextual limitations. Sometimes, the partners themselves exhibit actions of discrimination against their spouses, which is evidence of the level of ingrained bias towards the other race. Scientists have conducted research and work continuously toward programs to accept and integrate such families into society.

To develop a couple's identity, the interracial couple has to develop awareness of the racial histories and perspectives of the groups and work on reconciliation. Recognizing and managing the strength of the dominant partner is crucial to the relationship's success. Handling racial challenges and showing support for the partner is the next step. Defense and survival are key to maintaining the relationship.

Later, these defensive mechanisms transform into proactive defense mechanisms by relational imaging and deconstruction of stereotypes. In the maintenance stage, couples resume engagement in racial and interracial gatherings of the family. As they face unusual social circumstances, they acquire

new abilities and dexterities by reconstructing old policies and standpoints. They may stumble back to the earlier stages due to their own, partner's, or children's incidents.

Interracial families also face a series of steps for integration and acceptance including acceptance of the negativity from society, harmoniously figuring a way to overcome such tensions, formulation of a family standing on race and racial issues, and socializing with other similar families are some of the beneficial tactics employed by the individuals. The reconciliation of cultural disparities in values and norms, communication of issues, and child-rearing are also effective coping mechanisms. (Yancey, 2007)

Ethnic identity crisis is an influential process in the child's normative behavior. If proper attention is not given, it leads to problems in social adjustment, school belonging, psychological wellness, and academic achievements. According to the one-drop rule, biracial individuals are automatically relegated to the minority class. Several models have been developed for identification and acceptance patterns including singular model including the [identity of White or Black](#), unique mixture and amalgam of singular identities i.e. biracial border identity, a situational acceptance of identity known as protean identity, and transcendent identification, which crosses beyond racial terms and association.

Biracial youth may traverse through these identity phases and associations over time. They may identify according to the publicity of the gathering and matter at hand, and [racial discrimination](#) directed at them from society. (Navarro, 2008)

Factors such as physical features and appearance, gender, the economic standing of the family, education level of the parents and child, immigration status, school type and ethnic composition, and locality of the residence of the family all have deep impacts on the processes of racial bias and development of the child. At the tender age of 5, biracial children become aware of their society and the bias directed at them. Questioning racial identities in the early years of school leads to detrimental effects if not handled properly by the parents and teachers. Questions like "What are you?" shape the coming years of the child's life. Criticism directed at the child about his/her parents also has deleterious effects, culminating in dissociation disorders.

Conclusion

This disparity is faced not just by African-American couples and their families but also by other minority couples including Hispanic, Latin, Asian, and the like. The discrepancies in behaviors of people towards minorities and towards the people who accept them (spouses) are evidence of the double standards extant in our society. Standards of beautification, glamour, and portrayal of media images have resonated in our minds and we commit inexplicable and heinous crimes of discrimination based on color and race towards people. The situation is much better than that of the past where inhumane treatment of minorities was considered righteous by considering them slaves, but still

much needs to be done on this front.

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