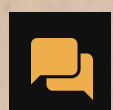


SYSTEMIC RACISM

Definitions



"[Systemic racism] is an interlocking and reciprocal relationship between the individual, institutional and structural levels which function as a system of racism. These various levels of racism operate together in a lockstep model and function together as a whole system."

(Canadian Race Relations Foundation)



"Systemic Racism includes the policies and practices entrenched in established institutions, which result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups. It differs from overt discrimination in that no individual intent is necessary."

(Toronto Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations)



"[Systemic or institutional discrimination] consists of patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for racialized persons. These appear neutral on the surface but, nevertheless, have an exclusionary impact on racialized persons."

(Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy Engagement)

"...systemic racism is the racism that's left over after you get rid of the racists. Once you get rid of the racists within the justice system, for example, you will still have racism perpetrated by the justice system."

-Senator Murray Sinclair

(Taking Action Against Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination Including Islamophobia - Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage)

SOME FEATURES OF SYSTEMIC RACISM



Not only reflected in individual actions but includes behaviour, policies and practices



Policies and practices can be overt and intentional like the Chinese head tax or forced removal of Indigenous children from their families



Policies and practices can look neutral on the surface but have a negative impact on racialized people



Can be found in the institutions that govern society



Maintenance of Western culture, ideals and standards as the "norm", as the "Canadian mainstream" and as superior.

SOME CONSEQUENCES FOR RACIALIZED PEOPLE



Overrepresentation in correctional institutions and as victims of crime



Internalized racism



Underrepresentation in public service and decision-making leadership roles



Unequal access to resources like gainful employment, education, sports/recreation and healthcare



Being taught exclusively from a Western perspective and bias where diverse Canadian experiences and perspectives are excluded.



Diminished sense of equal citizenship and belonging.

"The idea of systemic racism is not about individual attitudes. It is about how society works. Good people can participate in systemic racism."

(National Post, Jun 27, 2020)

Systemic racism can be found in all aspects of society including the education system, justice, health care, public entities, government, media and culture. Altogether, it creates a system of disadvantage for racialized people while privileging others. Because it is such a complex, interlocking system, dismantling systemic racism will require the collective efforts of individuals, communities and institutions in order to bring about systemic change.

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