

Allegations of Racial Identity Factor in Job Placement in Germany: Africans in the Diaspora Experience.

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ABSTRACT

Racial consideration is a challenge to the realization of peaceful co-existence and motivation of citizens in job process in a state which can affect the expected levels of development. Thus, discrimination based on identity factor in the economic activities of a state tends to slow down the will power and motivations of the affected citizens towards achieving the set goals of the organization and/or the state. The paper examined the allegations of racial identity factor in job placement in Germany with regard to Africans in the Diasporas. Utilizing secondary source of data, content Analysis and Structural Functionalism Theory, the paper made the following findings. Firstly, that identity discrimination in job placement in Germany is real. Secondly, Diaspora Africans in Germany are not properly placed in job positions because of their identity and this has affected their motivations and dedication to their jobs. To get the best from the Diaspora Africans in Germany, therefore, the paper recommended among others that in job placement process in Germany, merit should be the determining factor and not the consideration of colour, race or identity. Also, equal treatment should be given to all in job situation for the sake of social justice, efficiency and maximum productivity.

Keywords: Racial Identity; Germany; Job Placement; Diaspora Africans.

INTRODUCTION

Racial identity factor in job placement is an upshoot of racial identity and the practice of racism which represents a supposedly superior tendency by a certain racial group to undermine other races usually regarded as inferior. For the discrimination to be well enforced, identification of individual with a particular race becomes necessary within a particular geo-political region or country. In Germany, just like so many other countries, racial identity has form part of the social relation in daily life. People identify themselves as belonging to a particular race by the existing structural function which sometimes define their mode of relationship, particularly, in area of advantage. Racism is associated with discrimination of all kind with the belief that one's race is more superior to the other and so, differences should be created. The belief on race superior-inferior relationship has consequential effects on the attitude and disposition toward one another within the existing social order (Dubois 2022).

In a specific analysis, racial identity and racialism are anchored on the assumption that distinctive human characteristics and ability are determined by race, leading to the concept of racial supremacy among humans. It is a perception held very dearly by racial supremacy exponents and which has to a large extent defined their discriminating disposition towards others, often seen to be inferior within a system that has been brought together by forces of global economic interdependence.

The allegation of racial consideration for advantages especially in job placement in Germany has formed an important area of scholarly, policy and professional discourse at national and international levels. This is not farfetched as it has attracted considerable comments from scholars and public commentators alike on its

existence and how it affects workers motivation and dedication to the job for the overall economic development of Germany. Book writers, scholars, civil rights activists and commentators have expressed their concerns about the intensity of German racism. Thus Germany has been a country known for racism where racial discrimination and consideration are highly exhibited in job placement against the Afro-Germans and blacks stereotype as inferior race. This allegation has become deep rooted in the minds of people especially the Afro Germans who see Germany as lacking democratic principle of equal rights for its citizens as a result of the attitude of the native (Sow 2008)

Based on the above issues highlighted, this paper investigates the allegation that there is racial identity factor in job placement in Germany by attempting to answer the following questions: is there discrimination against the Afro Germans in job opportunity and placement in Germany? If there is, what are its effects on the German economy? What necessary efforts are required to eliminate racial consideration in job placement in Germany; among others?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Racial Identity and Racism

Race is a major factor of global identity and to a greater extent revolves around geographical and continental human placement. Human migration has brought about mixed race, thereby, changing the natural argument of geographical placement of races. Adewale (2007), has informed that the movement of people from one geographical location to another and the existence of mixed race orchestrated by human fellowship and interdependence have generated racial identity factor and to a greater extent, racial discrimination due to the erroneous belief of the existence of superior versus inferior race. This belief has exacerbated the practice of racial identity and discrimination within a political setting.

Racial identity represents the consciousness of identifying oneself as belonging to a particular race different from other existing races within a particular geo-political setting. It is defined as an attempt to balance racial group membership's needs and personal desires for positive relations within a longer society (Arroyo and Zigler 1995). The import of this distinction is that it is used to attract advantages from members of the same race just as it could represent the allocation of favourable and unfavourable job placement in Germany. Sellers, Smith and Chavos (1998) and also Beverly (1997) have opined that, racial identity connotes personal significance and meaning of race to one's self concept. It may not be for undue advantage but for the identification of one's existence and membership of a particular race in a larger society. For Belgrave and others (2000), racial identity is argued to be one's sense of self that is related to racial group members. In all of these, racial identity represents aligning with a group of people who share same racial heritage.

These arguments by scholars brought up the issue of racism as a practice from the principle of racial identification. Racism connotes all practice of human discrimination and possible hatred propelled by racial factor in human dealings and relationships within a particular geo-political setting. It is a deep rooted belief adopted by people that define relationship in terms of race; relationship that is usually anchored on belief in the existence of superior and inferior races.

As documented in the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination Adopted in 1966, racism can be understood as any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life (UN 1966).

A study of racism in Germany reveals that there was an organized form of racism before the enactment of the anti-racial discrimination laws (State Anti Discrimination Act) on June 21, 2020. Studies show that between

1904 and 1908, the German empire carried out a campaign of ethnic extermination and collective punishment against the Hereros (Ovaherero), the Namaque and the Sam in German West African (present day Gambia) colony during the colonial period (Oltermann 2021). The action of the Herero, Namaque and other traditional ethnic Gambians to liberate themselves from the discriminatory policies of the old German empire was interpreted by the colonial Germans as affront to a superior Aryan race. In response to the attempt made by the Herero (Ovaherero) under the leadership of Samuel Maharero and Captain Hendrik Witbooi of Nama ethnic group, the German colonial masters led a discriminatory massacre of between 24,000 and 100,000 Hereros, 10,000 Namas and unrecorded number of people of the Sam ethnic group (Nuhn,1989). Record also revealed that the German empire took the skulls and the remains of tribesman to Germany and kept them in museums until 2018 when the skulls were returned back (BBC 2018.)

Furthermore, the Germanisation policy against the polish population in Germany was a clear manifestation of racism (Nicola Piper 2018). This cannot be underplayed as it gives deeper insight to this discourse. It was a racial policy adapted by Germany in the conquered territories in Europe to spread the German language and culture by force. The non Germans resident in Germany were often prohibited from using their native language in conversation and communications. It was also geared toward state suppression of foreign tradition and culture, the essence being to eliminate all foreign cultures in Germany (Olusoga, Erichsen & Casper 2010). Record has it that the implementation of the policy later resulted to genocide of some non German ethnic groups, possibly as a result of non-total compliance (Browning 2017).

Racism in Germany expanded and became more pronounced during the beginning of Nazi period in 1933. From here, racism became an official state ideology (Christian 2007); which was mostly expressed in job procurement and in job placement. There were, in addition, other forms of discrimination against non native Germans with the enactment of the law for restoration of the professional civil service. During this period, civil servants who were of non Aryan origin were expelled except very few who were left for special purposes (The Nazi Germany Sourcebook 2002). More so, the Nuremberg laws enacted by the Nazis in 1935 provided official protection for German blood and Honor, prohibiting marriages between the people of Germany and the Jews, the Gypsies, the Negroes and the so called bastards (Michael & Wolfgang 1991). The Nazi regime promoted the held belief that race determines everything and in addition, imbibed this consciousness into subsequent generations of Germans.

According to (Bloxxham 2009), the Holocaust was the genocide perpetrated by Germany against European Jews during the WW II under the leadership of Adolf Hitler. It was reported that between 1941 and 1945, Nazi Germany and its collaborators systematically murdered some six million Jews across Germany occupied Europe (Holocaust Encyclopedia 2018). The Report from German newspaper, Die Zeit publication revealed that more than 130 people were killed in racist street violence in Germany in the years between 1990 and 2010. This was after German reunification in the 1990s when a wave of racist street violence claimed numerous lives through numerous acts of arson attack in Mölln, the Riot of Rostock-Lichtenhagen in 1992, the Solingen arson attacks of 1993 and the attack on Noël Martin in 1996. In 2006, *Der Spiegel* (2006) reported that a black German citizen of Ethiopian descent named Ermyas, an engineer was beaten into a coma by two unknown assailants who called him "nigger" in an unprovoked attack that has reawakened concerns about racist violence in the former Eastern Germany.

Job Placement

Taking cognizance of this trend, the Canadian Human Rights Commission defines discrimination as an action or a decision that treats a person or a group badly for reasons such as race, colour, culture, heritage, age gender, disability etc. These so called grounds are protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act. In addition, unfair discrimination is dealt with under Employment Equity Act. Such discriminatory tendencies that bears relevance to ones race, colour, heritage, gender and disability and which can also be direct or indirect in nature is the focus (<http://www.ccma.org.za>). In addition, scholars like Pager (2003) and

Eberthardt (2019), among others have played significant roles in developing methodologies and frameworks to measure and understand discrimination in the various contexts, including education, criminal justice and healthcare. Their contributions have been instrumental in advancing research and interventions aimed at combating criminality.

Among the countries with discriminatory job placement challenge, Germany stands out with worse global records. Although discriminatory job placement practice in Germany is said not to be an official state policy, top state officials, state institutions and organizations operate in ways that seem to lend credence to their endorsement of discriminatory job placement. As a mental and emotional attitude, Germans were acculturated into racial and colour discrimination through the Nazi Philosophy of race superiority, invented and promoted by Adolf Hitler, the World War II political leader of Germany (Achebe 1988).

Discriminatory job procurement and placement in Germany with its deep racial colouration have over the years, unleashed mental health issues such as anxiety and depression as well as physical problems including stomachaches, headaches and rapid heartbeat significantly on Diaspora Africans. Thus, racial inequalities have resulted in decreased workplace productivity which has invariably affected German economic output as well as the Diaspora remittances.

Diaspora Africans

Diaspora Africans in Germany, also known as Afro-Germans are people of black race from the Sub-Sahara Africa who are residents or citizens of Germany. Needless discussing the period of first contact, but reference is often made to the colonial era when Germany colonized the Great Lake Region and West Africa. Within the period, many Africans migrated to Germany, especially the young Africans who went for higher education. This mass movement of young Africans was nearly terminated by the outcome of the First World War that was not in favour of Germany. The defeat of Germany led to the takeover of German West African territories by the allied countries especially Britain and France. By 1945 when the Second World War ended also in favour of the allied forces and against Germany, more foreigners entered Germany. These new set of people were the soldiers of the allied forces who occupied Germany and had the opportunity of fathering children from native German women. There were about 8000 of these children given birth to immediately after the war. Unfortunately, to buttress racist attributes of the then German State, it was recorded that the Federal Government of West Germany adopted a policy of isolation of children of mixed race known as negroes (Jet 1951; Women in Germany Year Book 2005).

As at 1981, immigrant from Africa especially Nigeria and Ghana entered Germany in large numbers in search of employment and education. Some of them became citizens after meeting some legal conditions according to German immigration laws. Some are married to German women and thus, have children from them who are also part of the Afro-Germans and Diaspora Africans. Most importantly, the Europe Refugee Crisis and influx into Germany from 2015 to 2019 increased the number of Afro-Germans in Germany. Wagner (2021) observed that, there are more than one million black people living in Germany. The German government under the leadership of Angela Merkel was said to have welcomed the largest number of refugees in Europe. The attitude of the Germans, including the government toward the refugees during this crisis was remarkable and glorious in the annals of global management of crisis and resolution of challenges that affects humanity. Germany takes credit for this and the world, especially, the sub-Saharan Africa respect Germany for the humanitarian gesture. On the final note, it was observed that most black population are found in the urban cities of Hamburg, Darmstadt, Frankfurt, Munich, Bremen, Berlin, Koln and Dusseldorf among others.

Structural Functionalism Theory

Among the most successful frameworks for social analysis, Structural Functionalism, simply referred to as

Functional Theory was propounded by Emile Durkheim but was popularized by Herbert Spencer, an English sociologist whose intention was to support a society where natural selection is encouraged. Spencer argued for a natural tendency in society toward achievement of equilibrium. According to Macionis John (1944 – 2011), Functionalism is a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. The approach considers both social structure and social-function in terms of working together for stability and development of the society. Robert K. Merton opines that functionalism is about the static or concrete aspects of society including institution of government and religion (Hak 2007).

The Functional Theory lays emphasis on the large-scale social structures, social institutions, the inter-relationship and implication on society. The basic principle of Structural Functionalisms is anchored on three simple terms: maintenance of social stability, collective functioning and social evolution. According to Talcott Parson (1902-1979,) a function refers to a set of activities that fulfill the need of society. He went further to describe four functional imperative that are necessary for the survival of every social system: Adaptation, Goal attainment, Integration and Latency. For pattern maintenance, Parson informs that it is the capacity of the political system to maintain itself against a hostile environment which could be disastrous. He sees adaptation as the ability of a system to maintain a stable equilibrium irrespective of the disturbances within the environment. Simply put, this implies the ability of the system to adjust itself to changes in the environment. His third prerequisite which is goal attainment refers to the ability of the system to satisfy the various needs of its members and also achieve whatever goals it has set for itself. Integration as the final functional prerequisite was explained to mean the continuous interaction between the subsystems of the whole for a better overall performance of the system. This function is basically performed by means of socialization - for instance, through ideology, religion and formal education. For Parsons' an understanding of the interconnectedness of the subsystems will enhance human understanding and appreciation of the dynamics of the social system. Parsons' effort to specify roles and patterns of interaction within the political system excited political scientists even as David Easton acceded to this functional imperatives upon which order in the social system rests.

Application of Theory to the Research

Structural Functionalism Theory is applied in this work to explain the nature of social structure and the existing social function in German with regard to the relationship between Africa Diasporas and the native Germans in Job placement vis-a-vis social stability, collective functioning and social evolution that promote development. The understanding here is that when the existing social structures in Germany are regulated by rational functional imperatives, the stability and socio-economic development of the society will be enhanced. Thus, a rational security sector in Germany can further state adaptability and stability by ensure that critical paraphernalia against racism and racial discrimination in job placement are deployed to discourage these practices. The goal attainment and integration prerequisites will ensure that that through socialization, identity growing and nation building, people of all racial cleavages are integrated into one German people which brightens the chances of national goal attainment. By so doing, racial discrimination that has challenged job placement in Germany will whittle and when emphasis shifts away from racial identity to technical competence in job placement, national productivity will grow and national development will occur.

Africans in the Diaspora and Job Placement in Germany

To established the potency or otherwise of the allegation that racial factor is considered in job placement in Germany as it affects the Diaspora Africans, content analysis is applied to equip the researcher the data of the views and reports from individuals, newspaper comments, news and articles, statements from German state officials, human rights agencies and organisation and case studies of Afro-Germans about job placement in Germany.

A review of relevant literature on racial discrimination in Germany shows that during the Nazi period, race was considered a major factor in public life and economic opportunities in Germany. Burleigh (1991) reported that during the Nazi period, working condition and travels were made difficult for Diaspora Africans in Germany, especially the musicians and the film profession. Based on the realist propaganda, therefore, employers were unable to retain or hire Afro-German employees. The action of the Nazi regime portrayed the ideology that Afro-Germans belong to the inferior race and should not have equal opportunities with native Germans, seen to be member of the 'Master race'.

According to Council of Europe Report (2003), in spite of considerable number of non-citizens who have been living in Germany for a long time or even from birth, there was reluctance by Germany to consider itself as a country of immigration. Persons of immigrant origin, including those who are second or third generation born in Germany, tended to remain foreigners in German statistics and public discourse (Council of Europe, 2003).

A reflection of the past racial attribute of the Germans is juxtaposed with the present allegation of racial discrimination against the Afro-German in job procurement, job placement as well as workers relationship in job places. What is necessary to note is that, there is a law banning racial discrimination in Germany, thus officially, Germany is not a racist state but what is not certain is how the native Germans are responding to this law in their daily dealing with non native Germans in every aspect of their relationships.

The report from German Centre for Integration and Migration Research (Dezim) reveals that about 90 percent of Germans agreed there in racism is Germany. Dezim director, Neika Foroutan, stated that the researchers were surprised to discover that about half of the sampled population agreed that racism is a factor in Germany and people believed they live in a racist society. The Report also reveals that when it comes to discrimination in housing market, it is most likely to be described as racist when it affects the Jew and Black peoples. The content of the research report was acknowledged by the Federal Commissioner for Racism, Reem Alibali Radovan of the Social Democratic Party who stated that Germany knows about its racism problem (Marcel 2021).

Furthermore, it was observed that black people were everywhere in the German capital but that it was always difficult to find them in client fencing roles, in jobs that allow them to engage directly with the public. Rather, that their roles tend to be less visible; confined to restaurant kitchens or worse. A Kenyan man raised an issue to confirm discrimination in job when he asked, Why do bathroom attendants have to be Africans? (Chiponda 2020). Poliana Boumgarten, a German Afro-Brazilian filmmaker concerned with racism and discrimination argued that the black people are over-represented in menial jobs which she called structural and institutional racism. She opined further that it just shows there is not even a chance for black women to get jobs where they would experience some form of dignity (Chiponda 2020).

In the report presented by the Afrozensus 2020 survey, conducted by a group called "Each One Teach One Together", it was reported that racism and discrimination against the black people are widespread in Germany, especially in the educational, the housing market and the healthcare sectors. The report explained further that nearly two-third of black Africans and Afro-Diaspora individuals interviewed shows about 67.6 percent argue that they received lower grades than others in the classroom and about 82.4 percent received discrimination in the housing market due to racial identity (Aghan 2021).

With regard to the situation in the German mainstream media, Couri (2018) informs that Black Germans are highly under-represented and or misrepresented as at the year ended 2018. He further revealed that only one black female journalist, Jana Pareigis was functioning as a presenter in ZDF TV network and she faced serious challenges due to her identity. Pareigis was once reported in TRT news, as lamentably stating, "I have faced a whole variety of experiences, the question I have most is 'where are you from' implying that this is not my country" (Couri 2018). According to Report of the UN fact finding team to Germany on the

existence of “No Go Areas” for black people, People of African heritage live right at the bottom of the German society. The only jobs left for them are the ones no one else wants to do. Having ‘No Go Area’ for the Black people represent extreme display of weak acceptance of the blacks which appears unconventional and anti global fellowship in a global multi-race system where globalization and interdependence makes it expedient for the survival of the international economic order.

There is also the case of growing concerns among Germans over the increasing influx of migrant African population into Germany. The derogatory comment *Warum Deutschland?* which means Why Germany? Is a protest question most Germans ask in disapproval to the increasing number of African migration into Germany. Most Germans feel that it is economic problem, particularly job unemployment that is driving this migration. Even more have continually insisted that the jobs in Germany are for Germans, followed by their European Union brothers and sisters, then the indigenes of the former Eastern Europe states in that order. Unofficially, Germans have always maintained that Afro-Germans and Diaspora Africans have no good job placement prospects in Germany.

FINDINGS

Drawing inference from contributions of individual stakeholders, researchers, newspaper editorials, German government officials and even public affairs commentators about Afro-German position on job procurement and job placement in Germany, the researchers were able to decipher that:

1. There is structural racism in Germany which is not an official policy as there is an existing law banning the practice of racism.
2. The Afro-Germans are actually discriminated against in job procurement and job placement as reported in the newspapers, researches, human rights organizations and comments from relevant stakeholders.
3. Not all native Germans are racist as a notable number are at the forefront of the fight against racial discrimination of Afro-Germans and Blacks in job places.
4. The practice of racial discrimination to a greater extent has negative effects on the level of economic development in Germany as the Afro-Germans and the Blacks with great economic potentials are denied the opportunity to contribute effectively to the growth and development of the German economy. Additionally, discrimination dampens the morale of Afro-German workers in job places as reported by Couri (2018) in the case of Jana Pareigis who works in ZDF TV Network as a presenter.
5. Should the youthful population of the Afro-Germans and the Diaspora Africans in Germany be effectively integrated into the German society, Germany will have the potential to retain its position as the biggest economy in Europe.

CONCLUSION

Even though not an official state policy in Germany, tendencies towards racism is structurally strong and this manifests in several ways including discriminatory job procurement and job placement against the non-German natives. Ample evidences exist to support the claim that in all this, the Jews and, in particular, the Diaspora Africans are at the bottom of the rug in the socio-political and economic life of Germany and these results from xenophobic racial identity factors. In this study, it is observed that racism against Diaspora Africans living in Germany, particularly; in job placement and procurement have had severe consequences both for their motivational output as well as for the German economy. To curb this centrifugal tendency that has for long debased Germany will require strengthening institutional and legal frameworks against all forms of racial identity and racial discrimination. In addition, relevant formal and informal organizations in Germany should support efforts toward moral rebirth and ethical revolution that sees all human beings as equal before nature.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The paper recommends that more action is needed by the German government to curb racial discrimination against the Diaspora Africans and Afro-Germans by giving teeth to the laws banning racism. Before doing this, more awareness campaign is pertinent to sensitize the German racists about the legal and economic implications of racial discrimination in job places and job placements.
2. For peace and security of the German nation, discrimination of all kinds especially, in job places should be prohibited and legal backings on this prohibition effectively enforced to enhance total integration of the Afro-Germans and Africans in the Diaspora into the German society. This will douse race related tensions and conflicts often experienced and usher in a secure and stable German nation that is able to take leadership responsibility in Europe.
3. German employers should see the Diaspora Africans and Afro-Germans as full citizens and no less than an integral part of the German population that should enjoy on equitable terms, all the opportunities, rights and privileges that also accrue to the native Germans in work places and work placements. In other words, what should be of interest to German job employers essentially, are individual contributions to the growth and development of the firms and the enhancement of profit making and not skin pigmentation, nasal structure or where one comes from.
4. The United Nations Office in Germany with the support of the home government should prioritize enforcement of the United Nations Resolution on Race which in totality frowns against discrimination of any kind. The organization should be firm and resolute with the implementation and monitoring of the resolution and necessary sanctions should be imposed on Germany or any nation that continues to perpetrate acts of racial discrimination.

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