Reflection on the Direction of Affirmative Action Policy

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Opinion Paper

Abstract: Affirmative Action is a good policy with its foundation on our constitution as well as on the Universal declaration of Human rights. The policy originates from the application of “Group Theory of politics”. The general purpose was to correct past racial and gender biases and injustices that were of practice in American society. However, to be more effective, the policy has to be more convincing on its moral value than its forcefulness on its legal ramifications. Current data and discussions show that more could have been done to make this policy more efficient. Media and other civic or professional organizations should constitute the backbone of this policy by being more positively inclusive, conciliating and, educating.

The effort needed should result in embarking everybody in making the policy a firm basis in constructing viable and long lasting positive relationship between all social groups in our country and not let its application surface other forms of social tensions or conflicts that diffuse the purpose of its existence.

Keywords: Affirmative Action, Public Policy, Africa, United States

Introduction

Interest of this discussion
Sometime ago, I witnessed a debate that was very fascinating to me. It was about “Affirmative Action Policy”. Everything was on the table for that purpose. They talked about education and especially its impact on employment (education as skill builder). The discussion reminded me of a Congolese education policy translated to what was known then as equal opportunity for admission in higher education. In its application, this law was nothing less than equal distribution of admission. In fact, in the 1970’s and mid 1980’s each Congolese university and colleges were required
by law to determine the number of new students they wanted to admit each year as freshmen. Then equally divide that number by the number of provinces that the country had. Congo had eleven provinces at that time. The quota formula used was proportionally based on the number of high school graduates so that each province would have an equal number of students admitted in higher education. The policy was called: "Equal Education Opportunity for All" or "quota system". However, the ending facts that were observed suggested that the selection process of students from provinces with a higher graduation rate was highly restrictive while very extended for students from provinces with low high school graduation rate. Observation at that time was that in a cohort of 100 students admitted in the first year of the university/college, only 60% actually graduate. What the government did not like to fund for the obvious reason, was the analytical study of the origin and causes of 40% failing or if the policy of admission was also thought in term of retention. This situation was devastating, and created another parallel situation within the employment selection. While there was not a formal study, comparative observation indicated that higher number of students graduated from college at the margin of the graduation requirements. Using the same rational, in the US and compared to high school level, the Manhattan Institute indicates that only 51 percent of all black students and 5 percent of all Hispanic students graduate, and only 20 percent of all black students and 16 percent of all Hispanic students are ready for college when they leave high school. (Source: Greg Foster, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research). It is this 0.10 % of black students and 0.01 % of Hispanic high school graduates that are ready for higher education. An interesting question would then be how many would actually graduate from college and sustain the challenge of today’s work place? The answer to this question is the core of another conversation that is not the scope of what this discussion aims to accomplish. In Congo, the situation became a fact of public interest and government used it to rationalize the need for another policy: the “corrective employment policy”.
In earlier 80’s, the government issued another policy requiring employers to hire and promote workers in a proportional way based on their geographic origin (means province of origin). The frustration in Congolese observation case was that some of these students were not able to perform in the job that corresponds to the requirements of their college training. These facts created a crisis not only in work structure but also in social society structure. The poor performance of some workers increased the number of layoff and unemployment with all what it has as social ramifications, such as social frustration and economic crime. When I witnessed that discussion on Affirmative action, I was very impressed by the similarities and yet the difference in the causes of the Congolese Policy (on Higher Education) and the “Affirmative Action”. The difference between the Congolese policy and Affirmative action policy, however, is that in Congolese policy the object of the quota was not race or gender. Rather it was geographic origin. Also in Congo, the basis for the policy was not a “legal” discrimination based on geographic origin of individuals. In the US, some basis for which Affirmative action policy was needed were regulated by state laws. For example, “African Americans were still segregated for the most part into low wage jobs into the 1960s. For Hispanic Americans, employment opportunity remained seriously restricted into the 1970s. Whole industries and categories of employment were, in effect, all white, all male. In thousands of towns and cities, police departments and fire departments remained all white and male; Women and minorities were forbidden to even apply” (US Department of Human Services: Statement of Policy Regarding plan administration: Equal opportunity And affirmative action policy). As remedial measure of this situation, the Policy of Affirmative action was implemented over the years by Executive Orders 10925 (in 1961) and 11246 (in 1965) including the Civil Rights Act in 1964 as amended in 1972.

In this discussion, I am not going to engage in the search of the intrinsic validity of this public policy that was, I believe, a necessity of its time as a public interest problem, but it is about the effects of this policy. I would like to
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discuss why this policy did not positively affect some general and observable situations in our society today.

For example according to University of Pittsburgh studies,

Up to 50 percent of the black males in Pittsburgh Public schools do not graduate. In addition, because young black males cannot be divorced from their communities, the harsh socioeconomic realities that many blacks in Pittsburgh face figure in the story of young men. Additionally, the same studies show that black Americans in this city are worse off than in 70 comparable cities across the nation: up to 46 percent of black children, here live in poverty and 70 percent live with no father¹.

When reading this kind of data, one would wonder if the Affirmative Action Policy responded to the real public dissatisfaction that the policy was to resolve. I would like to see if the expected underline objectives were really met. In other words if the obvious objective of hiring or equally utilizing the portion of the American population that felt the need for the policy was accompanied also with the increase of skills that would break the cycle of poverty.

The Purpose of this discussion:

The purpose of this project is to apply and demonstrate knowledge acquired in the Public Policy course in a systematic analysis of a specific public policy issue. I chose a discussion on the controversial subject of Affirmative Action. What were its needs or public interest, what was the public problem that this policy intended to

¹ Read more: http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/07153/790500-391.stm#ixzz0GEjvvFVI&B
resolve? What the problem that the policy resolved instead and what negative externalities that the affirmative action policy surfaced. What now surfaces as the problem that the policy could have tackled if it was defined differently? All these questions and more will be part of this discussion. Data will be collected from some empirical studies that were previously done on this subject.

“Affirmative Action” is a federal, state and local government public policy. It is a national effort to remedy subjugation of racial and ethnic minorities and of women. It applies in education and at workplace. The policy aims to benefit minority (race and gender related minority) population of the US. The problem is that the statement “equal opportunity” translates really a quota system based on the criterion of what is called “minority”.

Theoretical Framework Analysis

Theoretical analytical/theoretical framework used for this discussion

Definition

Affirmative Action Policy is a derivative of the struggle of minority groups to fully integrate American social structure. The struggle comes because of the negative reference in racial inequality and gender differences in all aspects of American social structure. Thus, the Affirmative Action issue is defined in a setting of “Group Theory of Politics”. According to this theory, “public policy is the product of the group struggle....and that interaction and struggle among groups are the central facts of political life” (Anderson, 2006, p.20). It is within the landscape of this consideration that the Affirmative Action policy has to be analyzed. The main problem is that the social structure of the country does not work as a system that is equally inclusive of all social groups. People of color and women were deprived of their basic civil rights. Just like Affirmative Action policy, the
signature by the President Obama (January 29, 2009) into law of the Lilly Ledbetter Wage Bill to end Payroll discrimination is another sign that proves that our social system was not inclusive. Women were unfairly compensated at work place. This law is a major step forward for pay equity between men and women.

The existence of these laws and policies is an indication that minority group members are fighting together as a group to persuade elected officials of their cause and guarantee that their common voice is heard and that their rights are protected. By their common action as a group, their rationality demonstrates the existence of a public interest for a specific common problem that needs government solution. The solution is given in form of policy and regulation. In this case, the group struggle (the minority struggle to economically, socially and politically integrate and survive in American social structure) has led the government taking many actions and issuing multiple policies that intent to suppress the racial inequality and the gender bias that exist in American society. The assumption of Group Theory is that it includes the interests of all group members. All people of color and minority women in this case. These members have an opportunity to express their view within their respective groups and different civic associations. These associations give a positive perception to their members that they are heard and their views are taken into consideration. They strengthen the cohesion of all group members who fight for the same goals and objectives. They make group members commit to the success of the policy.

Policy statement

In response to this group struggle and in applying the letter of the constitution, the government has issued a mixture of legislative, executive and judicial action and policies to end racial discrimination in education, employment and business contracts.

Those measures produced effects that were the basis of The Civil Rights Acts (CRA) of 1964 and 1965. The Civil Rights Acts state “discrimination was
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outlawed in hiring practices, in places of public accommodation, and in any program receiving federal assistance”. In addition, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was established to enforce the CRA. The CRA were amended in 1972 to strengthen the authority of the EEOC by including state and local governments and labor organizations within purview (Hird et al, 2004).

However, by a close subjective analysis of these attempts to end discrimination in the US (or the negative perception that these laws generate), one could infer that discrimination is only banned in public places or whenever the taxpayer money is used. This means in private sector and private businesses and education the practice of discrimination is not stopped. Private Citizen and business could practice discrimination as long as they opt from receiving federal funding. The failure to ban discrimination in a single way and inclusively to all sectors regardless of their affiliation with the federal government-funding program gives a perception that these legislative, executive and even judiciary actions are just apparent. They do not really translate the real willingness to resolve the problem of inclusivity of minority in economic and social life of the social structure of the country. In some instances, these negative perceptions are expressed as social facts (as defined by Durkheim1) indicating in minority communities that “they are told what they want to hear” and that discrimination still is in practice. The ambiguous language adopted by some of these policies generates a feeling that rationalizes

1 By a social fact, Durkheim is referring to facts, concepts, expectations that come not from individual responses and preferences, but that come from the social community, which socializes each of its members. Although we might embrace the normative community behavior and share its values, we are constrained by its very existence. When I fulfill my obligations as brother, husband, or citizen, when I execute my contracts, I perform duties which are defined externally to myself and my acts, in law and in custom (Cited by Lemert, 2004)
some social crisis as effect of discrimination. The imprisonment rate, unemployment of minorities in private sector and even social and political interpretation of some statistics related to crimes and other social shortcomings could all be justified based on this rationality.

In the following paragraphs, I am going to refer to some government policies and court rulings that are related to affirmative action. My goal is not to do a complete inventory of these legislative, executive and judiciary actions but to indicate just enough to enable me pursue this discussion.

- **government action/statement**

  In business contracts for example, the first policy attempt was issued by President Roosevelt in 1941 when he created the “Fair Employment Practices Committee”. Hird et al indicate that the purpose of this committee was “to order defense contractors to cease discriminatory practices in hiring” (Hird, 2004, p. 293). President Kennedy also issued an executive order 10952 in 1961 “directing all federally funded contractors to take ‘affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, employees are treated during their employment, without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin’” (Hird et al, Op.cit.).

  In 1965, President Johnson issued an executive order to enforce previous executive order in ensuring that “affirmative “ measures were necessary not simply to make up for past discrimination and injustice, but also provide equal opportunity to previous disadvantaged and underrepresented groups”(Raymond, Bron cited by Hird et al. op. cit.).

- **court decision**

  In education, in 1954 The Supreme Court (In the case of Brown v. Board of education) declared “segregated educational facilities ‘inherently unequal’ and therefore unconstitutional” (Hird, op. ct.). This ruling was thereafter extended to all public facilities.
In 1971 (in the case of Griggs v. Duke Power), The Supreme Court ruled against employment criteria such "high school diploma" or requirement of literacy test (Hird, Op. cit.)
In 1978 (in the case of Regents of the University of California v. Allan Bakke), the Supreme Court ruled that admission policies of public education institutions were permitted to consider race for 'benign' purposes (Hird, op. cit).

As it is defined, the object analysis of affirmative action was to empower “the minority groups” through a “fit” education system that would help increase and acquire higher-level skills that should help to position them and meet the challenge of market place’s requirements. However, the ambiguity of the language used even in court ruling is not encouraging of getting expected results of these same laws. A law should not be left to personal and individual interpretation. Adam Smith once said that people are rational, and “rational people systematically and purposefully do the best they can to achieve their objectives” (cited by Mankiw, 2007, p. 6). From this rational, the interpretation of a law could be done to just meet a specific purpose and not answer to the public interest or public need for which it was intended to resolve. A developer or house builder who does not receive federal money, for example, could restrict his housing to female buyers. A restaurant owner could openly post a refusal employment ad for people of Mexican origin. A private university could refuse to receive federal money and restrict admission to a Black person of African descendent. An oil company located in the heart of Hopi land could refuse employment to any Native American Indian. All these examples meet the interpretation of some of these court rulings unless the court has to revisit each individual case and correct the perception that these laws and public policies have created in the mind of the people that are affected the most.

The Affirmative Action Policy stakeholders (including special interest groups), their
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interests and positions. Their power or the perception of power.

Based on The Federal Code of Regulations, the main stakeholders are identified to be “individuals who certify that they are members of named groups: Black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian Pacific, Sub-continent-Asian. They are considered socially and economically disadvantaged. Under some other programs, women shall be presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged individuals too”.

Besides these named groups, Affirmative Action was generated as product of Civil Rights movements and Feminist Movements.

For the purpose of this discussion, I would organize my thought around three major questions that I present as segments of the discussion.

1. What were the needs for Affirmative Action Policy or what was the public interest that justified the policy, what was the public problem (groups’ position) that this policy intended to resolve?

One may argue that the major interest group in this case is the country itself. Because, the starting point of the Affirmative Action policy has its foundation in American constitution. In fact, in the declaration of independence, it is stated that:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its
powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness” (US Constitution). If “all men are created equal” than no discriminatory policy should be acted at all level by any government branch or government officials. Hird et al argue that “the division and controversy engendered by affirmative action stems from the fact that it is closely related to the issue of racial inequality and the long history of racial discrimination in the United States...that the vast majority now reject and advocate the goal of racial equality” (Hird et al, 2004, p. 292). As Hird suggests, the declaration of the independence was not translated into a policy that required equality between all Americans. It is to this purpose that affirmative action intended. Affirmative action programs and regulations attempt to compensate for discriminatory practices that have in the past denied fair consideration to members of minority groups.

2. The special interest groups and their position.

Among special Affirmative Action – Pro interest groups are The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Urban League, Affirmative Action & Diversity Project, American Association for Affirmative Action and Americans United for Affirmative Action,...and United Negro college fund. These groups “feel that affirmative action has translated into advances for minorities that would not have occurred otherwise” (Anderson, 2006, p. 296).

Some other Affirmative Action – Anti interest groups are American Civil Rights Institute, Center for Equal Opportunity, Center for Individual Rights among many. The importance of these groups in this discussion is that they give the counter argument that justifies the action of the policy. This argument could be used to correct the trajectory followed in the application of the Affirmative Action Policy.

Referring to education for example, the position of these groups would be that:
“The use of racial preferences in admissions, in many ways, was like placing attractive wallpaper over a decayed social infrastructure. By calibrating the admissions process, both whites and underrepresented minorities could feel good about creating a policy that appeared to "level the playing field." However, by lowering the admissions bar for underrepresented minority groups (and thus raising it for whites and Asian Americans), race-based admission policies inadvertently perpetuate labor market discrimination against targeted groups” (Wydick, B. 2001)

3. Who has the power or the perception of power and is this accurate?

The power to influence policy is defined by the level of accessibility to decision making legislative, executive and judiciary bodies.

Applying the economic theory of rational-choice, one would advocate that the choices that people make by the way of election give them a positive perception of their proximity to power and possibility to influence policy. We elect members of legislative branch of the government not only because of what they promise to accomplish but also based on what we think and expect them to do. They are elected to represent interests of their constituencies. These elected officials have the obligation to function within the parameters of the group in order to represent its views and interests.

However, this same theory of rationality can generate the inaccuracy of voters’ perception and expectations. According to Downs for example:

“Voters and political parties act as rational decision-
makers who seek to maximize attainment of their preferences. Parties formulated whatever polities that would win them most votes, and voters sought to maximize the portion of their preferences that could be realized through government action. In this case and for the purpose of winning elections, political parties and their candidates moved toward the center of the ideological spectrum to appeal to the greatest number of voters and maximize their voting support” (Downs, A. cited by Anderson, 2006, p. 24). (Emphasize was made).

In this statement, one would infer that voters and candidates have different rational when it comes to elections. The rational of voters is to have someone who would advance their agenda and speak for their interests. In the rational of the political parties, however, it is about the power; the opportunity to control the power of the government and advance their ideology. Once candidates are elected, most of the time they advance the agenda of the strong group even if this group does not fully represent the interests of the voters in general. It becomes obvious in this case that the voters do not possess the power. A current example in American legislative body is the case of Senator Arlen Specter who was elected by a specific group of voters for a specific agenda within the Republican Party ideology. However by his own rational, decided to serve another group, interests and ideology. This case demonstrates that the perception of power that voters have is actually not accurate. It is just a perception.
The system of democracy is based on a majority rule. This means when the time to be re-elected comes, the elected officials would adopt the same attitude that helped them to be elected at first place just to be re-elected.

In my view, the elected officials operate in “elite theory of politics”. To be elected, they are part of a “group” and promise to exercise the power of the group. However, once elected, they operate and exercise their power base on elite theory and expect that their views represent the views of their group/electorate. They have the real power and with them the interest groups with more access to them.

The potential alternatives to the current format of Affirmative Action Policy.

Many people who oppose Affirmative Action Policy advocate for an alternative policy based on competition. Economic theory teaches that competition improves the market quality. That is any policy that is not in favor of competition would just produce a low quality product.

I think that the first step in adopting the Affirmative Action Policy should have been placed first in the education. With emphasize on the quality of that education. For example, the policy could have stated, “people from minority groups shall benefit from low cost in school fee”. That way the education would have been an equalizer of skills. In fact, “data from recent research on affirmative action and the wages of college graduates show that tempting policy alternative is to scrap the SAT, and heavily weigh high school academic rank in admissions. Politically, the use of high school academic rank is certainly more palatable than more overtly race-based policies” (Wydick, B. 2001). This system would generate talents that needed to be competitive on market. The admission to higher education and retention policy should have been the backbone of the policy of affirmative action.

On the other hand, I am not for school that classify themselves as “traditional Black/Hispanic school”. Because classified as such, these schools are already disadvantaged because of what is perceived to be their mission. This
perception opens the door to questions like: “where did you go to school?”; “which school did you attend?”; “how are teachers’ qualifications there?”. Education or school integration policy should be more effective not only by the way students are admitted to some institutions of higher education, but also by the way of their denomination.

**Potential consequences if the Affirmative Action policy is or is not enacted or enforced.**

One of the negative consequences of the Affirmative Action Policy is the cost associated with its enforcement. Rubinstein estimates that “for every dollar spent on regulatory enforcement, about twenty dollars is spent on compliance costs by the private sector” (Rubinstein, E., 2005, p.1). Cost related analysis seems to take place with the market failure analysis. In this case, the market failure could be linked to legal enforcement failure of the policy on affirmative action. In my experience, I come to conclusion that people act toward race or gender discrimination based on the social value they hold and not necessarily because of existent unenforceable laws with an ambiguous language. In fact, because no one would like to be openly and directly identified as racist or chauvinist, people adopt behavior that would save them from that identification. To prove this point, I remember an experiment we conducted with some students in job search. We sent some students of color to apply for jobs at local businesses by just filling an application and having a normal conversation with managers of these businesses. We also sent some other students at the same businesses except that this time there was a different language used during the quest for employment. We found out that there were more students from the second group who were hired compare to the ones from the first group. The economic crisis was the most received response for the first group. The second group whose members presented themselves as high school dropped out used in their introduction: “I know you guys maybe do not like to have any Black/Hispanic people here, but I really need a job to support myself”. We noticed that most of them were hired. We concluded that economic crisis was over looked whenever
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the moral value was inferred. None of these managers wanted to be viewed as a racist or to have their businesses classified as such.

The moral value of this policy is also viewed in the way it is politicized. In the name of diversity for example, the US Supreme Court needs to also have a Black Justice, a woman Justice or a Hispanic Justice. While the correct rational, in my view, would have been to have a highly qualified Judge Sonia Sotomayor and Clarence Thomas who happen to be Hispanic and Black.

In the business world, the problem with politicization approach to hiring workers is that it does not guarantee the productivity of the company. One reason is that the workers know the reason they were hired and the groups they represent.

Besides the economic cost, the ambiguity in the language that laws on Affirmative Action has, does not make easier their enforcement. When The Civil Rights Acts insists on “not discrimination in places of public accommodation, and in any program receiving federal assistance” (Hird et al, 2004), it also indicates the opposite of this definition. That is, when not receiving federal assistance and when being in a private place, discrimination could be accepted or tolerated.

In education, Wydick indicates that the irony of Affirmative Action policies is the fact that it “actually relies upon, and seeks to exploit, racial imbalances and inequalities between high schools to achieve racial balance in colleges. Moreover, such policies fail to rectify the vast discrepancies in college preparation between top-ranked graduates from different high schools. We must stop looking for cheap, cosmetic fixes to our deeply rooted social problems” (Wydick, B. 2001).

On the other hand, the absence of this policy or when it is not enforced would breakdown our social structure as a system, which would translate the failure of government to meet its obligations related to civil rights. It would encourage low living standard of certain groups of the population that “because of market breakdown are not very generously rewarded due to their lack of marketable talents or skills” (Bardach, 2009, p.3); increase discrimination against race and gender and, other social problems that
market failure may generate like high level of crime and prostitution/corruption.

Another side of the coin is that the Affirmative Action Policy creates another type of obvious discrimination that may justify certain action of hatred observed in our society. Anderson indicates that “while the relevance of race in the debate over affirmative action cannot be ignored, those opposed to this policy maintain that establishing quotas or otherwise giving advantage to minority applicants over whites results in unjust discrimination, usually against white” (Anderson, 2006, p. 295). The indication of “White” in this quote clearly indicates the perception that affirmative action really is: “a policy that opposes blacks and whites”. Viewed in this way, the Affirmative Action Policy surfaces and encourages a conflict that openly did not exist in the sense that at work place or in a classroom blacks and whites look at each other not as competitors but enemies; with a negative perception that any absolute deprivation of one group comes from the existence of the other group.

A negative perception of an absolute deprivation always creates or generates a face saving mode, which does not favor any social and economic development of any social structure.

Pragmatic Aspects of Affirmative Action Policy

How would you move this policy forward, including funding? Be specific. Example, do you need specific people, research conducted, etc? Where will the money come from?(Please note I am not looking for a budget)

The history of Affirmative action should be understood as it is linked to the period where the practice of exclusion was openly adopted. During this period, the practice was that
all blue-color jobs and upper level jobs in public and private sectors were exclusively reserved to white men. Affirmative Action Policy, then, only guaranties an important fact of the American society that is graved within our constitution. Equality of all humankind and equal opportunity for all citizens. However, the concept of “equality” should not be a slogan or source of vain expectations. I think that it should not be perceived that preferential treatment should be given to blacks and females because of their gender or color of their skin, but as corrective measure to their mistreatments or past injustices.

a. How would affirmative policy move forward

Affirmative Action Policy has to be encouraged. People have to be educated in understanding the purpose of the policy. So that instead of taking a form of compensatory policy (The term compensation draws heavily on the model of recompense or payment of damages that is found in tort law), affirmative action would actually be a moral issue. A just cause based on its morality. People should not be forced to act in a specific way to meet the legality of the policy but they should be educated to believe in the object of the policy. Affirmative action should be more of moral issue also because if person of color were mistreated in the past for a morally irrelevant characteristic (color of their skin), then to have a policy that justifies preferential treatment for the same morally irrelevant characteristic is equally vulnerable. Moral issues cannot be resolved by material compensation but by action of moral repair.

b. What are specific people and research needed

To morally repair the injustices for which people of color and women were subjected, it would take the participation of entire society. Policymakers, legislators and the support of all civic organizations. I think that people of color leaders and other women who have professionally succeeded in our social structures (in business, like CEO; college professors, and other professionals) should be more visible and vocal in presenting themselves as examples of success. They would
serve as role models to other people of color and young women. Data from past research should be used to understand the mindset of young people and their understanding of the policy of affirmative action. More researches should be conducted and results used in transforming the mentality of young people as to the fact that affirmative action policy is not a "handout" but it serves as a “hand up”.

Today we are at the turning point in American history. The election of the current president should be used as motivating fact for all minority groups. The work that the first lady is doing in education of young people of the minority groups should be encouraged and followed by other successful women that are in politics, business and even in academia.

c. How would affirmative action be funding and where the money would come from

There are many ways that affirmative action can be funded. One is reduction of school fee for minorities. School fee should be paid proportionally to the income of the taxpayer who is supporting the student. Another way would be through the community service done in the most disadvantaged areas.

Encourage organizations like “United Negro fund” and allocate scholarships based on merit or competition. Such money would come not only from federal government but also through contributions of successful minorities, also from membership to organizations that would encourage specific areas of education. For example, “organization of black physicians” will encourage students of color to attend medical schools. Money given in terms of loan would not be repaid if degree is completed and the student becomes members of the organization at the completion of his/her studies. Encourage businesses also to give scholarships to students of minority groups who excel in specific areas of their studies.
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How do you think the media will react? What do you need from them? How do you think this issue will be treated and by whom? How could/should be media be approached? How should it be marketed?

The media mainly plays a role in public policy by leaking information to influence policy (Anderson, 2006). Media identify and can amplify what they consider to be of public interest and bring to the attention of policymakers. Similarly, media form people consciousness by the way they frame or reframe issues. In their studies on “Media Distorts Debate on Affirmative Action”, for example, Martinez and Goodman found that in the past, between 1995 and 1997, “The U.S. media oversimplified the debate on affirmative action and deliberately misled the American public. Media coverage at the national level presented (or framed) the controversy as a conflict primarily between Blacks and Whites. Minimizing the place of Latinos and Asian Americans in the affirmative action debate misrepresents the true complexities involved in evaluating progress toward equality” (Martinez and Goodman, 2000). This way of reframing the objective of affirmative action policy aims to fuel the antagonism between blacks and whites as it also insinuates the separatism practice that long existed in the past.

The above statement makes it clear that some media actions have distorted the policy of affirmative action by highlighting quotes, and story-line emphasis to demonstrate “unavoidable” conflict of interest between Whites and Blacks. Conflict because these media reports portrayed African Americans purportedly gaining at the direct expense of Whites.

Today and if we have to succeed as society, the media have to play more positive role. Television programs, Newspapers and other forms of media should be used to change the attitude that affirmative action is a compensatory policy. Media should be approached to report actions of professional and civic organizations that encourage the purpose of affirmative action. These actions would be used to educate the minority groups on their responsibilities and how these programs could be beneficial
to them. These professional and civic organizations would serve as “groups” or “interest groups” that would have an impact in policymaking by the way of elections or as group of pressure.

It is in this way that media could be used to change people ideology and judgment toward affirmative action and increase their moral consciousness that justifies the importance of the Policy of Affirmative Action.

**Conclusion**

Affirmative action is a good policy for our society since its purpose is to overcome gender and race injustices in our society and, to correct past discrepancies that existed between ethnic groups. The policy has its foundation from our Constitution. To do well in this corrective measure is not to allow the measure itself to become another source of social conflict or a starting point of another injustice. Injustice not only because it is viewed in terms of Blacks vs. White conflict, but also, if not more, because it creates in the minority communities an urgency of hope and expectations that constitute a germ of policy self-destruction.

The integration in any society has to start with socialization and symbolic interactionism. It is in this area of education that Affirmative Action Policy has to be sharply implemented. If we succeed at this level, the application of the policy at work place will be more of moral issue than legal issue; skills and competency issue than racial or quota issue.

The role of the media should be more of a committed part of the triangle of education (home, school, society). Good examples should be emphasized in the media and negatively framed events should be reduced. Statistics data of our failing should be publicized only if used to educate and not to over emphasize the ability or inability of one particular social group.

**References**

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