It is known that gender and race discrimination are prominent problems in our society. Additionally, they are heavily intertwined, and studying the intersection of these two types of discrimination will help in understanding the complexity of the prejudices that individuals may face. The context of cultural and social differences rather than biological sex differences. This term can also be applied when describing a range of identities that are not limited to male and female, such as transgender. Race is a concept that groups people into categories based on distinguishing social and physical characteristics and qualities. These are both social constructs in which our society gives us identity but, unfortunately, these identity markers for labeling and stereotyping. This research will examine the intersectionality of gender and race and how each of these interact to disadvantage individuals. The following section will present the gender roles within African American, Asian, and Latin American males and females and will compare and contrast the different obstacles they face. Ultimately, the goal of this research is to shed light on the opportunities that these minority groups face due to their complex combination of race and gender. Keywords: intersectionality, race, gender

INTRODUCTION

Every individual is defined by multiple social structures (Goertz & Mazur, 2008). Social structures such as race/ethnicity, gender, class, religion, and sexual orientation, shape the way in which people experience the world (Brooks & Rollin, 2009). Intersectionality, coined by Black Feminist, legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in her critique of how Black women’s experiences were inaccurately addressed, aids in understanding the personal experiences of individuals (Keutt, et al., 2018). The idea behind this term contributes to the explanation of how these structures work together to create unique social identities that produce unique experiences of oppression. Furthermore, it argues that social structures are capable of being separate and a double or triple burden or exploitation (Goertz & Mazur, 2008). So rather than looking at these systems of oppression as separate or independent, intersectionality suggests that it is impossible to separate these identities when individuals can only experience them simultaneously (Smith, Watkins, Ladge, & Carlton, 2019). Not only do these identities lack privilege, Asian American women, for example, experience being reinforced and marginalized, dominant or oppressed (Goertz & Mazur, 2008, p. 196). For this project, the research will examine the coexistence of systems of oppression based on gender and race which interact to create interpersonal inequities and disparities (Smith, Watkins, Ladge, & Carlton, 2019).

AFRICAN AMERICANS

African American Men

Typically, men’s gender is associated with many privileges, but, when applying the intersectionality theory, men’s gender privilege often decreases when it clashes with the black race. (Bowleg, 2012, Rogers & Deshields, 2007). This is partly due to the stereotype of sexual and aggressive following emancipation (Wade & Ferree, 2019). Black men are often seen as possessing greater physical, athletic, and sexual strength than other races (Carnaghi et al., 2020). The fact is, though intersectionality, that their race increases what is expected of them as masculine (Bowleg, 2012). As a result of this intersection, many studies explain how these men are forced to overcompensate for these stereotypes early on. Boys’ misbehavior is often seen by teachers as free of malice, and, therefore,2019). The unassertive and patient Asian male is set up as a stark contrast to the idyllic White male who embodies strength, race, and aggression (Lee, dependence of each other, but they are also intertextual and multiple, therefore, reinforcing the individual’s numerous disadvantages (Lee, 2016; Smith, Watkins, Ladge, & Carlton, 2019). This does not mean that intersectionality is “the opposite of privilege or advantage; it is possible to be intersectionally advantaged or privileged as well as intersectionally marginalized, dominant or oppressed” (Goertz & Mazur, 2008, p. 196).

African American Women

When examining the intersection between race and gender, it is vital to note first that there is no gender apart from race and there is no raceless human (Goertz & Mazur, 2008, p. 195). The dominant cultural ideology of androcentrism tends to elect men to be the hegemonic normative standard and essentialism selects Whites to represent this same standard. Because of this, in the U.S., women of color are not “rationalized and feminized” as compared to their White counterparts. Interestingly, the social identities created for women are typically seen as uninteresting, especially of being “physically frail, emotionally delicate, and sexually pure, as white women” (Wade & Ferree, 2019, p. 102). This began the stereotype of the Angry Black Woman, individuals who are loving, patient, and nurturing demanding than other women” (Wade & Ferree, 2019, p. 102).Black mothers who work low paying and often degrading jobs in order to support their family are “denigrated as welfare queens” – (Wade & Ferree, 2019, p. 102). Instead of being honored as hard-working moms, many Black women “are assumed to be promiscuous single mothers” (p. 1708) and, as a result, they experience more racialized sexual harassment in comparison to women of other races (Smith et al., 2019).

LATIN AMERICANS

Latino Men

Latino Men are, naturally, men who are no exception to the inequalities of intersectionality. It is important to note how the characteristics these men face in the United States (Walters & Valenzuela, 2019). In a study analyzing the discrimination of Latino men, a participant with Mexican parents living in the United States and recounted to researchers how “Mexican relatives and American peers, therefore, never finding a home to fit in (Walters & Valenzuela, 2019). This challenge of the dual identities of both race and gender is one frequently faced by Latinos in the United States, who are set to face acculturative stress as a phenomenon (Liang et al., 2017). Machismo, a Latin gender role term, supports hypermasculinity and perceives men as “strong, virile, courageous, emotionalistic but sexually adventurous, brave, [and] self-sufficient” (Walters & Valenzuela, 2019, p. 1026). When adopted by the United States “media, it becomes a myth for Latino men (Chávez, 2019). Due to the expectation of the “good girl,” they are labeled as “bad girls” who are...gang involved, and unworthy” (Scott, 2018, p. 50). All of these stereotypes serve to show it is impactful to develop a comprehension of the often stressful and unjust experiences of Latina (Scott, 2018).

Latina Women

Latinas also experience the tension between their heritage cultural values and the cultural expectations as women in the United States (Laing et al., 2017). Contrasting to the male machismo, the marianismo standard expects domestic commitment from Latina women (Laing et al., 2017), as well as altruistic and compliant attitudes (Scott, 2018). Despite this image, Latina women are contrastingly depicted in pop culture and media to be unsuitable as mothers, using their children to obtain a green card, or as promiscuous and exotic. These stereotypes often invoke Latinas’ “women’s and girls’ interactions with professionals in the medical, education, and justice systems (Scott, 2018). The gender role hierarchy, meaning superwomen, infers that Latina women are strong, confident, and resilient. Although this can have a positive effect on Latina women, it also forces Latina women to attempt to carry out a variety of responsibilities with intense pressure on their ability to handle them (Laing et al., 2017). When comparing the intersectionality of race and gender, Latinas may be expected to be submissive, virtuous, or pure, (Paez, 2007; Scott, 2018). However, when Latinas are perceived to live up to the expectations of the “good girl,” they are labeled as “bad girls” who...gang involved, and unworthy” (Scott, 2018, p. 50). All of these stereotypes serve to show it is impactful to develop a comprehension of the often stressful and unjust experiences of Latinas (Scott, 2018).

DISCUSSION

The idea of intersectionality takes individuals’ varying identities and examines how they work together to leave many people with a range of disadvantages when living outside of society. For instance, it is difficult to grasp the unique experiences of members of society, they must examine the way their identities intersect to multiply experiences of oppression (Khan, 2016). This study focuses on the interaction of race and gender and analyzes the effects this has on individuals. For example, when studying women of color, it was shown that not only does their ethnicity, open doors for discrimination in many areas, but also their gender, leaving them double disadvantaged (Goertz & Mazur, 2008). Moreover, when examining the intersection of race and gender for men with color, studies have shown that when their race interacts with their gender, it often takes away their previous advantages of being a man in the society (Bowleg, 2012; Rogers, Sperry, & Leventhal, 2015). The purpose of this study was to explore the way the interaction of race and gender produce inequalities for Asian, Latin, and African American men and women.

REFERENCES

Please refer to the PDF for full citations and references.