

CHAPTER III

EXTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1 History of the African-American Community in the United States

The mass migration of African Americans from the South to the North following World Wars I and II had profound social and economic implications for urban life in the United States (Williams, 2004:94). This demographic shift led to overpopulation in Black urban communities, intensifying socio-economic challenges. Urbanization brought cultural tensions between long-established Northern Black residents and Southern newcomers, often resulting in the marginalization of the latter. These dynamics, combined with structural racism, deepened issues related to race, class, and gender within American cities.

This migration also contributed to the emergence of street gangs and social unrest. Marginalized and economically disadvantaged African American populations, especially in urban areas, formed gangs as a response to systemic exclusion and inequality (Brown et al., 2012:4). The racial dynamics of urban spaces reinforced minority status and social hierarchy, shaping the formation of gang culture. Migration further disrupted family structures, created challenges in educational readiness due to cultural and linguistic differences, and affected interactions with law enforcement and the justice system.

In Los Angeles, the African American population was under 100 by 1870, but it began growing due to several factors, including the expansion of the Santa Fe Railroad, the 1887 land boom, and the advocacy of journalist John Niemore, who encouraged Black settlers to migrate in search of land ownership and independence (Brown et al., 2012:210–211). Early African American communities in Los Angeles

were characterized by cohesion and resistance to racism. Despite widespread segregation, manifested in discriminatory practices in entertainment venues and restaurants, these communities remained relatively stable and had not yet experienced the high crime, family instability, and youth delinquency commonly associated with ghetto life.

However, from the mid to late 1950s, intra-community violence increased, and gang activity began to rise (Brown et al., 2012:218). As middle- and upperclass Black residents moved to more exclusive neighborhoods, such as View Park and Baldwin Hills, white flight followed, and new class-based enclaves emerged. The departure of wealthier residents led to a decline in homeownership, neglect of property maintenance, and a deterioration of the urban environment. As a result, poverty deepened, and traditional advocacy groups like the NAACP lost influence due to the lack of support from the Black elite.

In impoverished areas like Watts, rising juvenile delinquency, cultural alienation, and widespread feelings of inferiority created fertile ground for severe social issues (Brown et al., 2012:219). Drug use and gang violence increased, with schools becoming hubs for drug distribution and youth violence. By the late 1960s, in the absence of strong role models or institutional support, many young African Americans sought identity and belonging through gang affiliation (Brown et al., 2012:220).

3.2 Discrimination Forms in the United States

Discrimination is a fundamental concept in understanding issues related to diversity (Pincus, 1996:185). Historically, in the United States, it has significantly restricted diversity in higher education and society (1996:186). The term

“dominant” describes groups that hold the majority of power in society. Meanwhile, the term “minority” refers to groups that have limited power, rather than those are numerically smaller. The three forms of discrimination are individual, institutional, and structural.

Individual discrimination refers to actions taken by individuals from a specific race, ethnic group, or gender that are intended to create unequal or harmful effects on members of another race, ethnic group, or gender (Pincus, 1996:186). Individual discrimination involves a deliberate intent to cause harm, though the extent of such behavior can vary significantly. Institutional discrimination differs significantly from individual discrimination as it pertains to the policies of dominant racial, ethnic, or gender-based institutions, as well as the actions of individuals in positions of power who enforce these policies to create unequal or harmful effects on minority groups (1966:187). This form of discrimination is embedded within major social institutions and extends beyond the public sector. Typically, institutional discrimination is carried out by the dominant group against minorities since the dominant group, by definition, holds control over these institutions (1996:186). While these policies may appear neutral in their intent, they often result in unequal or harmful consequences for minority racial, ethnic, or gender groups.

3.3 Social Identification Theory by Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams (1998)

According to Hogg & Abrams (1998), an individual’s identity is formed through their involvement in social groups and the interactions that occur within them. Social groups play a crucial role by providing direction, structure, and certainty in an individual’s social life. According to Hogg & Abrams (1998:15), psychological processes influence how identities and behaviors develop within

groups, including how individuals perceive themselves, evaluate other groups, and use symbols or language in social contexts. Social groups are formed not only based on shared race or social class, but also through meaningful shared experiences among members. This perspective views society as composed of various interrelated and hierarchical social groups (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:17).

3.3.1 The Cause of Intragroup Discrimination

3.3.1.1 Social Identity

One of the central concepts in this theory is social identity. Hogg & Abrams (1998:15) describe social identity as the part of a person's identity that arises from belonging to a specific social group that shares norms and values. This is because when members deviate from group norms, the group may respond with intragroup discrimination to protect its identity and cohesion.

3.3.1.1.1 Categorization

Self-categorization is a psychological process in which individuals define themselves and others based on group membership (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:18). This is because, once individuals identify with a group, they adopt its norms and values to maintain a sense of belonging. However, when certain members deviate from those shared norms, whether in behaviour, appearance, or beliefs, they may face intragroup discrimination. This happens because their differences are seen as a threat to the group's cohesion and collective identity, leading to exclusion or negative treatment from fellow group members.

3.3.1.1.2 Social Comparison

Social comparison is a process where individuals evaluate their group in relation to others to build a positive group identity (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:20). This

is because, in the effort to strengthen their group image, members often emphasize internal conformity. When individuals within the group differ from dominant norms or challenge the group's values, they may be perceived as weakening the group's status. This perceived threat can lead to intragroup discrimination, where those who don't fit the ideal image are excluded or devalued by fellow group members.

3.3.1.2 Social Mobility and Social Change

3.3.1.2.1 Social Mobility

According to Hogg & Abrams (1998:24), social mobility refers to the belief that group boundaries can be crossed. Social mobility is often used to distance oneself from a low-status group identity and move toward a higher-status dominant group identity.

3.3.1.2.2 Social Change

Social change refers to the belief that group boundaries are rigid, fixed, and impermeable (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:25). This means that a person cannot simply leave a subordinate group and join a dominant group. In such situations, the only option is to improve the social status of their group from within, rather than trying to leave it.

3.3.1.3 Stereotype

Stereotypes are general assumptions about a group that form because humans tend to categorize people into social groups (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:70). Over time, these stereotypes become believed and used by group members as a way of perceiving themselves and other groups.

3.3.2 The Influence of Intragroup Discrimination

3.3.2.1 Self-Awareness

Objective Self-Awareness (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:107) explains that individuals become self-aware when their attention is focused on themselves. This process plays an important role in influencing social behaviour, including the tendency to conform to group norms to gain social acceptance.

3.3.2.2 Social Performance

According to Hogg & Abrams (1998:109), social performance refers to how people behave when they are aware of being observed by others. In such situations, individuals tend to adjust their attitudes and behaviors to be accepted by the group or to follow existing social rules. The goal is to make a good impression and gain acceptance from others in external social contexts.

3.3.3 The Interaction within the African-American Community

3.3.3.1 Intragroup Behaviour

3.3.3.1.1 Traditional Perspective

A traditional perspective defines a social group as a face-to-face collective of individuals who share common goals and mutual affection, where sustained interaction fosters roles, structure, emotional bonds, and a sense of identity that strengthens group cohesion (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:83–84).

3.3.3.1.2 Group Dynamics

3.3.3.1.2.1 Intragroup Attraction

Intragroup attraction is a form of attraction among group members that arises from their shared group membership (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:93). This attraction forms when individuals identify themselves with the group. There are two distinct

types of attraction: social attraction, which occurs among group members due to shared membership, and personal attraction, which is based on closer, more unique personal relationships between individuals within the group (Hogg & Abrams, 1998:100).

3.3.3.1.2.2 Group Polarization

According to Hogg & Abrams (1998:156), group polarization is a phenomenon where a group's decisions or opinions become more extreme than those held by individual members before discussion. This occurs due to conformity to group norms, influenced by the tendency of members to follow the behaviours or opinions of those perceived as the most prototypical or representative of the group.