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CRITIQUE

Dear Anna,

In editing your essay I have tried to make it flow as smoothly as possible. I think your original could have been read as suggesting that the theories that *explain* racism actually *cause* it; I have rephrased it to avoid this problem. Also, the Caucasus is a region – the people from the region are called Caucasians.

I have substituted *aggravate* for *alleviate* and made similar changes where I thought the context required it. I have also reworded the opening and closing paragraphs for greater clarity.

Best wishes,

Keith McLennan

BetterEdit Editor

Social Psychological Theories Underlying Racism in Russia

As a result of changes in legislation and societal values, Russia has witnessed a major growth in the prevalence of prejudicial attitudes. Recent times have seen a decline

~~Russia has encompassed major changes in the prevalence of prejudicial attitudes through changes to legislations and societal values. At present, there has been a decrease in democracy and a corresponding increase in the rise of “Russism” (Russian chauvinistic nationalism). The objectives of Russism are, firstly, to create an ethnically pure Russian state, more generally, to persecute Caucasians (peoples of the “Caucasus” (such as the Georgians, Azeris, Armenians and Chechens) and who differ by their physical type from the Russian (Slavic Russian) majority. According to MSNBC.com, people of African and Asian origin are also targeted (MSNBC.com). These dark-skinned minorities are subjected to a high degree of hostility, discrimination and violence throughout the Russian Federation.~~

Social psychological research is rich with examples of how race adversely affects social perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. This essay will first examine the social categorization theory, which suggests that Russian citizens are being categorized and segregated in terms of their ethnic groups – namely, the ethnic “white” Russians, and the rest who are not ethnic Russians. This will then examine the psychological fundamentals and theories underlying the individual and intergroup processes that drive racial conflict and violence in the Russian Skinhead movement.

Social Categorization by Ethnicity

The categorization ~~by ethnicity~~

~~The categorization of the~~ Russian citizens into ethnic groups ~~has~~ caused ~~their the~~ racial differences to be highlighted and made more salient. ~~The Based on the~~ social categorization theory suggests that Russians have been ~~,the ethnic Russian is~~ evaluated and classified into two groups: ~~which is~~ the ingroup (the group that one belongs to) and ~~the~~ outgroup (~~the~~ group that is not one's own). The effects of categorization ~~lead~~ to ~~within~~ ~~group~~ assimilation ~~within the group~~, and ~~contrast~~ between ~~groups~~ ~~group contrast~~; ingroup members ~~perceive~~ ~~perceived the~~ outgroup members to be more similar to one another (Charles, 2003), ~~while~~ the ingroup generates more negative opinions and attributions towards the outgroup (Tajfel, 1981; Pettigrew, 1979), as well as ~~tend in~~ ~~the tendency~~ to stereotype outgroup members (Charles, 2003). This is obviously shown in the interview with Tesak (an ethnic Russian skinhead) who viewed his race in a positive light (i.e. ingroup favouritism) while he belittled the out-group (i.e. ~~the Caucasians~~ ~~Caucasus~~) and had a strongly negative stereotyped opinion regarding them (Blascovich, Wyer, Swart & Kibler, 1997). To put it succinctly, the differentiation between ~~the~~ ingroup and outgroup ~~demonstrates~~ ~~demonstrated~~ that ingroup favouritism is simply a result of categorization (Hamilton, 1979, as cited in Howard & Pike, 1986).

Formation of Stereotypical, Prejudicial and Discriminatory Attitudes ~~Formation of stereotypical, prejudicial and discriminating attitudes~~

When an individual is categorized as a group member, the observer can assume that that person possesses many characteristic features of that particular group. ~~Stereotyping occurs~~ ~~Stereotype occur~~ when the observer ~~refuses~~ ~~refused~~ to see individuality in other people; and ~~tends~~ to see them in terms of various fixed and oversimplified ethnic categories (DeSteno, Dasgupta, Bartlett & Cajdric, 2004). The consequence of stereotypical

perceptions is the formation of prejudicial attitudes (Locke, Macleod and Walker, 1994). Prejudice refers to the negative judgement that is made of a group and its individual members. ~~In Specifically in~~ the context of ~~the~~ Russian ethnic violence, racial prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization towards a group as a whole, or towards an individual because he is a member of that group (Allport, 1954, as cited in Wade, 1985); in this instance it is ~~the~~ ethnic categorization. This behavioural manifestation of racial prejudice will lead to ~~discriminatory~~ ~~discriminating~~ behaviour. The behaviour is based on ~~stereotyping~~ ~~one's stereotype~~ and prejudicial thoughts ~~that deny~~ ~~which denies~~ equality of treatment to other people and ~~lead to their being treated~~ ~~treats them~~ differently ~~based~~ ~~purely based~~ on their group ~~membership~~ ~~memberships~~ (Fiske, 2004). ~~It results~~; ~~thus, resulting~~ in racially motivated violence and racial harassment (Raab and Lipset, 1959, as cited in Charles, 2003).

Devine's ~~(1989)~~ socio-cognitive theory of stereotypes and prejudice ~~states that~~ ~~stereotype~~ ~~ing~~ ~~stated that stereotype~~ is an automatic process ~~that begins~~ ~~which is attained~~ from a very young age and ~~is acquired~~ ~~gained~~ via channels of socialization. Ethnic attitudes and stereotypes are part of the social heritage of society, ~~so that~~ ~~thus~~ children learn the consensual stereotypes of other ethnic groups in their community at an early age. This is somewhat similar to Kohlberg's ~~(1976)~~ theory of moral development, which suggests that a young child's ~~cognition is~~ ~~cognitions are~~ dominated and prescribed by strict adherence to conventional and societal norms. ~~Automatic~~ ~~The automatic~~ stereotypical opinions become established in memory ~~from~~ ~~since~~ early childhood (Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001) and will ~~endure into~~ ~~follow through to their~~ adulthood.

Given the pervasiveness of racism and racial violence in Russia, a vast array of social psychological theories may be used to examine the individual and intergroup processes that drive this racial conflict: ethnocentrism, realistic group conflict theory, social identity theory, social dominance theory, the frustration-aggression hypothesis, deindividuation, conformity and institutional racism.

Ethnocentrism

An ethnocentric attitude is one of the primary functions of competition between ethnic groups. In ethnocentrism, certain people judge all other community groups by the standard of their own group (Ray & Lovejoy, 1986). It involves the assumption that thinking well of one's own group entails looking down on the members of the other groups (Heaven, Rajab & Ray, 1984). The consistent derogation of the devalued out-group and approbation of the valued in-group occur is regardless of the positive or negative nature of actual behaviour (Greenberg and Rosenfield, 1979). The members of outgroup were being treated in a hostile manner simply because they were different from the ingroup (Howard & Pike, 1986). In the SBS video, Tesak belittles and devalues the Caucasians and has clearly acquired negative attributes towards them. He is proud to be an "Aryan" and he hates the other ethnic groups due to the difference in their appearance.

Realistic Group Conflict Theory

According to realistic group conflict theory (Bobo, 1983; 1988), group conflict and ethnocentric attitudes and behaviours are the fundamental functions of "realistic" competition between groups, which is said to stem from scarcity of resources.

resources and perceived threats to the group position. The ~~Therefore the~~ theory holds that economic, political, and military or prestige-related threats to ingroup advantage will result in negative intergroup reactions (Campbell, 1965). The skinhead movement ~~aims was to~~ legitimize the current inequalities through group-interest ideologies, which ~~resultsresulted~~ in the perpetuation of discriminatory behaviour. In the years since the collapse of the Soviet Union, ~~the~~ ethnic Russians ~~have~~ felt threatened by the economic ~~activities of domination of~~ ~~the~~ non-ethnic-Russian groups. Thus, a ~~perceived the~~ threat to ~~their~~ employment, territory and economic benefits in Russia could have been one factor ~~leading that led~~ to ~~such~~ racial violence and discrimination. ~~NonFurthermore, the non~~ ethnic Russians and ~~immigrants~~ ~~are~~ ~~migrants were~~ regarded as ~~to be~~ stealing the jobs of ethnic Russians, who feel ~~threatened; therefore they felt threaten~~ by the non-ethnic-Russian ~~Russians~~ (outgroup) due to the limited resources in Russia.

Social Identity Theory~~*Social identity theory*~~

According to the social identity theory, ~~membership~~ ~~people's memberships~~ in groups ~~contributes to people's~~ ~~contribute to their~~ self-esteem, so that ~~and therefore~~ individuals are motivated to attain and maintain a positive social identity from the groups to which they belong ~~to~~ (Tajfel, 1981). When people think of themselves in terms of their ethnicity and race, they are motivated to protect the identity of their group relative to the other ethnic groups, and thus they strive to differentiate the in-group favourably from the relevant out-group (Ford & Tornander, 1998). Similarly, Brewer (1991) ~~posit~~ ~~posited~~ that a person's social identity derives from the ~~ir~~ membership of ~~a~~ race. As seen from the video, ~~skinhead killings~~ ~~the killing of the~~ non-ethnic Russians such as ~~Caucasians are~~ ~~the Caucasus~~ ~~is~~ widespread, and ~~However, the~~ Russian skinheads are ~~sufficiently~~ proud of ~~this~~ ~~their~~ achievement" to ~~justify in killing the Caucasus and have justified~~ their murderous acts. With each killing, the Russian skinheads ~~seem~~ ~~seemed~~ to increase their group's self-esteem and ~~their pride in~~ ~~are proud that they are~~ doing their race a favour".

Social Dominance Theory~~*Social dominance theory*~~

According to social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1997), individuals differ in the degree to which they desire unequal status relations between groups in society. Individuals who want groups at the bottom of the social hierarchy to be kept down and dominated by groups at the top of the hierarchy endorse a variety of ideologies, ~~such as~~ ~~racism, and individualism,~~ which justify greater levels of social inequality. ~~This such as~~ ~~racism, and individualism.~~ ~~Similarly, this~~ group-based dominance and hierarchical structure ~~are~~ ~~is~~ prevalent in Russia. Alexander Kuzmich Ivanov Sukharevsky (the leader of the People's National Party) ~~claims~~ ~~claimed~~ that the "Russian people always stand for

justice” while “Asians have no notion of justice”, thus implying the superiority of the Russian race. His followers refer to Caucasians ~~They refered to the Caucasus~~ as “filth” and are extremely prejudiced against ~~them, obviously the Caucasus;~~ viewing ~~them the latter~~ as ~~an the~~ inferior group. ~~In As seen in~~ the video, Lena, the 17 year-old-female supporter of Russism, ~~states member, stated~~ that she does not want the future generation of children to be slaves to the Caucasus, thus ~~emphasizing implying that~~ her disapproval of having to be “inferior” to ~~the~~ non-ethnic Russians. Similarly, Dmitri Rogozin (head of the Rodina Party) ~~fight also fight~~ for more “rights” for the ethnic Russians in order to put ~~them the ethnic Russians~~ in a higher hierarchical status ~~than when compared to the~~ non-ethnic Russians. Therefore, the ethnic ~~Russians~~ are competing for social dominance through the ~~racism~~ ideology of ~~racism~~ in order to achieve the desired higher hierarchical status ~~in Russia~~.

The Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis ~~Frustration aggression hypothesis~~

The frustration-aggression hypothesis by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Sears (1939, cited in Fiske, 2004) has been put forward as another source that drives the spiral of inter-ethnic violence. ~~Frustration at not attaining The frustration to~~ a certain goal, leads to ~~the~~ eventual aggression as a response. This aggression is then directed towards other groups as scapegoats and unwilling substitutes for the ~~original~~ recipient of the aggression. In addition, emotions also play a part in activating goal-driven action tendencies (Ledoux, 1996). ~~This Thus, this~~ prepares the drive to challenge the associated conflict in order to achieve the desired goals (Bodenhausen, Mussweiler, Gabriel & Moreno, 2001). With reference to the video, the ethnic Russians were angry and frustrated with the ~~Caucasians Caucasus~~ for “stealing” their jobs in Russia, and ~~so thus they are being~~ attacked ~~them~~ and made ~~them victims the victim~~ of their aggression. Such aggression is evident in

the incident where a 9-year-old Tajik girl was beaten to death by ~~the~~ Russian skinheads and ~~in the murder~~~~the murdering~~ of Artur Amirova. ~~The~~~~Furthermore, the~~ frustration-aggression hypothesis also explains Tesak's drive to kill the Chechens ; it ~~, which~~ was triggered by his girlfriend's death.

Deindividuation

Being part of the Russian Skinhead movement, Tesak and his fellow skinhead members ~~are~~ were somewhat 'masked'. Their alteration of their external facade (by ~~becoming~~ being skinheads) ~~and not using their real names~~ could have led to deindividuation. Deindividuation is a process whereby ~~variables in~~ external input ~~variables~~ lessen self-awareness and one's concern with other's evaluations of oneself (Zimbardo, 1969). It ~~has been~~ was found that ~~when deindividuation accompanies~~ accompanying anonymity, it creates the potential for individuals to act in evil ways and eventually to execute violence (Diener, 1980). ~~It is noticeable in As seen from~~ the video that ~~;~~ Tesak ~~has~~ did not used his real name since he entered the skinhead movement. He began to be known by his street name instead.

Conformity

Conformity refers to the act of changing one's behaviour to match the responses of others (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). The Russian skinheads ~~are~~ were headed and supported by an influential political figure; thus ~~the~~ Russian youths ~~are~~ were probably conforming to the societal norm in joining the Russian skinhead movement ~~in order~~; to persecute ~~Caucasians~~ the Caucasus and ~~the drive to~~ create an ethnically pure Russian state. The "silent" approval of the police and the inaction of the government could ~~have~~ also have been a major encouragement (Zimbardo, 2004). ~~Being~~ Therefore, ~~being~~ part of a 15,000-member political group and gaining ~~the tacit approval of the~~ from police department could ~~well~~ have resulted in a diffused sense of personal responsibility ~~among of the~~ members of ~~the~~ the ~~Russian~~ skinhead movement and thus furthered the abuse of ~~on the~~ non-ethnic Russians.

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Institutional Racism

Apart from individual and intergroup processes that drive racial conflict, there has also been evidence of institutional racism in Russia, in several domains: in the criminal justice system, the employment sector and the media (Jones, 1997). In the video, the Amirovas state their difficulty in finding employment in Russia due to their ethnicity and their low socio-economic standing. In addition, the police department seems to approve the racial violence, while the government manipulates the xenophobic attitudes of the population. The situation is this out of control. To further aggravate the problem, the racial hatred has been further fuelled by the government's demonisation of the Chechen people to justify the war on Chechnya.

In conclusion, social psychological research and theories state that race influences social perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. In contemporary Russia, these factors have been severely disadvantageous towards the members of non-ethnic-Russian ethnic groups. Although race is the result of a categorization process based on race, it leads to devastating consequences in Russia as the non-ethnic Russians are being targeted as victims of racial prejudice and violence. The intergroup processes that drive racial conflicts, the institutional racism of the police department, and the xenophobic attitudes of the government have made lead to the vulnerability of these dark-skinned minorities vulnerable even though they too are Russian citizens, and their safety is at grave risk.

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