

There were lots of thoughts racing through my mind before the research interviews. To start, the questions for the interview me and my group did were: What does racial injustice mean to you? Have you personally experienced racial injustice? How do you think we as a community can help combat against racial injustice? We came up with these questions to help get a better understanding and different perspectives on how others view racial injustice, how it has affected them, and what they think can help fight against it.

I started with a mental hypothesis of how I believed people would answer depending on their race/ethnicity. I predicted that more people of color would most likely have experienced some type of microaggression or subtle racism at some point in their lives, while white people would answer they have not experienced or they know someone who did, who is most likely a person of color.

At first, it was very awkward and hard when trying to approach people, but it got easier and easier with each interview. I noticed that for me, approaching women was much easier than approaching men. It was also easier asking people who were by themselves rather than asking a big group.

The results of the research interviews made my hypothesis correct. Five out of eleven of the people we interviewed were white. The other six were people of color. The five white people answered that they have not experienced racial injustice, while the six people of color said they did or that they experienced microaggression.

Something I noticed during the interviews is the answers to how to combat against racial injustice. One answer that really stood out to me was by Megan. Megan states “I think we could make classes teaching about different minority’s history.” This answer stood out to me because it is similar to the answer on how to combat racial injustice.

In my eyes, racism is caused by ignorance of another’s culture and history. This ignorance leaves room for misinformation and stereotyping of racial/ethnic groups. If we are educated on other racial/ethnic group’s culture and history, we could erase our ignorance and then be able to form our own opinion and thoughts around them. Through this would gain an understanding of why different cultures do the things they do and what they went through and hopefully gain respect for them rather than hate.

Another answer that was interesting to me was one from Kacianna, a young biracial woman. She talked about her experience in being one of few people of color within her small, predominately white town. In her town, racism was much more present and outspoken. There were many white

people who would use the N-word religiously. She also states how she was often racially profiled when she would work at the bank. Customers would accuse her of stealing money from them.

Kacianna's situation shows how racists are more outspoken in predominantly white areas. As a person of color who grew up in predominantly black areas, racism was not much of a problem for me. There were times when I experienced microaggression, but nothing blunt. Now, transitioning into SIUE which is a predominantly white institution, I have experienced and/or heard more stories of microaggression or racism than I ever did in the previous years of my life.

Next time, I would suggest asking more data based questions such as asking for race/ethnicity, age, etc. This could help us better understand the people we are collecting data from.

In conclusion, this research not only helped give me more data for my hypothesis, but it also helped to open my eyes to more research questions for the future. I think it is also important to note that with this data, it is also up to us to spread awareness of the issues presented and to help find solutions for them as well.