

Triangulating Racial Discourse: Post-Racialism, Non-Racialism, and Anti-Racism Across the United States, South Africa and England

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Abstract

This oral presentation is a comparative analysis of three dominant racial frameworks: the United States' post-racialism, South Africa's non-racialism, and England's anti-racism to examine how each shape's racial identity formation and influences students' self-esteem and sense of self-worth. While these frameworks are often positioned as progressive responses to histories of racial oppression, they carry distinct ideological assumptions that shape how race is discussed, minimized, or confronted within educational and social contexts. Drawing on qualitative methodologies, such as facilitated cross-cultural dialogue, this research centers the lived experiences of students engaging these frameworks in both classroom and community-based settings. In South Africa, non-racialism often promotes unity while obscuring persistent inequalities; in the United States, post-racial narratives can invalidate ongoing racial realities; and in England, anti-racism initiatives attempt to directly confront structural inequities yet vary widely in implementation and impact. This study argues that these frameworks do more than shape discourse, they influence how students understand themselves, their value, and their belonging within society. By foregrounding student voice, this research highlights the emotional and psychological consequences of racial discourse. Ultimately, the paper calls for more critically engaged, culturally responsive approaches that center both structural awareness and individual well-being in conversations about race.

Keywords: Racial identity formation, Non-Racialism, Post-Racialism, Anti-Racism, Student Well-Being