Government and Indigenous Australians

Exclusionary values upheld in Australian Government continue to unjustly prohibit the participation of minority population groups. Indigenous people "are among the most socially excluded in Australia" with only 2.2% of Federal parliament comprised of Aboriginal's. Additionally, Aboriginal culture and values, "can be hard for non-Indigenous people to understand" but are critical for creating socially inclusive policy. This exclusion from parliament is largely as a result of a "cultural and ethnic default in leadership" and exclusionary values held by Australian parliament. Furthermore, Indigenous values of autonomy, community and respect for elders is not supported by the current structure of government.

The lack of cohesion between Western Parliamentary values and Indigenous cultural values has contributed to historically low voter participation and political representation in parliament. Additionally, the historical exclusion, restrictive Western cultural norms and the continuing lack of consideration for the cultural values and unique circumstances of Indigenous Australians, vital to promote equity and remedy problems that exist within Aboriginal communities, continue to be overlooked. Current political processes make it difficult for Indigenous people to have power over decisions made on their behalf to solve issues prevalent in Aboriginal communities. This is largely as "Aboriginal representatives are in a better position to represent Aboriginal people and that existing politicians do not or cannot perform this role."

Deeply "entrenched inequality in Australia" has led to the continuity of traditional Anglo-Australian Parliamentary values, which inherently exclude Indigenous Australians. Additionally, the communication between the White Australian population and the Aboriginal population remains damaged, due to "European contact tend[ing] to undermine Aboriginal laws, society, culture and religion". The lack of cohesion between the traditional Anglo-Australian values upheld since federation and Indigenous Australian culture have continued to limit Aboriginal people's access to government. This is highly concerning as Aboriginals are the traditional owners of Australian land and have historically been excluded emphasising the need for unique considerations to promote equity.

The typical identity of Australian political leaders continues to be an inadequate depiction of the diversity present in Australian society, despite the alleged egalitarian values of the Australian government. The mainstreamed political identity present in Australia as "white, heterosexual, Anglo-Celtic males" excludes minority populations, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people. Thus, it is evident that "systemic problems apparent in Western liberal democracies are at play" that cannot effectively be solved without Indigenous political representatives.

Indigenous Australians values and needs continue to be ignored within macro- level governmental institutions, perpetuating systemic racism and advancing social exclusion. The

social exclusion faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australian Government due to the deeply entrenched nature of "ancient, pre-existent social and cultural factors" are highly significant factors in the low participation in parliamentary processes by Aboriginal people. The inability of current representatives to "recognise the diversity of Indigenous peoples in Australia" due to the non-homogenous nature of Indigenous Australian culture, makes it increasingly difficult to make legislation and policy surrounding Indigenous issues without having partisanship or understanding of this group.