

Sample essay on urban young men and incarceration

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



Question 2

Rios emphasizes on both cultural and structural aspects that have majorly contributed to the incarceration of the young men in the urban setups. The fact that the young men in the urban centers have lost hope in the police and the criminal system is enough to qualify this (Pettit, Becky and Western, page. 154). They feel that the systems are not in place to protect them but to harass them. This is apparent from the questioning that they receive from school teachers to the authorities around them to establish whether they are involved in any crime related activities.

Dropping out of school has been one of the reasons why there are an increased number of young men in prisons, in the United States. This cuts across all the races in the U. S. though the African Americans are the most affected. This may be due to the permissive nature of the American society; the parents and the education systems have failed to protect these young men from the state prisons.

According to Rios, another major cause of higher rates of incarceration of the young men can be attributed "labelling". He gives the statistic that 1 out every 3 black men in their age cohort is under incarceration or behind bars. A similar scenario is evidenced for the Latinos where 1 out of every 6 have been incarcerated. As a result of the habit of labelling certain groups to be high risk, increased incarceration and containment occurs. Consequently, more resources are directed towards supporting incarceration than in facilitating for higher education. Incidentally, the lack of higher education amongst these young men leaves them vulnerable to lack of employment. Subsequently, as they try to establish their identity, many start with the

wrong footing and find themselves indulging in the illegal activities that promise to generate income.

The Blacks suffered in the hands of racial segregation. This meant that the fourteenth and the fifteenth amendment rights of the African -American would not be applied. This made the Africans in the South become loyal to the republicans. African-Americans were the first people to lose their jobs when the great depression struck. The Democrats were happy about this occurrence until the party leadership once again allowed their (African American) rights to be exercised. The South made it impossible for full execution of the New Deal terms. It used its power to make a regional division between the African Americans and themselves, for example, the law of 1935 that led to the creation of the Social Security System (Meier and Schlesinger 28). This explains clearly that the plight of black men since history. It was an impediment towards the realization of the policies that would have enable them secure better future for their generations. However, some developments have occurred that were able to achieve one of a significant goal of creating an American Welfare state, which included the retirement plan and empowerment of the labor movements.

Most of the young men are experimenting, and some of them have resorted into drugs. These drugs impair their moral judgment, leading them to doing that which they come to regret when they are sober. Most urban young men perceive jail as something that is normal. Therefore, they may not consider the implications of not abiding by the rules and regulations. For the urban young men, seeing their parents mistreated by the other white people, or discriminated against is dehumanizing. The manner in which hiring is done

when it comes to employment opportunities deserves a lot to be looked at. Cultural and structural racism has been greatly implicated in the increased population of the young male minority populations. Many young men who committed crimes that are not violent have been sent to prison to serve a long time. This is usually based on their skin color, thus, explains why there are a lot of African American origins in the prisons. Consequently, they develop resentment where they continually engage in even graver crimes. Even after they complete serving their jail terms, it becomes imposed to integrate in the society as they lack the fundamental skills that they can leverage to earn a living.

These neighborhoods are characterized by high levels of poverty with the people there living in deplorable conditions.

Michelle Alexander

Michelle makes a valid explanation when she likens the mass incarceration with the New Jim Crow, because just like the old Jim Crow laws, today, there are many minority persons who have suffered the racial segregation before the courts that are supposed to protect them (Michelle , page. 74).

The fight against racism in the United States courts has not ended, but just started. The only thing that has changed is that, it is done in more subtle ways as opposed to the past. It has just been given a new name, but the fact remains that a racism is deeply rooted in the American Judiciary (Michelle, p. 177). This explains why there is a large number of African-American in the prisons. There is an increased chance of up to six fold for a black person to be sent to prison in the United States. It is more likely that most of the black families with single mothers have their men locked up in prisons. The homes

of the blacks have been weakened by the imprisonment of the heads of the households, (Michelle, p. 179). It is also true that African American has been discriminated against, either by not receiving equal services that are offered, or employment opportunities. It is also noticeable that the services of a jury are hardly given to the black people. The problem has further been complicated by the minority themselves who have turned a blind eye to these injustices by assuming that everything is all right. The big issue remains whether is it justified for one to be sent to prison on the basis of their race.

The moment the African American community is going to realize that majority of the inmates in the federal prison are of black origin, then, they will they be able to liberate themselves from these shackles of racism and discrimination (Pettit, Becky and Western , p. 154). There may be a denial that African Americans have not been targeted in the courts, but the realization that there are some forms of racial abuse in schools and hospitals makes it a bitter herb to swallow.

More trouble comes in when this vice becomes part of us, and the manner in which things are done. This makes it difficult to decipher whether really someone has been racially discriminated against. The idea explains the status quo that is usually observed in the various parts of the United States.

Changes

The offenders of non-violent crimes should be pardoned in order to prevent mass incarceration of the black people. There should be checks and balances to evaluate some of the cases that are determined in the courts especially

that involve the black people.

There should be mechanisms to prevent any form of discrimination especially work related to the African Americans to have equal job opportunities. This will ensure that the blacks also have a way of making an honest living.

Spending on some programs should be cut to ensure that more urgent programs are given emphasis, such as, Programs for the poor and the medical care programs. This is because most of the veterans once had jobs and made some savings.

Awareness campaigns should be made to help enlighten those people who are not aware, or are ignorant that racism and discrimination in the courts have been the sole contributor of mass incarceration. This way, it will be possible to avert the injustice committed due to discrimination resulting in more young men in jails

The police should be fair in conducting their operations, right from the moment one is asked to stop to the time he/she is arrested. For those offenders who have shown a significant behavior change, such people should be granted parole in spite of their race or color.

Impacts

There will be continued fairness in the handling of the cases in the courts to ensure that one is not just sent to prison because of their color, but because they are guilty. Pardoning of those people with minor offenses will ensure that there is no congestion in prisons. There will be increased awareness of the injustices faced by the African American society. The idea of promoting

equal job opportunities across the races will foster self-reliance hence minimize the crime rates. The number of incarcerated blacks in jails will reduce significantly.

The aspect of dependency on the state aid will further increase. This may lead to a nation of entitlements as opposed to the one for opportunities. Investing in creating awareness and higher education for the youth will ensure that majority of them secure job opportunities. As a result, they get a chance to direct their efforts towards legal activities that contribute to the economy and their personal development. This will reduce the number of young men in incarceration or containment. Impelling the police officers to make a thorough investigation before apprehension will ensure that the young men receive fair treatment from the officers. Consequently, there will be a reduction in their number in the jail.

Conclusion

The injustices that used to be witnessed in the past are still at large, though the manner in which they are manifested now a days is hard to establish.

The government should put down measures to ensure that the challenges illustrated in this paper are addressed.

References

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