

Theories for youth gang crime references



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Reasons Why Teens Engage in Street Gang Related Crime

Introduction

The rapid increase of criminal gangs in the United States of America has been alarming in the recent past. It had been reported that these criminal gangs have been recruiting juveniles as members of the gang (Howell, 2015). Due to this tremendous increase, there has become the need to address this issue critically and extensively. The issue of radicalization of the youth can also be addressed on this topic (Howell, 2015). Most youths have enrolled themselves in these gangs for a couple of reasons such as the need for affiliation and peer pressure, weak social; control structures among others. The thirst of power for these youngsters can also be seen as a driving factor to the enrolment to this criminal gang. The gangs have structures that are determined by the ability and willingness to commit crimes (Howell, 2015). These gangs are a major threat to the well-being of the people they operate around due to their actions of robbery, assaults and uncontrolled killings. Failure of the federal government to implement harsh laws on criminals bears all the blame for the increase in street gangs.

Structure of gangs

Most types of gangs form the general structure of the organized group. The group members, as derived from the definition of a gang, are from a similar background and share a common interest (Ratcliffe, 2016). The members of these groups are arranged in hierarchies which are determined by specific factors such as the ability to fight, physical structure, the willingness to commit crimes among others. Most gangs operate informally having their leadership falling on whoever takes control. The structure depends on their primary size which in most times ranges from five to thousand (Krohn & Eassey, 2015). The structure of gangs may also depend on the mission of the gang. It may have subgroups in itself that report to the main group.

Research done by the federal board of investigations indicates that about thirty-three thousand criminal gangs operate in the United States of America. These gangs have been reported to enroll about 1.4 million members in the past fourteen years (Ratcliffe, 2016). Another study by statistic brain found that about forty percent of the gangs in the US are below eighteen years of age. It further analyzed that about eight percent of the gang members are females. Large cities and their suburbs remain the hub of street gangs in the United States America having about forty-one and twenty-five percent respectively (Phillips, 2015). Street gangs cost the government about one million dollars to establish the gang risk intervention program that was initiated in the Los Angeles school system

Social control theory postulates that most people would commit crimes if not for the controls that the society puts on them (Krohn & Eassey, 2015). In this

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case, most children will engage themselves in crimes since the society has less strict rules that guide the conduct of the children. The society may lack the fundamental structures that control the children such as the school. Due to this, the children are likely to be pulled by their peers to enter into crime and criminal related activities to so as to quench their thirst of affiliation (Krohn & Eassey, 2015). The failure of the school to develop affirmative guidelines to control the behavior of the students can lead the students to crimes.

Strain theory assumes that the society sets goals for the people to achieve. The people are guided by the societal values so as to achieve that target. When people fail to achieve the targets in the most moral ways, they use every means to make sure that they at least accomplish what the society expects regardless of the moral drive (Krohn & Eassey, 2015). By so doing, they find themselves engaging in criminal acts. In most times most people who engage themselves in crimes do not like hard work and delayed gratification, therefore, they look for a better and faster way of achieving their goal.

Social disorganization theory postulates that a child's physical and social environments are key factors that shape the behavior of the child. A society that has weak structures is likely to mold people who are weak in their morality. In this theory, the society a person lives in is held into account of the person's choices (Howell, 2015). A society that is characterized by poor schools, high rate of unemployment, and a mix of residential and commercial property is likely to have many young people developing criminal behaviors. For example, a child living in a filthy environment will tend to have

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a behavior that leans towards crime while that who lives in a physically and morally clean environment is likely to have a behavior that leads the towards morality and deviance to crimes.

Engaging in crimes violates the law. Gang violence is a threat to the social and economic welfare of the country. Gang violence drives away investors since they threaten investment. People who engage themselves in crimes are an economic liability to the society (Krohn & Eassey, 2015). Also, the cost of incarcerating gang members is very high and strains the public finance for the federal government. The other problem of young people engaging in crimes is that they act as a threat to security. Young people are usually very energetic, and if engaged in criminal activities they can cause high insecurity to the lives of peoples and their property. Criminal gangs dissolve the societies' values but acting in defiance of the set rules. The meaning of the laws set by the society is lessened by the criminal activities (Krohn & Eassey, 2015). Criminal gangs tamper with the social order. They change the usual way of living and after that dismantle the already existing social structures. These gangs give teachers and the law enforcers a hard time during their correction.

The social structures such as the school should be made stronger so as to prevent radicalization of the youth. They should have an elaborate structure of governance that offers strict rules and regulations to be used as a guidance tool for the conduct of the young children. Teachers, for example, should conduct themselves in a way that is worth copying by the children (Howell, 2015). They should act as role models for the children to emulate and embrace their behavior. The school should have mechanisms

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that control the children behavior not only in the school environment but also in their entire interactions in the society at large.

The federal government of the United States of America has set up the National gang intelligence center with the aim of curbing the growth of criminal gangs which have been reportedly increasing tremendously. The NGIC has the mandate to integrate the gang intelligence across the individual states and the local law enforcement agencies (Ratcliffe, 2016). The center provides timely and accurate information by ensuring that it provides strategic analysis of intelligence. The

The Transnational Anti-Gang task force has been established to curb the MS-13 and the 18th street gangs which are very popular in the United States. The mission of this force is to investigate, interrupt and dismantle any of these transnational gangs (Howell, 2015). This force operates as a team with the FBI. The government should also ensure that they initiate the safe neighborhood projects that will help in reporting crimes when the gangs start to form. This will help combat the criminal gangs from the grassroots.

Recommendation

Parents must be provided with the necessary education on how to spot the signs of aging associations of their children. They should also be taught on how to work with their children to make the value of the gangs seem less fashionable. Families also need help to deal with their children who show aspects of deviance by joining street gangs (Krohn & Eassey, 2015). The school also should put in place viable measures that will help in reducing the pressure for the children to join the street gangs. The school should provide

the lawenforcers with the right information on the development of gangs in the schools. it should also give accurate information on drugs to the students (Phillips, 2015). The teachers should also teach the students on how to “ say no” to drugs and other crimes.

Conclusion

As from the above statistics, street gangs are very dangerous and bring about extensive problems (Howell, 2015). They are very critical, and they should be dealt with immediate effect because they get bigger and worse when they realize that there is no action being taken against them. Even after the efforts of the government, and the social structures to combat the gangs, the gangs have continued to grow tremendously in the United States of America (Phillips, 2015). The above recommendation is believed to bring an amicable solution if put in place since they deal with the criminal gangs at the grassroots.

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