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Introduction

South Bronx is found among the administrative divisions New York City, the richest city in the world. There is a region in New York called Southern Bronx, which is different from South Bronx. South Bronx is strictly the southwestern part of the borough of Bronx and Bronx is the only borough in New York city in the mainland. Though New York is the richest city in the world, we find ten of the poorest congregational districts here, among them, South Bronx. It borders Manhattan to the east, the richest congregational district in North America. South Bronx is the most famous slum in the nation due to its past since it was named, a city without slums (Jonnes, 2002. Rooney, 1995).

Bronx was not always the poorest city in the American nation. In 1930's, it was a city without slums, it had the lowest rate of unemployment among the five administrative districts of New York and during these days, it was among the first and few regions in New York that undertook privately financed residential construction. Contrary to its beginning, the face of Bronx today is very different. By around 1970, its beautiful developing face had already vanished and its new face was in ruins characterized by part cleared rubble, half-collapsed buildings, and some completely burnt-out buildings. Wild dogs could be seen roaming through the streets, in and out of ruins and through garbage filled sidewalks, and so much crime among men.

South Bronx is a city where extreme violence is common (Jonnes, 2002. Rooney, 1995, pg 5).

Decay of South Bronx

South Bronx became the symbol of international decay in the 1960's and many people who knew the place have no hope of its restoration. It turned from being a comfortable neighborhood for middle class and blue-collar workers to a literally dangerous place to live.

The major cause of this decay resulted from world war two (Silverman, 2004, pg 94). The fall of South Bronx started quietly and it began by collapse of law and order. As Dublin coat of arms suggests, ' By the Obedience of the People is the Happiness of the City Ensured', this is fact that did not take root in South Bronx. McCloskey's Hell's Kitchen harbored very delinquent young males and though they lived in institutions that were strongly in control, these young men always prevailed over them. Their ill-mannered conduct continued taking root and with time, crime became prevalent in this region. By mid 1950's drug abuse was an epidemic, which was out of control since it caught the government unawares thus it was beyond control.

There was no institution in South Bronx that was able to convince these young culprits that drug taking was wrong or even enact laws that would term drug taking a punishable crime. However, with the help of the stern Jansenist church, the family was the only institution that put effort to curb this crime since the church never tolerated any form of delinquent conduct (Jonnes, 2002). As the epidemic of drug use prevailed, the society that was long before independent started depending on welfare. In the beginning, New York creation of welfare population was just a generous act but by 1970, there was a welfare explosion. South Bronx community had already destabilized and more than half of the families in the society were depending <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-arms-suggests-by-the-obedience-of-the/>

on welfare. Badly behaved children, men drifting away from their responsibilities, and destruction of the residential premises and other buildings by fire, characterized the societal crisis.

This entire crisis was a result of government's irresponsibility (Jonnes, 2002). Another factor that contributed to the decay of South Bronx leading to its current poverty state was World War II. When America declared war, more than two hundred thousand men from south Bronx community left their homes and went for battle. It was a very patriotic community devoted everything to the success of its country.

Most of the streets were filled with women and the people left behind were not energetic enough to improve the face of Bronx. The battle lasted several years and this marked a major transformation of this community. There were so much labor shortages in the industries whose main objective was to accelerate mechanization of Agriculture in America, which lead to need for immigration in order to supplement the workforce (Jonnes, 2002. Rooney, 1995, pg 31). The American government contributed a great deal to the current poverty situation in south Bronx.

At one point, it introduced policies on rental costs and did not support the landlords to overcome the deteriorating income. The property owners started withdrawing while the tenants started migrating to better places. The factories that used to provide job to the community started suffering from acute labor shortages. The abandoned houses became harboring blocks for gangsters and drug dealers. The government also failed to control the fires

that were prevalent due to poor electrification and carelessness, which consumed thousands of buildings and property.

Negative Effects of poverty in South Bronx

In social development, housing is ever a dependent factor especially on the social status of the community. Growth and development of the housing sector is greatly influenced by availability of jobs, stability in the family set up and crime control. When these factors are responding positively, creation of housing is made easier. The case of South Bronx in this field is a bit wanting. There is a lot of crime, instability in the family set up since men have drifted away from their responsibilities and unemployment is prevalent leading to extreme poverty. The result of this is drag in creation of housing and decay of the housing developments that took place in 1930's.

Rental housing became unprofitable as the community continued deteriorating thus investors withdrew to better means of investment (Jonnes, 2002). Poverty in south Bronx has always had a close relationship with drug abuse and crime. There have been several reported cases of molestation of female teacher by unknown intruders in the classes, and this is all due to poverty related issues. For instance, there was a case where a teacher's sweater put in fire while still on her body. Another female teacher claimed that her idealism was badly battered and she was planning to leave the school to avoid being hurt. The school was generally indiscipline with kids loitering around with bottles of wine and several cases of fires set by students (Rooney, 1995). Sexually transmitted diseases especially AIDS have been a very common phenomena in this region. Twenty percent of the

sexually active men are infected and statistics show that AIDS has been the leading cause of deaths of young women in south Bronx.

5% of children born in the regional hospitals are infected with AIDS while others have traces of drugs in their blood (Rooney, 1995, Sam and Lake, 2010). Drug trafficking and drug abuse has been so prevalent in this region. Young teenagers are the most affected since their jail sentences on these cases are not as hard as those inflicted on older culprits who get mandatory jail sentences. Drug abuse and trafficking hit south Bronx unawares in 1950's and it took roots since the government and the institutions concerned were reluctant on the issue and there was no proper control when the issue arose. The leading drug trafficked is crack cocaine due to its high pay.

It is projected that a teen can make \$3000 in a day through this business. A certain teacher was reported saying that the face of a certain school was teenager loitering in the playground with bottles of wine. Drug abuse is not only a problem to the youngsters but also the older men whereby many men have dropped labour due to drug abuse. Teenagers have also dropped out of school due to issues related to drugs (Sam and Lake, 2010; Rooney, 1995, pg 39). South Bronx is the leading district with teen pregnancies in New York. The number of pregnant teens outnumbered that of the rest of New York in 2005. This scenario results from the prevailing poverty in south Bronx leading to many idle teenager girls with low access of employment and education.

The setting of the community does not impose so much stigma to unwanted pregnancies among teens thus they end up not being very keen to use birth

control measures. Abortion cases are also very common among teens since most of these pregnancies are accidental (Trapasso, 2008).

Efforts to restore the ruined South Bronx

Charlotte Street in the centre of the borough of Bronx marks as the sample of the poverty prevailing in south Bronx. It was the worst hit region and its features have brought so much confusion to the American government on what to do in order to solve this shame to America.

In the effort to restore the region, two presidents of America have visited Charlotte and their objective is to mobilize resources of the US and rehabilitate the region to start a new face of the region (Rooney, 1995). The Bronx borough has put much of its attention to south Bronx. Since 1980's, the region has been going through urban renewal whereby old buildings have been rehabilitated and new residential houses have been built. Bronx has channeled half of its housing projects towards Bronx in order to restore the once ' city without a slum (Sam and Lake, 2010. Purdy, 1994). In 1935, there was formed an organization known as Aid to Dependent Children which was later changed to Aid to Families with independent children. This organization was solely meant to provide cash assistance to families without supporting fathers probably deceased, absent or unable to work. This was the beginning of war to poverty, which facilitated access to health care, and reduction of poverty, hunger and malnutrition (Brady, 2008).

Conclusion

The poverty condition in south Bronx has always been controversial due to the nature of the region in the early 20th century. It started as one of the

fastest growing borough in New York and its residents mainly composed of the working class. South Bronx started decaying in mid 20th century whereby it lost a large number of its population, housing and even investments. Low class people started residing here and as poverty increased the level of crime. Poverty in south Bronx has had a negative impact to the society though the government has been putting effort to restore it to its original status. However, it might take a longer time to take South Bronx where it was since it has lost most of the factor that contributed to its well being like good investments.

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