

Essay on effects of having a parent incarcerated

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Introduction

Incarceration refers to the act of detaining a person in prison as a form of punishment from a wrong thing done. Parent incarceration forms one of the most serious problems with a long-lasting effect in the American society, especially to their children. Research findings show children separated from parents by death do not suffer as much as the children left behind by incarcerated parents. The higher rates of incarceration indicate that more parents are being imprisoned today than before. Children left by an incarcerated parent become needy of basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. In addition, the child's emotional and psychological needs that are only known by a parent are greatly affected by the absence of one parent or both. Such children face many challenges in life starting from adapting to live without their parents (Arditti 55-71). Child-parent separation is a devastating thing especially for children between ages of 7 to 10. While some children have the capacity to overcome the effects, a big percentage ends up suffering a lot from the separation presenting maladaptive behavioral patterns whose limitations are minimal.

The high rate of imprisonment leads to an ever-increasing number of children whose parents have been incarcerated composes one of the largest populations in America. For instance, America recorded an increase from 950, 000 million in 1995 to 1. 7 million children whose parents had been incarcerated in the year 2007 (Mumola 12-15). Such children face serious effects because of different life circumstances they face in their daily life. The impact is more when the female parent is imprisoned than when a male

parent is imprisoned. In addition, the number keeps on increasing meaning that the rate of crime in America has increased. (Dallaire 440-453).

Discussion

Incarceration of parents increases children exposure to poverty, crimes, substance abuse, and violence. Such cases are evidence where the father is incarcerated hence children have no respect for the mother and can do anything. Parents, especially fathers, play a significance role in correcting children behavior and once they are out of sight children result into unlawful acts. In addition, children feel depressed due to lack of love of one parent forcing them to result into violent acts to ease their anger. Researchers also discovered that paternal incarceration leads into the emergence of family tensions while, maternal incarceration have a greater impact on children placement. These effects continue to rise as the number of incarcerated male and women continue to increase in the American prisons (Miller 473-474).

On the other hand, paternal incarceration leads into a temporary single-parenting system whereby the mother assumes the responsibility of sole guardian. Imprisonment has more serious effects on children behavior than any other cause of parent-children separation. In cases of death, the remaining parent acquires a natural mitigation against the impact that last for a short while. Separation due to imprisonment has a negative response to the remaining parent because it is associated with stigma and stress. In most cases, children faced with the stigma of parental separation due to incarceration always feel embarrassment and shame that makes such children unable to cope with the anxieties resulting from the separation. In

addition, as the time goes on the child of an incarcerated parent faces deleterious effects and in the course of prolonged embarrassment and shame the child is unable to socially associate with others. The effect of a parent incarceration takes different forms depending on the type of crime that a person is accused of (Hannon, Martin & Martin 23-260).

Parent incarceration also has an adverse effect on the education life of the affected life. Education is a powerful aspect of life and every child has the right to education from primary level to tertiary level. The education of a child is highly associated with income and the presence of a parent to for motivation. In cases where the parent is in prison, the child faces many challenges in school. At some instances, such children are unable to attend classes in fear of other students mocking them. For instance, children whose parents face death and rape cases have difficulties associating with other students and even teachers. Such children are termed killers because they are thought to take the behavior of their parents. The United States statistics indicate that one in every three students drop out of school due to cases of parental incarceration. In addition, the statistics show that a child whose mother has been incarcerated shows low performance compared to a child whose father face incarcerated (Glaze & Maruschak 18).

Children of incarcerated parent might also develop eating and sleeping disorder. Some children become bear much stress to an extent that they are unable to eat or sleep as they spend most of time thinking of their absent parent (s). On the other hand, a child might develop irregular eating patterns that have serious effects on the victim. On other instances, children of incarcerated parents develop mental disorder because of excessive thinking.

Mental disorder problem develops over time and eventually becomes a long-lasting maladjustment in a child. The main cause of mental disorders for children and families whose parent has been incarcerated is social stigma. Children of incarcerated parent give stories of how their peers bully them and say nasty words to cause embarrassment. Such a person cannot stop thinking of the parent in prison while forgetting other important things in life. In addition, the problem has an effect on the other parent because he or she bears the load of taking care of the family alone.

Generally, parent incarceration has a lot of negative effect on a child, the society and the community at large (Gabel 220-223). The child is separated from the loved one for a significant period with limited visits. The following aspect changes the behavior of a child and may lead into early suicide. In addition, incarceration leads to a lot of strain by the family members left behind. The family of the affected individual faces development challenges. Development is essential for the growth of a family and the absence of the person who implements developmental changes introduces a challenge. The above problem leads into an economic strain where the family and relatives of the incarcerated person struggle in all means to look for money to cater for basic family needs (Arditti 13-18).

Conclusion

Work cited

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