

Youth work and poverty (reaction)



Reaction paper On Youth, Work and Poverty The current statistics on the employment status of American youth is dismal and raises serious concern about the emerging new trend of poor in the world's most developed nation. When the demographic data is looked from the wider lens of transforming economic conditions and changing format of unemployment and poverty across the country, it become apparent that increasing number of unemployed youth cutting across race, color and culture, is mainly because the majority of them are unskilled with low education which significantly reduces their chances of getting employed (Conger & Dogan, 440). I agree with this contention because education empowers individuals with knowledge and skills that help them to exploit new opportunities of personal and professional growth. It also ensures that they are better equipped to make decisions based on informed choices which enhance their scope of employment.

The increasing poverty forces the youth to abandon their studies in favor of work that is necessary for human survival. Moreover, while 16% youth is unemployed, by the age of 23 years, 41% of them end up being arrested at least once for something other than minor traffic violation (dol). This is hugely pertinent fact because it reveals the subtle trend in the current generation towards criminal acts and unlawful activities. The problems of the youth and the deteriorating level of education have emerged as crucial social factors that adversely impact the socio-economic development of the nation (Doob, 38; Conger & Donnellan, 179). It not only deprives the future of the nation with their dreams but also considerably adds to the burden of public welfare plans.

One of the interesting questions that it raises is why one of the richest and

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the most developed nation of the world has not been able to motivate its youth for higher education as two out of every three unemployed youths have high school certificate or less (dol). Their lack of education either makes them jobless or earn much less than their peer group who are better qualified. It often results in low esteem and tendency towards unlawful activities for enjoying the lifestyle that they believe they are entitled for! (Abramsky, 29). Thus education becomes vital tool for the young people to ensure that they are better equipped with skills and qualifications to avail new opportunities of work and contribute to the development of the nation. The educational level has emerged as key element that significantly widens the scope of getting good jobs. It cuts across the divide of race, color and class as shown in the US Bureau of Labor Statistics where more than 85% of whites and non-whites including blacks, Hispanics etc. with graduate degrees and above are employed (bls). I therefore, strong believe that education, including higher education should become the responsibility of the state so that children are not deprived of their fundamental rights to education. Economic hardships and poverty of parents adversely influences the cognitive development of children and their ' ability to learn' which deprives them of the opportunities of decent life, access to good education, basic life skills and network support for their better future.

(words: 518)

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