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**Prison Reform**

In contemporary society, prisons serve as the potential platform of civilly dealing with convicts and criminals in a controlled environment. However, the prerogative exercised by prisons transcends the norm of confining the prisons. They ought to introduce reforms and inculcate productive reforms in society. The aspects of rehabilitation and social integration are not met by prisons because of the abhorrent structure of prisons. In such circumstances, it is imperative to promulgate reforms to confront the tumult. The approach pursued by the United States of America (USA) must be revisited at both the federal and state level as prisons have struggled to adhere to the principles of rehabilitation and social integration in true letter and spirits. The fundamental onus relies on the policymakers to advance and enhance the conditions inside the prison system of the USA. Irrefutably, the need of the hour is the introduction of reforms to bring productive changes in prisons by addressing the prejudice subjected to minorities, dispensing justice to poor communities and removing the gang culture.

To begin with, it is essential to highlight the need for prison reform in the USA. The primary purpose of prisons is to enhance public safety and deter crimes. The contemporary state of affairs reflects a contrasting picture. The ruthless crime rate is an explicit illustration of the need for potential reforms. The struggle to accomplish the fundamental principles of social integration and rehabilitation further indicates the weak structure of prisons. Gang issues, targeting poor communities and minorities are the critical challenges that ought to be addressed to bring a positive transformation. A wide range of socio-economic factors contributes toward the pervasive existence of these adversities.

Besides, minorities often face grave challenges in the prisons. Several researchers have stipulated that African Americans are targeted persistently in comparison to the white Americans. The racial and ethnic discrimination is apparent. The racial disparity lies at the very heart of the criminal justice system. In 2015, President Barrack Obama said at the NAACP convention that African Americans are at an increased risk of being detained and sentenced for the same crime for a significant time (Dillon). It further justifies the rationale that the menace exists. Moreover, the minorities constitute Asians, Hispanic and American Indians. Research reflects they serve more time in comparison to the non-Hispanic whites. Such critical are the manifestations of the discrimination perpetrated against the minorities. The key to eliminating the peril is by offering a balanced platform to minorities both inside and outside prison. The minorities are often overlooked and deemed inferior inside the prisons. The racial and ethnic disparities should be abrogated to provide them the opportunity to integrate into society and contribute toward the welfare of the state. Minorities are proceeding to initiate an innovative multicultural and multiracial heritage in America. Targeting them not only desecrates the principles of prisons but also provoke minorities to disown the regulations and policies.

In addition, the gang culture is the most prominent adversity inside the prisons systems. A research study published by Sacha Darke reveals how several Brazilian prisons have been run by prisoners entirely (Kearney). They distribute food and clothing, maintain the facility and ensure the safety of prisons. Prison gangs play a similar role in several prisons throughout America. A critical appraisal of the matter underpins the growth of population and lack of officials inside the prisons. For instance, the prison system of California was shielded from the gang culture in the previous decades but these days they have an instrumental impact on each aspect of inmates. Stealing, lying, beating and snitching were an uncommon practice inside the facilities in the previous decades. However, the violation of code has cast an adverse impact. It is the foremost responsibility of the prison officials to ensure robust accountability inside the walls of the prison. A critical appraisal of the matter reveals that several prisoners join gangs to be safe. The staff member must make them safe in the first place. Second, the liberalization of the economy is a critical aspect. Gangs strengthen because of the manifestations of the underground economy. For instance, California has barred cigarettes in prison but several gangs earn hundreds of dollars by trafficking cigarettes inside the prison.

To address the menace, the prison officials ought to be stringently directed and accounted for the provision of profound access to healthcare, food, clothing and other amenities. These are the essential practices followed in Scandinavian states. The existence of the illicit economy gets reduced to a significant extent (“California’s Prison Gang Problem”). Gang culture is pervasive because the inmates seek their services which are not offered by the prison officials. Thus, it is the key to meeting the needs of the prisoners. Besides, understaffing and underfunding are potential reasons fuelling the instance of the gang culture. It is imperative to offer a profound environment in terms of prison staffing to make the prisons feel safe and shun the integration into powerful gangs for addressing the issue. Since approximately 90% of the prisoners are released, the state officials must promulgate the prudent economic and funding mechanism to essentially rehabilitate the prisoners.

Furthermore, it is evident that poverty is a detrimental menace in the United States and is also reflected in the paradigm of prison structure. In comparison to other nations, the rate of violent crimes is relatively higher in America. It has been asserted by several researchers that the victimization and incarceration rate of personal crimes are essentially higher for the communities living in poor living conditions. Crime has certain economic and social cost often associated with persistent impacts on the victims. The poor families of America not only face the risk of crimes but also are at an increased threat of being incarcerated. For 2.7 million American children, an incarcerated parent is stemmed as their fate. An African American is at a fifty percent chance of having his father inside the prison until his fourteenth birthday. These factors demonstrate the discriminatory environment in the prison facilities. These communities are further looked down upon in the prisons. Primarily, the accomplishment of social integration becomes a challenging task amid these heinous circumstances. The implications of discriminating against the poor population are not only confined to prison. Instead, it transcends the spectrum of economic and social marginalization of the poor in society. As the United States is combating the critical adversities as income inequality, poverty and low economic mobility, the prejudice subject dot the poor communities in the criminal justice system aggravates the threat.

Irrefutably, the disadvantaged communities and populations in the prison are the prominent cause of the impediments faced to accomplish a prison structure based on the principles of rehabilitation and social integration(*America’s Racial and Ethnic Minorities – Population Reference Bureau*). Both the minorities and the poor communities ought not to be discriminated. Besides gangs culture, it is the dominant threat affecting the efficiency of prisons. The problem lies at the heart of social economic discrimination in society. The policies must aim at reducing the cost and growth of prisons instead of driving the budget. For instance it will require the promulgation of stringent policies that are a testimonial to the critical efforts and strategic policies pursued by the stakeholders to abrogate the widespread racial policing. If the minorities and poor communities are inspected unnecessarily at the check posts, a profound and sustainable change will never occur. America is a state that is home to diverse ethnicities and each individual is deemed equal in the eyes of law. Because of the radical policy of racial profiling, the socio-economic resentment among the minorities has also accelerated. Consequently, they are discriminated not only inside the bars but also in society. The crucial beliefs of Americans have also shaped radically as the black communities are the perpetrators of the major crimes. Irrefutably, these instances reflect the adverse consequences of targeting minorities through racial profiling and desecrating their rights inside the prison.

Likewise, the contemporary correctional system of America and its policies of mass incarceration underpin the triumph of the theory which holds the individual responsible for crime, not society. The issue becomes further contentious when illustrious leaders also adhere to a similar belief. It is the key to abrogate such beliefs and promulgate policies. The promulgation of prudent policies is critical to reflect that the policymakers are keen to introduce productive reforms in society and prisons. For instance, only 1 percent of the population in Vermont is black but the prisons constitute 11 percent of the black population. Until such radical and stark differences are abrogated, the primary principles of social integration and rehabilitation will never be accomplished. Prison reform must be considered the primary goal of the policy makers to confront as an adverse domestic society. It casts widespread adversities for the sustainability and harmonic existence of the criminal justice system.

The removal of gangs, abrogation of discrimination against the minorities and racial profiling of the poor society must be the primary focus of the policymakers. There exist several other areas which also require thorough rejuvenation. However, the highlighted areas have proved the most detrimental for the essence of the prison system as deliberated above. From addressing the socio-economic issues to removing the radical practices inside prisons, critical efforts are necessary to change the protracted practices. A wide range of policymakers has asserted influence on exercising an alternative approach than imprisonment. However, the contemporary state of events demonstrates that prison reforms are the most effective and plausible strategy to revisit the quintessence of the criminal justice system.

To conclude, prisons are aimed at confining prisons and introducing productive changes in society. They are only meeting the purpose of confinement and have utterly failed to rehabilitate the inmates because of radical practices. The widespread gangs’ culture, racial profiling of minorities and an increased rate of the incarceration of the poor communities are the foremost threats desecrating the principles of the criminal justice system. The dominance of gangs is manifested by the lack of prison staff and failure to perform the obligations as ensuring the safety of the inmates. A thorough assessment of the matter postulates that the prison officials must protect and safeguard the rights of inmates to prevent them from joining and strengthening the gangs. Besides, the underground economy must be abrogated through transparency and stringent implementation of prison laws and regulations. The racial profiling of minorities accounts for an enhanced rate of ethnic discrimination in the criminal justice system. None is above law and it holds true for each American citizen regardless of ethnicity, race and color. Similarly, poor communities ought not to be targeted as weak entities in comparison to powerful persons. These policies are imperative to be implemented to ensure the principles of social integration and rehabilitation in prisons.

Work Cited

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