Social Issues and Justice

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**Abstract**

Gun violence is a significant social issue that our justice system faces. Keeping guns is legal in America that allows citizens to carry guns everywhere. Consequently, people having any mental disturbance attack their fellow citizens and they scarcely get capital punishment if are not killed during the assaults. The courts cannot ban firearms because the Constitution has allowed it albeit firearms are used in more than 68% homicide incidents in the US. Scholars like Reiman and Wintemute also endorse this statement that firearms are used in the majority of murders in the US. This phenomenon has caused many conjectures among civilized citizens. Some of the states have introduced some laws to control this irrational freedom of having fatal weapons but that is not enough. The legislatures are supposed to determine the ability to have a firearm, and they should make amendments to the laws about having fatal weapons.

**Introduction**

Every act of human being is intentioned to be productive but few acts meet the expectations otherwise many acts prove more counter-productive than productive. General permission to have firearms granted to the American citizens by the constitution is one such acts. Our forefathers might have thought that the citizens will feel more safe and independent if they carry self-defense weapons with them, but they perhaps did not know that it will eliminate many innocent citizens while doing their jobs honestly at workplaces and schools. Gun violence has become a headache for law enforcement agencies, it has become a social trauma, and scholars have discussed it many times proposing solutions to control it, but much is left to be done.

**Body**

The purchase of guns for self-defense is allowed by the law in the US that has made our masses vulnerable to the shooters. Every American citizen can have any type of fatal weapons, and the non-citizen residents of America can buy a gun with permission. The approach to a firearm in America is so easy that they can be purchased online also. This easy access to arms has caused mass homicide incidents in America. People are killed in schools, colleges, universities, and workplaces. The Bureau of Justice Statistics claims that 10,117 people were killed in gun-violence in 1999 and the number rose to 10,869 in 2008. The National Crime Victimization Survey reports that 467,321 persons were killed with firearms in 2011 *(Gun Violence in America*, 2019). This rise is continuous although many debates were held to stop this inhumane practice. This dramatic rise in the incidents of gun-violence questions the integrity of the law enforcing agencies and the justice system. But the system has its own concerns rather than limitations that prohibit it to control such incidents. American constitution offers full liberty to its citizens and allows them to pursue their *Happiness* and *American Dream* (Follman, M., Lee, J., Lurie, J., & West, J, 2018). The *Pursuit of Happiness* phrase in the Declaration of Independence allows the citizens to do what makes them happy. *American Dream* perused by the middle and poor classes to update their social status. People buy weapons for self-defense or happiness generally, but the data indicates that when they are unable to pursue their American Dream due to financial setbacks, the sickly frustrated people attack their fellow citizens. Robert Merton explains it with Strain Theory. The theory claims that when people feel unable to meet their socio-economic goals, they become frustrated and that frustration makes them violent.

Gun Violence has horrified the society and a significant condemnation to this practice is on the record. A movement named *Moms Demand Action* is known to every American today that stresses upon the authorities to take a strict and solid action against gun violence. The official page of this movement claims that 8 school kids succumb to gun violence on a daily basis. The activists of this movement claim that the future of s great country like the United States of America is slaughtered daily, but the authorities give no importance to this issue that can cause a big crisis in the country.

Many scholars have written about the issue, some of them demand a serious consideration to this issue before it causes a national crisis while others believe that it already has caused it. Reiman claims that compared to other industrialized democracies, the United States has the highest firearm death rate by a significant margin. Garen Wintemute is a famous American researcher who claims that the entire increase in homicide in the United States through 1993 was attributable to firearm homicide. The easy availability of firearms has exposed the innocent masses to this mass shooting. The other problem caused by this easy access is that stressed people shoot themselves at the peak moment of depression. The managing editor of the Foundation for Economic Education John Miltimore notes that 33,000 people are shot annually and about two-thirds of these deaths are suicides *(Jon Miltimore*, 2019). Robert Merton argues in the Strain Theory that the government must ensure economic security for every citizen to control this crime by controlling mental stress.

Some states of the US have taken some measures to control this crime although it has not been proved much productive. Some deadliest gun-violence attacks in schools obliged Texas, California, Florida, Virginia, Connecticut, Oklahoma, and Nevada to introduce some measures to control this fatal practice (DeConde, 2003). Two terms are introduced in the different states of the US: concealed carry weapon, and open carry weapon. Carrying open weapons is now prohibited in all over the country. Carrying concealed weapons is legal in 50 states whereas New Mexico allows carrying concealed cum unloaded weapons. Some restrictions are introduced in the allowance of the permit like the authorities ask the reason of why the person wants to have a weapon. Even then, over 17 million permits were issued throughout the US in 2018 *(Worldpopulationreview.com*, 2019). It shows that the measures taken by the authorities are of little effect against gun violence.

The justice system is helpless unless Congress takes strict notice of this crime. The penetration of firearms in all over the nation keeps the threat alive. America is a major global arms producer and exporter, but slaughtering its own citizens, for this reason, makes no sense. There should be an amendment to the laws that allow everyone to carry weapons. More restrictions on getting permits are required to control this crime. The state authorities should examine whether a person's demand for a weapon is right or not. In fact, a weaponless society has less number of deaths than an armed society. China can be taken as a good example where few civil citizens carry lethal weapons with them, and the common Chinese feel safer than the Americans feel while roaming in their country. Capital punishment can also stop many shooters from killing innocent cities if they know that they will not be spared after such an act albeit this punishment can help stopping a limited number of incidents. Otherwise, the people who suicide or kill themselves after the attacks can be stopped only by making our society weaponless.

**Conclusion**

An abundance of weapons in our society has boosted a terrible crime that horrifies the civilized citizens of a great country like America. Justice System cannot stop it because the constitution has legalized the purchase of weapons by everyone. The scholars criticize the practice and suggest that the government can control this crime by curbing disparity among the citizens and addressing their socio-economic issues. Some states of the US have banned open-carrying of firearms but it has helped little. The country cannot find peace until the firearms are prohibited to the civil citizens, and the culprits of a mass shooting are punished ruthlessly.

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