PROMPTS: THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

American prisons have a disparate number of minority inmates in their populations. Is this trend due to a higher rate of minority crimes or the manner in which the judicial system operates? Research the possible answers, and defend a single cause of this disparity.

Many people have questioned the fairness of the United States’ criminal justice system. This is because of the high number of black inmates in the United States’ prisons despite the fact that they are the minority group. This scenario has led to many scholars and observers questioning the handling of cases regarding blacks. Some argue that the whites should be the majority in these prisons since they are also the majority group. The following annotated bibliographies are going to look into this issue in order to find out what is the cause of this situation.

Boothe, D. (2007). *Why are so many black men in prison?* United States: Full Surface.

According to Boothe, war on drugs is believed to be the major factors in leading to the increased number of blacks in the United States’ prisons. This is because of the high chances of a person convicted for handling drugs ending up in prison, especially blacks. This is because of the notion that blacks were the perpetrators of these activities in the United States.

This is an important source as it outlines the inequality in the way drug cases involving blacks and whites are handled. For instance, many whites involved in drug cases for the first time are usually put on probation. This is unlike the blacks who are given sentences directly as they are viewed to be harmful to the society.

Clear, T. R. (2012). *American corrections in brief*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

According to Clear, the United States’ prisons are operated at the federal and state level. These levels depend on the nature of crimes that the convicts did. Those that did serious crimes such as murder are usually held in maximum-security prisons while those that committed less serious crimes are held in minimum-security prisons. However, in both prisons, majority of the prisoners are blacks.

The high number of black inmates in these prisons is an indicator that there is something wrong with the United States’ criminal justice systems. This makes this book an important source of information on my topic. I therefore plan to use to derive important information on the disparities being experienced in American courts.

Flowers, R. B. (1990). *Minorities and criminality*. New York: Praeger.

In this book, Flowers talks about representation of various groups living in the United States in juvenile prisons. According to Flowers, majority of juvenile inmates come from poor backgrounds, which are mainly blacks. The author says that the whites are the least represented in these prisons despite the fact that they are the majority in terms of the general population.

This book is very important in doing my research as it contains a lot of important information on the inequalities that the minority groups face in terms of justice. For instance, the whites’ juveniles are given minimum punishments whereas blacks are given harsh punishments. Therefore, using this book I will explain properly the injustices being done on blacks through being given longer sentences for committing simple crimes.

Mann, C. R. (1994). *Unequal justice: A question of color*. Bloomington, Ind. [u.a: Indiana Univ. Press.

In this book, Mann tries to look at the disparities in the United States criminal justice system by looking at the disparities in the administration of law. According to this book, statistics reveal that race had a close relationship with imprisonment. For instance, he says that black Americans accounted for 78 per cent of prisoners in state owned prisons in North Carolina. These scenarios show that there are disparities when it comes to administration of law, with some races being favored.

This is book is a very important source as it outlines the disparities experienced in the United States judicial systems. I am therefore going to show how this systems practices injustice instead of justice in making rulings using this book. For instance, the author says that there are a lot of prejudices in the U.S courts brought about by language problems.

Western, B. (2007). *Punishment and inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage.

According to Bruce Western the number of prisoners in the United States has increased more than seven times in the last three decades. Western says that incarceration is a regular phenomenon in today’s society and further says that over 60 per cent of blacks who dropped out of school have spent some of their time in prison. This is because of the inequality in giving punishments for crimes that people commit.

This book is a very important source as it explains how blacks are wrongly sentenced for crimes they did not commit. At the same time, blacks are given longer sentences than the whites even if they committed similar mistakes.

References

Boothe, D. (2007). *Why are so many black men in prison?*. United States: Full Surface

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