

## Candidate 2 evidence

Is social class the main cause of crime?

Throughout this assignment I aim to explain the impact of social class on crime rates and how they are linked. I plan to research this on a variety of sources such as internet websites and newspaper articles. My hypothesis is that I personally believe that social class is the main cause of crime. I plan to conduct both supporting and opposing arguments explaining both white and blue collar crime and also prison inmate statistics. My opposing arguments will focus on other causes of crime and will help me reach an overall conclusion.

### AIMS

In this assignment I aim to research a number of things to conduct my arguments such as, crime rates in the UK, why people choose to commit crimes, how this links to social class and also other contributing factors to crime rates.

### METHODS

One method I used for my research was internet websites. I chose to use the history of learning site as it provided information and statistics of prison inmates and their social class. Therefore this makes this site entirely relevant to my topic and helped me conduct a very useful argument. However I was unaware of the site before I discovered it and I am therefore unsure of its reliability.

Another method I used for my research was newspapers. I extracted information from The Guardian

which had an article about how behavioural problems could affect crime rates. This helped me when developing an opposing argument for my research which makes it very useful. Also, newspaper articles tend to be quite reliable as people cannot write whatever they want within them.

#### BLUE COLLAR CRIME

Adopted from 'www.todayozaman.com', blue collar crimes tend to be the crimes most committed in the UK. These are crimes such as violence, robbery, burglary and drug abuse. These crimes are most often committed by people in manual occupations such as plumbers, electricians and structural workers. These crimes are considered as being less of an impact on the society as the individuals commit them for their benefit only. They are very often committed by people from the lower social classes (especially D and E) who have virtually "nothing to lose yet everything to gain." However blue collar crimes are more obvious and are considered as street crime, which are very easy to catch out. This means that people from lower social classes receive a large portion of the blame as those crimes are the ones which are most often reported. This shows that individuals from lower social classes can have a significantly large impact on crime rates.

#### WHITE COLLAR CRIME

White collar crimes tend to be more serious crimes such as fraud and domestic violence. These are most often committed by individuals from higher levels of the social class line, and work in more professional occupations such according to 'www.nejrs.com'

by accountants, bankers, and real estate agents. These types of crimes are said to have more of a "damaging effect" on the society as large amounts of money can be stolen.

as accountants, bankers and real estate agents. These types of crimes are said to have more of a "damaging effect" on the society as large sums of money can be stolen very easily due to their occupations. White collar crimes can result in financial loss, physical harm and can also damage the community's moral climate. They can affect businesses by providing unsafe working conditions, and also by providing damaging products to their customers. They can also affect pollution levels in the sense that they could drastically increase.

The individuals who tend to commit these crimes are usually well respected and do it to gain more power and authority over others. This shows that people from higher social classes can have a big impact on crime rates although they may not be caught as often as people from lower classes. However it shows that all crimes are committed for an individual's own benefit, and according to social classes the reasons may differ.

#### CRIME IN THE UK

According to the National Prison Survey most of the UK's prison inmates are those of lower social classes. 41% of the current inmates are taken from either skilled or unskilled manual labour. However many are also illiterate, are high school or college drop outs, are jobless or are in low paid occupations when they commit crimes. This shows that many crimes are committed in order to just gain more from it, such as something the individual wants like more money. People who come from lower social classes tend to be much poorer, and over the last 30 years prisons have continued to withhold individuals from the poor who have committed a crime for their own

benefit. This shows again that individuals from lower social classes have the biggest impact on crime rates. This may be because they do not earn enough to satisfy their family for example and they may need more money.

#### BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS AND CRIME

Behavioural problems can have quite a big impact on crime rates on the other hand. In 2009, 80% of crime <sup>was committed by people</sup> in the UK who had behavioural problems according to The Guardian. This has caused a big problem to the society as it has cost a lot of money. 1 out of 20 children have a conduct disorder and proceed to commit 30% of all crime. This alone costs the society up to around £22bn a year. 50% of children have moderate behavioural problems and can cost the society up to £37bn a year. However this factor cannot really be altered as people cannot help if they have behavioural problems. This shows that a persons social class is not the only impact of crime although it may be a highly contributing factor.

#### PEER PRESSURE AND CRIME

Peer pressure can also be a large influence on crime rates. People may give in to peer pressure for a number of reasons, for example to feel a sense of belonging and the fear of isolation. Teenagers can very often be driven to peer groups who indulge in harmful activities which they regard as "exciting." However many teens are too young to understand the seriousness of their crimes and don't know what the consequences may be. Many teenagers can be pressured into vandalism,

Underage drinking and also drug use. Adapted from a survey from 'www.surveum.com' 33% of the people asked have once before pressured a friend into doing something they may be uncomfortable with. 30% have admitted to once before being pressured by one of their friends into doing something illegal, and 28% of the adults asked say that even in adolescence they are still under the influence of peer pressure. This shows that many people may not want to commit crimes but feel forced into doing so. Teenagers are most affected by this and could perhaps want to show off to their friends. However the figures are relatively small which shows that peer pressure does not have a massive influence in crime rates compared to social class.

#### CONCLUSION

From studying my research and developing arguments, I have come to the conclusion that my hypothesis, "I personally believe that social class is the main cause of crime" is correct. This is because my research shows that all individuals within social classes commit crimes for different reasons, either for power or for more money etc. My first and third argument link as both show that people with less money are most often likely to be committing crimes. Although my counter arguments may be relevant, they do not show enough high statistics to overrule the concept of social class.

## Research sheet

'www.today5zaman.com'

- plumbers, electricians, structural
- violence, robbery, burglary, drug abuse
- less impact on society
- nothing to lose, everything to gain
- lower social classes receive blame

'www.nejrs.com'

- accountants, bankers, real estate
- fraud, domestic violence
- "damaging effect" money stolen
- financial loss, physical harm, moral climate
- working conditions, products, pollution
- power, authority, easy access

National prison survey  
'The Guardian'

- 41% males skilled, unskilled manual
- 30 years without poor individuals
- illiterate, dropouts, jobless, low paid
- own benefit
- prison inmates don't earn themselves

The Guardian

- 2009, 85% committed behavior problems
- 1 of 20 have conduct disorder, 30%
- costs society £22bn a yr.
- 50% moderate behavioural, £37bn a yr.

- crime rates in UK
- why people commit
- how does it link?

'www.surveum.com'

- sense of belonging, fear of isolation
- peer groups indulge in harmful activities
- "exciting" don't know consequences
- 33% have pressured a friend
- 30% been pressured by peer, illegal
- 28% adults still influenced