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Dear Reader:

I hope you are doing well in this cold NYC November. My name is Noor Shamanta Jahan, and I am a proud member of the African American/Black discourse community. As an advocate for my discourse community, I find the main issue affecting the well-being of individuals is discrimination from many aspects of their lives, from the workplace to daily activities. This leads to many individuals feeling out of place, and a sense of imposter syndrome, or feeling like they are not able to complete something more advanced, like a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) degree, compared to a liberal arts degree.

The discrimination of black people is based on unjust aspects that have no substantial importance in our society. For instance, African Americans are mainly discriminated against due to their appearance, and with America's history with slavery. The basis used by people to deny black people their vital rights in society is sickening. African Americans constantly live in fear. On the other hand, the majority of white people tend to enjoy more privileges and rights in society compared to black people. For example, on average, black people are seen as less capable and ignorant in job interviews compared to a white person. Personally, I have also experienced such discrimination at my workplace. During an interview at a school, for the role of an after school teacher, the interviewer looked down on me when I asked them to pay me \$17 an hour. However, my friend, who is white, faced no such discrimination, and even got the job for the

hourly pay I asked for. Both of us had the same qualifications as well, with the only difference being the color of our skin.

The demonstration of discrimination towards African Americans lowers their quality of life, especially their mental health. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many black college students were, and still are, disadvantaged. College can make students feel equal, but I believe the pandemic brought out how unequal society really is. While one student can rely on their parent's vacation home, another student may not have this same luxury. My friends and I did not have the luxury of staying in peace at home during the pandemic, we needed to work because our parents got laid off, their businesses crashed, and we still had bills to pay. While one student can focus entirely on their education, none of us had the opportunity to put all of our efforts into it. As quarantine sought out to corner the virus, it also cornered the mental health of many African Americans as well as my mental health. There is a burden of thinking about passing all of my classes, of not ending up homeless at the end, and the fact that there is a chance everyone can still end up dying from the virus.

The discrimination and inequalities towards African Americans have led to the intensification of social ills. For instance, police brutality towards African Americans is based on the nature of discrimination in society. Thus, efficient measures have to be attained integration to eradicate discrimination towards African Americans to ease the transformation of the success of their lives. I believe the police really have no place in society, and they should be abolished for the most part, but still kept for a few of their services. For example, in New York, the police spending budget is about \$6 billion a year, but there isn't really a need for such a big budget. Many of the job responsibilities that police have can be outsourced too in my opinion. There are many small jobs that police do, such as responding to noise complaints, and giving out traffic

tickets. For the most part police don't really deal with crime, rather the focus is on noncriminal issues. With the cut in police budget, these small issues should be given to different departments, and therefore these departments can get more funding. Each year, the \$6 billion that goes to police can be divided up to go into better mental health, education, and most importantly, money that goes into the people's hands. Additionally, movements have been generated in society to address the issues facing African Americans. The integration of adequate movements addressing the problems of African Americans displays the effectiveness of their lives. For instance, The Black Lives Matter movement has played an imperative role in solving racism towards black people. The adequate solution to the problems of racism shows to have resulted in the transformation of the quality of living among individuals in the community. The adoption of effective measures meant to address essential issues displays the potential of upholding the reformation of the livelihoods of black people.

From my viewpoint, the problems faced by African Americans can be solved through sufficient support of issues of the discourse community by other people, and particularly by those who are more privileged. Therefore, individuals who are progressive in social issues should play an active role in addressing the racism issues African Americans face. The assistance of people in eradicating discrimination against African Americans will translate in the transformation of the effectiveness of their lives in the community. Something I feel strongly about is a Universal Basic Income (UBI). It has existed for a while, but it was made popular by businessman Andrew Yang. UBI, with Yang's definition, provides one thousand dollars to families each month by taxing technology companies such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft who commonly evade paying their fair share of taxes. The government could easily implement

this if they wanted to with how much they spend on other departments like the military and police.

From my point of view, many organizations in society have a responsibility to adopt effective measures that uphold the quality of life among individuals concerning the importance of equality. As promoters of the African American discourse community, we develop a responsibility to go against injustices towards black people.

Reader, thank you for reading through my letter. I hope my letter to you has pointed out many of the injustices the African American community faces, and I hope you have a great day.

Sincerely,

Noor Shamanta Jahan