**What social issues are affecting the African American race? as well as what policies will help**.

**Social issues are affecting the African American race.**

1. **Life expectancy ;** Women live longer than men, on average but there are big race gaps, too. Life expectancy is lowest for Black men, according the CDC National Center for Health Statistics, both at birth and at age 65. For white men, life expectancy at birth is about 6 years lower than at age 65. But for Black men, that gap is over 9 years ,showing that Black men are more likely to die prematurely.
2. **Unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic ;** Black men have the highest unemployment rate of civilian non-institutionalized Black and white men and women over age 20. There was a large race gap in unemployment even before COVID-19 swept the U.S. Prior to March 2020, Black men consistently had among the highest unemployment rates of Black and white workers. Unemployment shot up for everyone in April, and Black women faced higher unemployment than Black men for two months. As unemployment began to fall for most in June, Black men’s unemployment rose and remained high through September (the last month data is available).

1. **Education ;** In 2019, 28% of Black men ages 25-29 had a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 30% of Black women, over 40% of white men, and nearly half of white women, according to the National Center of Education Statistics in 2019. The gap is greater still at higher education levels: only half as many Black men have a Master’s degree (4%) as Black women (9%), white men (8%) and white women (13%).
2. **Labor force participation ;** The labor force participation rate for Black men aged 20 and over is 5.6 percentage points lower than for white men. Many men and women face different considerations when deciding to participate in the labor force , so here for simplicity we compare Black and white men in terms of labor force participation.
3. **COVID-19 death ;** Black men have been the most likely among Black and white Americans to die of COVID-19 at a rate 2.4 times that of white men, since the white men have a lot of specialized doctors who can treat them compared to the black men.
4. **Criminal justice ;** Black men face a much higher chance of being incarcerated. Since they don't have people ( lawyers )who can help them to fight for there justice due to lack of education among them hence leading to a lot of them being incriminated even if they aren't guilty of them crime accused.
5. **Earnings ;** Black workers regardless of gender earn less than white workers, and white men have substantially out earned white women and Black workers since 1980 . For both Black and white workers, men earn more; but the gender gap is much smaller for Black workers. Overall white women have seen the biggest increase in earnings, overtaking Black men in the 1990s.
6. **Upward mobility ;** Black women and white women raised by low-income parents have similar rates of upward intergenerational mobility, measured in terms of their individual income as adults. Black men, by contrast, are much less likely than white men to rise up the income ladder, according to Raj Chetty and his team at Opportunity Insights who have crunched the numbers on 20 million Americans in the 1978-1983 birth cohorts. A third of white men raised by low-income parents end up in the top 40% of the income distribution as adults, compared to only 19% of Black boys.

**Policies that will help stop social issues affecting the African American race.**

1. **Criminal justice reform ;** To truly address the social issues problems affecting Black boys and men, there must be significant reform to the criminal justice system. Black men are drastically overrepresented in the prison population, accounting for 32% of the prison population but only 6% of the overall U.S. population. They are five times more likely to be incarcerated during their lifetime than white men and they are more likely to serve longer sentences than white men (on average, 19% longer). This reality has multiplicative effects on the life chances of Black men. They face barriers in finding employment and housing, many lose the right to vote, and many lack access to social services, including federal student aid. All of this taken together reduces the economic opportunities available to Black men and hinders their role in social and family life. To address these obstacles, criminal justice reform must be made a policy priority. The objective should be first, to reduce the number of Black men behind bars and second, to improve re-entry conditions.
2. **Improving employment rates and opportunities ;** On average, Black men experience higher unemployment rates, lower labor force participation rates, and lower earnings than their white male counterparts. These trends are not only indicative of lower economic power, but also lower access to quality healthcare, and fewer social connections. To address this, policy should promote better employment opportunities for Black men. As a starting place, improving educational outcomes for Black boys and men will consequently improve their chances in the labor market. But beyond that, policy should aim to match unemployed Black men with gaps in the labor market. Most prominently, there is rapid growth within the HEAL sectors (health, education, administration, and literacy) and a lack of Black men in these roles. Policy should respond by providing scholarships and other incentives to encourage more Black men to become nurses, health aides, teachers, social workers, and other similar professions.
3. **Improving the educational system ;** As compared to Black women, white men, and white women, Black men have lower levels of educational attainment. Only about 28% of Black men (aged 25-29) have a bachelor’s degree or higher, while about 30% of Black women, over 40% of white men, and nearly 50% of white women do. Comparatively, Black men have fewer opportunities to receive higher education because those with a felony record face limited access to federal student loans. Moreover, many of the service providers within the educational system do not cultivate the full potential of Black male students. This includes grading biases, higher suspension and expulsion rates, higher rates of in-school arrests, lack of Black male role models within the school, and other forms of overt and covert racism. To improve the economic outcomes for Black men, there needs to be a policy response to these educational disparities. First, federal student loans should be made available to those with a felony conviction because it will provide many Black males with the opportunity to further their education. Second, the infrastructure of the education system should be improved to better support Black male students so that they can achieve their full academic potential.
4. **Mentorship programs ;** Mentorship program for Black boys and menhave been a vital part of strengthening connections within a community. Providing young Black boys with access to a Black male role model has the potential to benefit them across several areas, including academic performance, mental health, social and emotional well-being, and preventing risky behaviors. While mentorship programs should be promoted through public policy (i.e., greater investment), the scholars emphasized that the approach must be deliberate. Black men must be willing to sponsor Black boys into opportunities (e.g., jobs) to make a difference in their lives.
5. **Place - based policies ;** High-poverty neighborhoods are typically characterized by poorer quality schools, less access to jobs, social networks, and health care, and higher rates of crime, pollution, congestion, and noise. Moreover, evidence suggests that boys tend to be more sensitive to their environment growing up, which often materializes in behavioral issues, lower educational attainment, lower earnings and more. Therefore, to address some of these adverse outcomes for Black boys and men, there should be greater investment in neighborhoods. Effectively designed and implemented place-based policies can improve the chances for Black men and their families, and ultimately restore communities. Using the opportunity zone model, these policies can provide neighborhoods with greater resources and invest money in areas that need it.
6. **Reparations ;** The final policy area suggested during the panel discussion were reparations to be paid to American descendants of slavery. The racial gaps present in wealth, income, housing value, educational attainment, health status, employment, incarceration rates, and more are all the result of deep racism within the U.S., stemming from the egregious act of slavery. Reparations can be used to correct this injustice and to reduce the disparities that remain pervasive in society .The policy of reparations including how they are issued, how they are financed, and at what leve must be explored.