Criminal Justice Reform

**Annotated Bibliography**

Criminal justice reform is a type of modification that is designed at becoming appropriate for alleged mistakes in the criminal justice system. The aim of such reforms is to decrease the population in jails and jail sentences as well as getting rid of compulsory minimum punishments for low level drug criminals. Drug use and is crime is one area that requires reformation considering that it has been in the justice system for long since it became considered a defilement of the law. Prisons are crowded with law breakers who fall into this category.

Below are some sources that provide helpful information regarding the reform in the drug use and crime category of law breakers;

**Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2010). Rehabilitating criminal justice policy and practice. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, *16*(1), 39.**

The above source focuses on what should be done with the criminal justice system that deals with people who abuse drugs as well as get involved in criminal activities. The attitude of becoming tough towards offenders hardens them and they end up getting worse. That kind of seriousness towards these lawbreakers leads to increased growth of law breakers which leads to congestion in prisons. According to the above source, the best way to deal with these offenders would be offering them rehabilitation to help them reform and become important people in the society. Individuals with similar issues should be identified and grouped so as to be offered help at a go as well as help in minimizing usage resources and wastage.

**Chassin, L. (2008). Juvenile justice and substance use. *The Future of Children*, *18*(2), 165-183.**

This particular source indicates that young adults as well are prone to the vices of drug abuse and committing crimes. The juvenile system requires to be reformed so as to offer treatment to these individuals. Further, the screening that gets done on them should be done thoroughly and often to make sure that none of them is using drugs or other substances that are harmful to them. young adults should monitored while in school to find out the kind of environments they come from because they contribute to them being exposed to criminal behaviors. So as to avoid the rising numbers and congestion of teenagers in juveniles, they should be taken through counseling and educative lessons which discourage them from substance use. The fact that the treatment process for the young adults is expensive and long as well as tedious, parents should be asked to take care of their children and always know what they are up to at all times.

**Brewer, R. M., & Heitzeg, N. A. (2008). The racialization of crime and punishment criminal justice, color-blind racism, and the political economy of the prison industrial complex. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *51*(5), 625-644.**

The above source focuses on the way crimes and punishment become based on an individual’s race where some get punished severely while others are pardoned for the same crime. Reformation will be required in the justice system to make sure that people get the justice they deserve without favor. Criminality becomes associated with certain races and the non-Americans to be precise. The neighborhoods where they reside are perceived as drug dens as well as criminals hub where they hide and plan their criminal activities. According to this source, the prisons are congested with prisoners who were never given a chance to present and defend themselves in court. Those who deliver the verdict of law offenders should as well be in a position to fight for their rights especially when they do not get treated right.

**Reiman, J., & Leighton, P. (2015). *The rich get richer and the poor get prison: Ideology, class, and criminal justice*. Routledge.**

The above source focuses on the manner in which justice gets delivered. Those who belong to classes that are recognized are set free regardless of the crimes that get committed. The rich people deal drugs but use the poor who get caught in the middle without the owners of the transactions getting noticed. Further, when they get apprehended they buy their way out by bribing the people involved. Reform should take place in the justice system to make sure that people of integrity run these positions who are not capable of becoming corrupt. Additionally, they should be people who can give verdicts depending on the crime committed regardless of the criminal’s background. The poor people at most times find themselves in prison because they cannot be able to pay for their freedom. They are not recognized in the society and therefore cannot receive any favors despite of them committing the least of crimes.

**Hughes, C. E., & Stevens, A. (2010). What can we learn from the Portuguese decriminalization of illicit drugs?. *British Journal of Criminology*, azq083.**

This source seeks to give optional way approaches that can get used in dealing with criminals and drug and substance users. Portugal is one state that decriminalized the use of illegal drugs and never experienced increase rates of the same vice. Borrowing a leaf from Portugal would be wise if at all people were shown the essence of being responsible in their use of drugs and committing crimes. By so doing, the number of people in prisons will reduce as the conditions there become improved due to decongestion. The criminal justice system should consider giving individuals a second chance to improve their behavior rather than out rightly sending them to jail. By making people understand that they are the most affected by their negative behavior, they will withdraw from those vices and reform as they appreciate the chance they get given by the courts. By the courts showing concern to the people’s welfare, they gain their confidence and get the respect they deserve.

**Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2010). *The psychology of criminal conduct*. Routledge.**

The above source would be of great help in the effort of bringing change in the criminal justice system. Having competent and qualified personnel in the system who know the conduct of the criminals is wise. This will ensure that the law offenders get the justice they deserve in the correct manner. Having psychologists who can read the criminals mind and come up with a comprehensive report of why they did what they did or commit the crimes they do as well as the abuse of substance. People commit crimes or use substances in the wrong way because of different reasons. The psychologists could find some reasons valid which could see the criminals get acquitted of their crimes.

**Overview**

**Executive summary**

The main purpose of this research is to find out the reforms that require to become undertaken to make the justice system better and reliable. The manner in which justice is administered matters a lot considering that sometimes people do not get what they deserve. The system should not its powers to oppress some while favoring others. Further, the level in which the crimes get committed should be considered in that even youngsters get involved in vices that can get them to jail or juvenile to be precise. Reform is highly required in the drug abuse and crime units which have become prevalent in the society. The issues that get focused on regarding criminal justice reform include; the approach toward the criminals, the involvement of young adults in substance abuse and criminal activities, racism in the administering of justice, corruption in matters of justice, possible remedial approaches and the incorporation of experts in dealing with criminals.

**Approach towards criminals**

According to (Andrew & Bonta, 2010), the criminal justice system should become careful when passing judgement towards criminals of drug abuse as well as other crimes. The offenders should not receive harsh treatment but should otherwise be corrected and given second chances. Making tough decisions towards the offenders only creates room for them to become worse while in an effort of showing off their capabilities. Further, the law breakers should be offered rehabilitation to help them better their lives.

**Involvement of young adults in crime and substance abuse**

The criminal justice system should become reformed in such a way that teenagers as well get the justice they deserve once they get caught being involved in crime and substance abuse. These vices are prevalent in the society considering that these young adults could be experiencing hard childhoods. According to (Chassin, 2008), juvenile should not be last option for teenagers who get caught up in such crimes. They should be offered treatment which will help in reducing the number of offenders in juvenile. Further, they should be guided and counseled in regards to the criminal activities and discourage them not to get involved.

**Racism in the administration of justice**

Justice can sometimes become injustice when it becomes based on racism. Some races are perceived as sources of criminal activities and are therefore judged wrongly. According to (Brewer & Heitzeg, 2008), most people get justice on racial basis and some get favored while others are oppressed. The blacks and other non-American races are thought to get involved in crimes more than the natives and they end up in prison without justice getting administered.

**Corruption in matters of justice**

Rich people get to buy their freedom regardless the weight of the crimes they commit. The poor on the other hand rot in jail because they do not have the resources to buy their freedom (Reiman & Leighton, 2015). Favoritism is directed towards people of social classes that are recognized while those of low classes in the society receive no help.

**Possible remedial approaches**

Seeking help and advice from states that have experience in dealing with criminals is a wise move which could lead to reform in the criminal justice system. Portugal’s approach of decriminalizing use of illegal drugs could helpful in reforming criminals rather than just being prisoned. Giving people a second chance after committing crimes will help in reducing the number of people in prisons. According to (Hughes & Stevens, 2010), the justice system should look for optional ways in administering justice.

**Incorporation of experts in dealing with criminals**

The use of people who are specialized in criminal matters will help in administering justice to criminals who would otherwise have become oppressed in one way or another. According to (Andrew & Bonta, 2010), psychologists play a vital role in analyzing individual’s cases and they should therefore get incorporated in the process of administering justice.

References

Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2010). *The psychology of criminal conduct*. Routledge.

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