

# Good essay on prison overcrowding

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



## **Prison overcrowding**

In this assignment, I am prepared to conduct a, thorough, research on this upcoming issue-prison overcrowding. I am going to make use of two modes of research techniques and they are literature review and conducting an interview with a prison warden in United States. Prison overcrowding has become a boiling debate all over the world and, to me, something must be done urgently before the matter becomes out of control. I met one of the prison wardens, California prison warden, so as to study the issue from its setting. But who is a prison warden? A Prison warden also known as prison superintendent is either allotted or hired by state executive committee. Prisons wardens are bestowed with responsibilities that they are expected to fulfill by the state executive committee. These responsibilities consist of; hiring and firing of staff, identifying the causing problems in a prison facility, creating and implementing new policies for easier and efficient flow of the prison facility, implementing training programs as well as other rehabilitation opportunities, and enhancing security in the prison facility while staying within the budgetary. I asked the prison warden, who was not willing to disclose his name, what are the qualification needed for one to be a prison warden, where, he responded by saying that he or she needs to have a bachelor's degree in criminal justice or any other pertinent field and several years in correctional system. He went further to describe prison wardens as personnel who are trained both as administrators and as correctional officers. He did not fail to mention of the responsibilities that prison wardens are expected to perform, some I had captured them through literature review while others were new to me such as feeding the inmates, taking care

of the inmates, treatment of the inmates, and managing and supervising the staffs. This the reason why I chose to conduct an interview with a prison warden instead of other working staff in this institution since he or she is more updated and familiar with the current issues, and furthermore, his or her education level tells it all (Dukakis, 1985).

### **The major issues pertaining to prison overcrowding**

I asked him of the major issues, according to him, that seems to be prevailing as a result of prison overcrowding. He started by establishing a rapport where he offered me a cup of coffee. It may seem peculiar, offering a cup of coffee, but it boosts the confidence of those in a dialogue and an environment of good understanding of the issue is established. Prison overcrowding is considered as one of the key contributing factors to poor prison conditions around the world and especially in U. S prisons. It has led to deprived physical condition within the facility thereby resulting to major source of problems such as affects on prisoner health. Waterborne diseases are the leading cause of death in these facilities as a result of too many prisoners congested in a small room, thereby, making the situation to control these waterborne diseases next to impossible. The situation is so serious that they have attempted to solve the issue of prison overcrowdings by converting some of their recreation facilities such as the gymnasium, but with little success. I was shocked, to learn from him, that they had converted the gymnasium into a sleeping area, thereby, limiting the prisoners' rights to recreational facilities. From literature review, I leant that idleness can result to, more, severe issues such as chaotic demonstrations within the facility. This review helped me in creating the next question on whether they have

experienced rebellious behavior from the inmates. The prison warden responded by saying that they had not, but something must be done quickly before the situations get out of control since it is, more, likely, for them, to witness one if the matter is not addressed quickly (Dukakis, 1985).

Through literature review, we learn that Prison overcrowding would result to problems such as abridged staff self-esteem, manage and safety difficulties, prisoner and personnel health and well being problems, amplified level of hostility and disagreement, breakdown of psychotherapy resulting in amplified re-offending. From the interview, I learnt from the prison warden that they have been going through a hard time when it comes to controlling and managing overcrowded prison. To him, it is difficult to manage humanely and effectively since the demand of the living space appears to be on the increase while the other factors seem to be held constant. It has, therefore, resulted to reducing or entirely eliminating the space available for leisure, religious activities, educational, and cultural activities. Prison overcrowding, according to him, has resulted to the beginning of other, fresh, problems such as lack of privacy that make worse mental health problems, and increases the rates of hostility. From literature review, it is illustrated in detail that lack of privacy can result to self harm that, later, leads to the oppressed resulting to suicide as the only left alternative. It is important to note that prisoner misbehavior and its causes are connected with the problem of overcrowding that results to, far more, nerve-racking surroundings on the corrections officers and wardens. A study conducted in 2006 about psychological consequences of prison overcrowding found out that a high prison population has an undeviating, unconstructive

consequence on the psychosomatic states of prisoners. It has caused, more, nerve-racking situations, thereby, prompting prison officials to act in rejoinder inappropriately on occasion, due to being forced to provide somewhere to stay for ill-advised numbers of inmates (Dukakis, 1985).

### **Government move about prison overcrowding and what explains its involvement in solving prison overcrowding.**

Through literature review, the government is also playing a major role so as to see that this problem of prison overcrowding is solved. The government considers prison overcrowding as a well-established problem and solutions necessitate watchful work and strong political determination. The government has adopted some creative measures that when in use would lend a hand in easing this problem-prison overcrowding. The government is also making maximum use of the probation community services as an alternative to prison, thereby, controlling this problem (Dukakis, 1985). Sentencing reforms have also been established and implemented by the legislators with the objective of reducing the length of sentences. Parole boards have been bestowed with the power to discharge and oversee prisoners, before time, who pose diminutive risk to the public. They are released back to the community, thereby, reducing the problem of prison overcrowdings.

### **The government participation and the various proposed solutions to solving this issue.**

The government has proposed numerous solutions that can help in alleviating this problem at hand. According to Gov. Brown, he hopes to implement a long term solutions that would help inmates become productive

members of the society and make them our community safer. His solution is privatizing prisons so as new modern facilities can be established. The government would also want the foreign offenders to be deported and tried at their country so as to reduce the number of foreign prisoners.

### **The models that best capture this issue- prison overcrowding.**

Community correction programs are models that have contributed, significantly, in alleviating the problem of prison imprisonment. It mostly deals with the rehabilitation for nonviolent offenders. I would recommend other countries to implement this program since it has helped a lot in reducing crime rate, thereby, solving the problem of prison overcrowdings. The United States has two basic community models- integrating society improvements programs and the optional consent to programs. These models are intended to help in plummeting prisons overcrowding and are not as much of luxurious alternative to detention center. This is the reason why I would recommend the use of these programs since they start solving the problem by identifying the root cause first and then the rehabilitation continues-it is a stage by stage process.

### **Challenges facing the implementation of these models as far as prison overcrowding is concerned.**

Through this model, minor wrongdoers can be penalized through communal work, scrapping off the minimum sentences and deporting outsiders so as to be judged in their individual countries. Rehabilitation model that is under community correction programs, has also been working successfully as far as solving this problem is concerned- prison overcrowding. The challenge facing

this model is that some prisoners released back to the community are not willing to follow the set rules and procedures such as reporting to their assigned probationer officer- for effective supervision of their well being. This causes their probation term to be revoked and they end up back into prisons.

### **The best solution, according to my stand, that could work miraculously in solving prison overcrowding.**

A community correction program is a model that is responsible for publishing and distributing cognitive existence skillfulness workbooks for adults and adolescences in both groups. This model is able to put into practice these responsibilities through the help of the American community corrections institute. They are educated on how to live honestly, thereby, reducing the chances of misconduct within the community, hence reducing prison overcrowding. Educating the society of what the societies requires of them makes it the most successful method to adopt. We should, all, appreciate the fact that education is both light and power; it gives us light where there is no light, thereby, reducing our chances of participating into dirty activities. It is our high time to change our perception on prisons. Some, mostly investors, views detention center as virgin grounds for doing commerce, but this view must change to a more meaningful awareness such as to serve their rehabilitative purpose with a vision to plummeting rates of re-offending in the midst of the convicts (Dukakis, 1985).

### **The similarities and differences compared to other three issues.**

Prison overcrowding as depicted from the literature review is caused by scarcity of prison facilities as it is the case for homelessness, poor health,

and poor education. The government must be financially stable in order to solve these problems; prison overcrowding, homelessness, poor education, and poor health. Secondly, these problems can all be solved through privatization as depicted from literature review, but the major different lies on the hand of the government or company implementing the solution (Dukakis, 1985).

## **References**

- Dukakis, M. S. (1985). A balanced plan to end prison overcrowding . Boston?: S. n..
- Prison overcrowding. (1993). London: prison Reform Trust.