

Child sexual abuse research paper examples

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Criminal Law

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

It is vital to develop interventions that will aim to prevent child sexual abuse by focusing the attention on the role of the criminal justice systems to prevent and respond to sexual abuse among children (Smallbone, Marshall, & Wortley, 2013, p. 16). The criminal justice system is mainly composed of three core elements compose of the courts, police and corrections. Each of these elements plays a significant role in the prevention of child sexual abuse. In the case of the police force, they have the duty to investigate crimes involving child sexual abuse and to carry out immediate detection of crimes to prevent further harm to the victims. In the case of the courts and corrections, they have the joint obligation towards the attainment of four (4) goals: retribution, deterrence, incapacitation and rehabilitation (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 16). The formal activities of the criminal justice system shall begin with the detection and investigation of crimes which shall be carried out by the police and other investigatory and law enforcement agencies. The investigation and detection is generally being handled by the police to locate potential offenders of child sexual abuse. Thus, in order to assist the police officers to reduce the crime rate, there is a need to increase the number of police officers. In addition to this, there is a need to increase random police patrols and to concentrate the attention of the police on crime hotspots. It bears stressing that increasing the frequency and improving the quality of police-citizen contacts or community policing will aid the police in arresting the offenders. Lastly, there is a need to identify and minimize the proximate causes of the crime (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 18).

The allocation and administration of punishment is the cornerstone of criminal justice policy because punishment is applied for retributive purposes (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 20). Although punishment may be viewed as a form of retribution, it does not in itself serve the crime prevention purpose. Hence, there is a need to shift the focus on the utilitarian purpose of punishment which is to be made applicable to criminal justice settings. This shall be the role of the courts and the corrections to provide the just punishment for the offenders of child sexual abuse offense. The recent study of Smallbone et al. (2013, p. 20) have shown that punishment is effective in suppressing target behavior, but should hold sufficient severity and the punisher must be perceived as relevant by the person being punished. Hence, in the case of the child sexual abuse offenders, they should respect the decision of the court because it is part of the judiciary and empowered by the state to impose punishment.

However, it is noteworthy to state that evidence appears to contradict assumptions that increase the severity of the punishment for crimes such as child sexual abuse will result in general or specific deterrent effects. This may be the result of the justice system having limited control over the certainty of punishment that severity is no longer material (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 24).

Aside from this, incapacitation is the third ultimate goal of criminal justice interventions for persistent sexual offenders. Through incapacitation, it will banish or lessen the crime rate by removing the criminal opportunities for the individual offenders. In the past, some of the methods used for incapacitation shall include banishment, exile, transportation, mutilation and

death of the offenders (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 25). However, modern methods to incapacitate the offender shall include chemical castration and imprisonment of sexual offenders for indefinite periods (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 25). Chemical castration has been regarded as one preventive method that will reduce the sexual drive of offenders. This is as opposed to physical castration that will require the removal of the testes, which produce the chemical testosterone among males. Removing the testes will result to elimination of sexual drive and can result to prevention of sexual offending (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 24). However, due to the critical side effects of this method is related to ethical issues. Thus, the modern view of Western countries stands as they no longer allow physical castration except for life-saving interventions. While in the case of chemical castration, it shall require the administration of anti-androgen which is a hormonal agent that has the capacity to eliminate the production of testosterone among males. As a result, the sexual urges of the offenders can be controlled. The purpose of the pharmacological agents is to reduce the sexual urges among the offenders, but does not necessarily eliminate the sexual drive of non-habitual sexual offenders. There are only a small number of offenders who might need to undergo chemical castration since only those sexual offenders who have difficulties in expressing their sexual interests who are required to undergo such procedure (Smallbone et al., 2013, p. 25).

Another method to prevent child sexual abuse is to amend and revise the criminal laws to confine them beyond is considered as otherwise normal prison sentence for specific crimes such as designation of the offenders to “dangerous offenders” so that the public will be well-informed and protected.

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