

Community corrections term paper examples

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



Following the American Psychological Association's Guidelines

Crime is widespread. Everywhere we go, anywhere in the world, somebody is stealing, dealing drugs, or even trying to take the life of another. Community corrections are operational in most countries in an effort to keep law-abiding citizens safe. Corrections removes law breakers, segregating them from society sometimes forever, and sometimes in an effort to reintroduce them after their debt is paid. Some countries, like the United States, benefit greatly off the many facets of the community corrections program that exist within the country. Other countries attempt to recognize many criminals are capable of change, make use of them in the community, and rather than turn jails into a business, funnel functioning criminals back into society once they are ready to follow society's rules. It is my belief American society would be better if we were able to function more like these other countries, without preying on the mistakes of others, but instead utilizing their skills while they repaid their debts, and then releasing them for good.

The term community correction has become more difficult to define over the years as the public and private justice systems have expanded to fit the needs of society. Once just a system of courts and prisons, we now see a system of courts, prisons, juvenile detention centers, holding cells, and various other impositions placed on criminals in order to keep law-abiding citizens safe. Essentially, community corrections are sanctions the law imposes on convicted criminals, both adult and juvenile, occurring in community or residential settings. The act must occur, therefore, outside of a jail or prison in order to be considered a community correction. The

corrections are therein enforced by those bestowed with legal authority such as law enforcement, or the courts. According to Burk Foster's, " Corrections: The Fundamentals," there are many punishments and restrictions still being put in place between prison and probation in order to expand the community correction services offered by the justice system .

Community corrections influence the communities in which it is practiced in a variety of ways. For example, many criminals are released on probation.

Probation is often not successful due to overworked probation officers or the management of the system itself . Therefore, this branch of community corrections does the community little good, as it is likely these criminals will commit their previous deeds, or new ones, again. Rehabilitation is difficult, and with the system cutting spending and employees overworked, it is nearly impossible to give convicted criminals the attention they need.

Furthermore, there is a general attitude in some neighborhoods that only the " essential" criminals should be removed from communities, leaving behind the ones that will not do detrimental harm to anybody . While there is a small crumb of logic in this argument, the fact remains the system leaves criminals on the street with the hope they will not harm anybody in the community.

It would appear then, as hypothesized, that the strict correctional system of other countries may not have it entirely correct, but they may be on a better track than the American system. The American justice system, for example, wastes money on probation, which in many instances is unsuccessful.

Probationary officers are often overloaded with cases and are unable to check up on each of the convicted criminals they are supposed to be

watching. This allows these criminals to slowly, or quickly, slip back into old habits unnoticed. Crimes are committed and rehabilitation is impossible. Meanwhile, millions of tax dollars go wasted on a futile venture. Americans have essentially turned prisons and the justice system into a business while calling it a rehabilitations venture .

Other countries, such as Germany, have small prisons, housing only 120 inmates at a time. Rather than keeping 1, 500 at a time locked away, together in the dark for years, then forcing them to rehabilitate to society's norms all at once, Germany asks their prisoners to go into society during the day, make use of themselves at a job, and return to the prison to be locked away for the night . They maintain their sense of civility while being of use to the community. They never become a caged animal as they become in America and, best of all, they never become a drain on the system, constantly cycled through prisons across the country as they continue committing crimes, never hoping to be rehabilitated. It is, of course, unrealistic to think every prison in the United States could adopt this model; violent psychopaths and murderers are indeed locked away for a reason. However, those who were held for petty theft or misdemeanor drug charges could easily be placed in this program. Not only would it free up time for overworked probation officers, but also it may eliminate the program all together. Inmates would learn skills, and rehabilitate themselves to society while also paying their debt for their wrongdoing, as well. The American justice system could be a legitimate corrections system, rather than a money-grubbing business praying on the mistakes of others.

In sum, in America community corrections continues to become a lengthier

process. It could be for our safety, but it is likely to obtain more money and keep people in the system for minor infractions. Rehabilitation is less likely, and even less of an option under these circumstances. Prison becomes more of a business in these situations. Other countries, such as Germany, try to cage people less and rehabilitate people more, making money on legitimate businesses rather than the misfortune of others. If America were to model its community corrections after countries such as these it is my belief that crime would lessen, criminals would have a real chance at being rehabilitated, and people would feel safer.

References

Foster, B. (2005). *Corrections: The Fundamentals*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall.