

Punishment vs rehabilitation



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This paper, I will discuss the issues of punishment versus rehabilitation debates. I will point out issues on how punishment and rehabilitation affects deterrence of crime, how it impacts victims and their family, impact offenders, impact on society, and the fiscal impact upon society. When looking at punishment and rehabilitation each one has purpose for the inmate. This debate will show both pros and cons to punishment and rehabilitation. Punishment versus Rehabilitation The criminal justice system has four objectives.

I will be talking about two of them punishment and rehabilitation. When talking about these two objectives, society looks at these two with high expectations and will the justice system live up to these expectations. The justice system and the public has opinions on how each should work and how they will not work, and I will address each side of the issue on when it will be time to punish or rehabilitate. Deterrence of Crime Deterrence theory if one commits a crime the benefit should outweigh the crime itself, if not the individual will think twice before committing another crime.

The theory does not explain criminal behavior, to prevent crime from occurring the law will show through punishment, but the punishment should outweigh the potential crime. With the two components of deterrence punishment dispensed to the wrong doer to prevent them from recommitting the crime, and put the fear of punishment in others will prevent others from committing similar crimes. Crime has been part of society for centuries, and the common form of punishment is to incarcerate.

Even though incarceration is a temporary fix for offender research shows “recidivism amongst convicted felons following release from prison is as high as 63%” and most of the inmates had arrest records and convictions prior to the incarceration of their current offense (Carson & Mulako-Wangota, 1989). Over years many has debated that life or death sentence can be deterrence to crime do to contribute to the effectiveness of punishment. Others argue rehabilitation is a permanent fix. Rehabilitation has long-term effect on offenders since it would prevent future crime from happening.

Also rehabilitation changes the criminal behavior, and get them adapted back in to society by giving them an education or trade. By giving offenders an education or skill, when they get released offenders can find jobs and it allows the offender to have a sense of existence in the community. When offenders use rehabilitation programs they can engage in therapy such as drug therapy for those with a substance abuse addictions, and for those that has been abused or are abusive could use the psychological counseling they have to offer.

When offenders get involved with any type of rehabilitation program their view to commit crimes change and they will no longer desire to commit a crime. Effect on victims/families Victims have been overlooked mostly in the shadow of the accused and their rights. In the past victims and their family has been treated unfair through the proceeding since the Constitutional rights gave the accused the “right to a speedy trial, the right to counsel, the right to confront witnesses, and due process under the law” (Larrabee, 2006, p.).

The courts found victims ignoring so most times they were told to leave or stay away from the court proceedings. As a victim many felt they were being re-victimized, so has of 2004 President Bush signed a law guarantying the victims had rights in the courtroom. For victims and their family emotions can flair up and can be stressful if courts handed out a sentence that was improper. For victims they would like to see punishment handed to accused, rather than giving them rehabilitation through probation.

For majority of the society punishment by prison is the best sentence for an offender to receives, where they could not commit future crime. If the offender had to pay the victim but wasn't able to because of imprisonment it could cause more strain on the victim or their family. If the offender was on probation, the victim could benefit since the offender could pay restitution. If one was on probation they have a chance to join programs that was offered by the courts in which could benefit the victims and their family.

Programs such as Victim Impact Panel allows victims to be face to face with the offender, hoping that the offender could understand how the criminal act effected their life. Impact upon offender/family Incarceration when an offender is sentenced to prison it could affect offenders psychologically. Offenders can become depressed due to separation from family, and society. Incarceration of an offender can hurt the family structure, leaving one parent to raise children, even the finances will become a major problem.

Then after the offender gets out they have the risk of offending again, isolate from society. They could have a hard time getting employment. On the other hand if offenders had probation the family would not be separated, financial

support for the family wouldn't suffer. The only thing the offender will be closely watched by a probation officer. Impact upon society When looking into society what do we see a group of different people, criminals normally have a poor education, no job or low paying job, and started young or grew up around crime.

If we took a group of people and discusses how punishment and rehabilitation can impacted offenders, most likely people will argue due to cost to house inmates, families will be disrupted , the increase of inmates in prison etc.... The problem with the justice system they try to punish and rehabilitate at the same time, to offenders it could be a cross road to mishaps. Building new and adding on to old prisons, the sentencing of offenders giving less time or more for certain crimes all this impacts society on punishment versus rehabilitation.

When the criminal justice system punishes an offender the social impact it has on the society in many ways “ 1) the cost, 2) economic since a remember might bring home the money, 3) family disruption- weakens families many ways, and 4) kids suffer may not finish school or commit crimes themselves” (Cotterman, 2007). The impact that rehabilitation has on society “ 1) the offender is giving a second chance, 2) Society may feel threaten that offender is not in prison, 3) rehabilitation cost is higher than incarceration, 4) it could prevent offenders to commit another crime, and 5) prison less crowded” (Cotterman, 2007) Fiscal impact upon society

When incarcerating an offender it cost not only the county, but the state an average of \$28, 000 to \$35, 000 a year to house, feed, clothe, health care,

etc... an inmate. Than states like California, Texas, and other states with population problems in prison looking to build new or add on to old this dollar amount is not included into that figure. Rehabilitation deter crime, but it helps with the ongoing battle with the cost of punishment. Today even private prisons are being built by organizations to help with cost to the county and state.

Boot or shock camps may also be an option and lower the cost of rehabilitation programs. New York uses shock camps saving a estimated \$10, 000 a year over traditional incarceration, and parole programs saves an estimated \$12, 000 years for taxpayers” (Larrabee, 2006, p. 2). We all know if you do something wrong you will be punished. So many refrain from committing a crime while other just don’t think about right or wrong, and punishment can come in many forms. Punishment and rehabilitation can work since they both play a major role in the criminal justice system.

Punishment and rehabilitation controls crimes if it is effectively done right. If the justice system punished an offender the punishment should be followed by rehabilitation. When an offender commits a crime an appropriate sentence should be giving, but then the system needs to be fair to both the offender and victim. To deter crime effectively punishment and rehabilitation needs to work together. Punishment versus rehabilitation the debates will go on for years, and the debate will continue until the justice system can figure out how to crime, offenders etc