

The psychological disorders

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Juvenile justice systems at times require young offenders to undergo psychological evaluation. Most young offenders exhibit one form of psychological disorder or another. These disorders range from growing up in dysfunctional families, drug abuse to mental disorder. Evaluation requirement arises out of the need for the justices system to assign the proper collective rehabilitation measures. If disorders are diagnosed, the juvenile court system is mandated to recommend psychological treatment for the juvenile offenders found to be suffering from any given psychological order (Feldstein & Ginsburg, 2006). The treatments can range from substance abuse rehabilitation, psychological treatment to education assistance.

The recommendation depends on the disorder diagnosed. The treatment for the diagnosed disorders can be provided by state institutions. Alternatively, the court can order either the parents or right agencies to provide the necessary help required for complete rehabilitation of the young offender. This means that psychological evaluation of the offenders provides the court system with invaluable information (Naar-King & Suarez, 2011). From the information provided, the courts system is enabled to recommend the proper rehabilitative measures which the courts can incorporate in their sentencing.

Therefore, in addition to whatever sentence the court assigns to the offenders, rehabilitative measures are included. All juvenile offenders do not undergo psychologically review. Psychological review is requested by either the juveniles' defense or the prosecutor. Defense attorneys' also can have one undertaken as part of their defense strategy and use the review report to defend the juvenile. The interest in juveniles' psychological state rose

after there was an increment in youth related violent crimes in the 1990s (Hong, Robert, Harriman, & Mina, 2010). Studies were carried out to provide the corrective measure to be undertaken.

The studies were also for the purpose of identifying the influential factors that trigger juvenile violence (Feldstein & Ginsburg, 2006). Most juvenile offenders were found to have psychological problems. This means that sentencing young offenders to juvenile rehabilitation centers or putting them on probation, without addressing their psychological issues, would do more harm than good. In order to ensure that proper rehabilitative measures are undertaken, studies on the effectiveness of juvenile rehabilitative centers have been carried out. Lack of proper psychological treatment in these centers was among the issues found to curtail the effectiveness of the systems (Feldstein & Ginsburg, 2006). This increased the likelihood of young offenders failing to get proper rehabilitation.

Those sentenced to serve incarceration period in these centers without the benefit of psychological evaluation were, therefore, likely to serve their time without their psychological problems being diagnosed. The main goal of sending offenders to serve sentences in rehabilitative centers or jail is to ensure that their offending behaviors are corrected. However, common sense dictates that one cannot treat an ailment without being aware of its existence. Sending young offenders to rehabilitative centers without the benefit of knowing their problems is not much of a rehabilitative measure either. It is on this basis that the importance of undertaking psychological test on young offenders became clear. Juvenile correctional centers were

also found to be inadequate in the provision of care for mental health problems (Feldstein & Ginsburg, 2006).

In their study Feldstein & Ginsburg (2006), found out that most juvenile correctional centers had problems diagnosing psychological disorders. This means that a young offender with undiagnosed psychological disorders is likely to undergo his or her sentence without the psychological disorder being treated. Most of the psychological disorders prevalent among young offenders include substance abuse and mental illness. In a system where such issues are not properly addressed, the problem is likely to be compounded rather than being resolved. Feldstein & Ginsburg (2006) in their article recommends intervention so that such problems can be recognized and addressed instead of being swept under the carpet.

This way, in their view, young offenders can be fully rehabilitated and emerge as better adults and citizens. This is better as opposed to serving their sentences only to commit more crimes after being released. Such a scenario would beat the purpose of sentencing them to rehabilitative centers in the first place. For this reason, proper evaluation of youthful offenders should be undertaken to ensure that those sent to these centers achieve the goals that these centers have been established to meet. Their study also found gender disparity in young offenders.

Young females, according to them, are the minorities in the juvenile justices system. Additionally, psychological disorders are less prevalent among the female offenders. They noted that among young females there was a higher likelihood of them acquiring psychological issues once they were put into the

juvenile justices system as opposed to having issues before entering the system. For this reason, the system should be improved to ensure that those who undertake rehabilitative measures do not leave the system worse off than they were when taken into it. The juvenile system and its challenges has always been subjected to heated debates, with protagonists arguing that it does more harm than good.

Such arguments largely stem from the fact that the system is perceived to be inadequate in addressing issues of psychological disorders (Naar-King & Suarez, 2011). This coupled with the likelihood of young offenders leaving the system more hardened than they were when being sentenced gives some weight to their view. Correctional facilities are intended to make better adults and citizens out of the youths who commit crimes. They are taken away from the society for given periods of time to ensure that they do not repeat their offences (Benedek, Ash, & Scott, 2010). Sentences are also handed out to ensure that they undergo the proper corrective measures that would help them turn away from crimes. This reduces likelihood of young offenders repeating their criminal activities and turns them into productive law abiding citizens.

As such, the system should then be capable of addressing the root causes that drive the youth to committing criminal offences. Additionally, the system should be able to make recommendations on how to address the problems of young people engaging in crime, so that crimes committed by the youth can be reduced. Such a crucial task can not be achieved within a system that is unable to diagnose psychological issues that influence criminal activities among the youth (Benedek, Ash, & Scott, 2010). For this <https://assignbuster.com/the-psychological-disorders/>

reason, a proper diagnostic evaluation mechanism should be in place. This is to ensure that youth offenders who enter into the juvenile justices system are not sent into rehabilitation centers to be hardened rather than rehabilitated.

We should note, however, that juvenile correctional centers are a total failure. Some offenders do get rehabilitated on serving their terms.