Mental Illness of both Offenders and Victims Impact Various Divisions of the Criminal Justice System

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Abstract

In the prisons of the United States, there are dozens of mentally ill offenders who are involved in the criminal actions. Their activities influence various aspects of crimes along with the entire system. There could be other reasons, but the primary factor illustrated that psychological problems had contributed individuals to move towards illegal actions. These obstacles, conditions and the difficulties are guaranteed necessary mental health interventions which is not being fulfilled by the community. APD and PTSD are common among the psychiatric disorders which are prevalent and impacts the various parts of the criminal justice system. Depression, Bi-polar disorder and the schizophrenia are also the leading features that influence law enforcement agencies, accompanying prosecution and agencies for detaining or supervising the offenders. The analysis of victims and offenders provides a comprehensive picture of how both impacted the criminal justice system in one or the other way.

**Introduction**

A person who kills someone with a deliberate attempt and predeterminations cannot be held liable for the degree of murder. There could be varied reasons and mental elements that seems self-evident, which defines the real causes of crimes. Mental disorder or the intoxication is attributable to provoking circumstances which are supported by the evidence in different court proceedings. On 23 May 2011, the US Supreme Court orders the release of 33000 prisoners due to mental health problems which contributed to the killing of many innocent individuals. The decision of court reflects that there was a severe violation of constitutional clause of the eighth amendment and this also shows that *murder, criminal homicide and voluntary manslaughter by criminals have significant relation with mental health and it influences the criminal justice system.*

**Discussion**

Among the major segments of society, the criminal justice system plays a critical role, and it is a complicated part of the community. Recognizing the significance of law illustrate the dedication and enforcement which streamlines the actions of each member. Corrections, courts and law enforcement are the major areas and fundamental parts of the criminal justice system. An officer while investigating the crimes gather certain pieces of evidence to give testimony in the court and continue its investigation after making the required documentation (Davis, 2017). Same is the case with courts which gives their verdicts through the evidence presented before them. Judges have certain powers to accept or reject the plea and can oversee the trials and offenders convicted of a crime. Rationality is generally the focused pointed for judges to look into the matter and render their unbiased opinion.

**State Level Criminal Justice System and Offenders**

Similarly, the corrections are the system which separates offenders from the community and effectively ensure their rehabilitation. Through the continuous monitoring and care of a person, they hopefully release them for not committing the crime again and again. The concerned authorities appoint various correction officers for safe and secure services which could oversee the day-to-day interactions and dealings of convicts (Davis, 2017). One of the significant factors that derive from such actions is the poor mental health, depression or the loss of someone by criminals which convince them to act against the moral values, norms and settled rules of the society. For that matter, policymakers have defined areas through which they could intersect with health policy and criminal justice. Properly handling a mentally ill person is a challenge and people who are experiencing crises of mental health are more likely to encounter police than medical help.

More than 64 percent of jail inmates have a mental health problem as per data provided by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Agencies and officials at several stages of the criminal justice system may face the challenge of responding effectively. The legislatures are interested in how to make policies for better results for both the network and the individual. The behavioral health requirements for individuals are designed by the state lawmakers to improve the initial interactions with the criminal justice system. Serious mental issues like schizophrenia, depression and bipolar disorder are the growing concerns among lawyers and advocates of human rights (Davis, 2017). Millions of people are having some serious mental health issues which impacts on the criminal justice. The jail system of Los Angeles is one of the largest mental health treatment facilities in the United States.

Over 3000 individuals are treated every day which is better than the other state prisons and jail interventions. It is noted by many that jails are establishing their practices for controlling offenders through punishment and they fail to control the symptoms of mental health. Stressful nature of the correctional setting, lack of psychologists and the resources are a leading factor for the failure of mental health. Punishment, in most cases, resulted in solitary confinement and more extended prison stays (Davis, 2017). Releasing the offenders without psychological intervention also create troubles for the criminals when they move back to the community. Society is not ready to accept them as usual and noble members. The terms of parole and probation are failing because of no stability and normality of prisoner. It is common that offenders with mental illness are likely to have parole suspended than those who have no psychological issue.

There is an interesting fact that media created the perception for the account of violence, which reinforces a link in the mind of the public for dangerousness and criminal's mental health. The reason for the prevalence of high rates of people with mental illness in prison is the assumption that criminals are violent individuals because of their mental state of health. Coverage of media has indeed generated the phenomena and drive for a fearful environment like the mass shooting which is frequently happened from the past few years. There is a view that mentally ill individuals have not only impacted the criminal justice system but also the society in a harmful and destructive way. In 2012 the killing of twenty children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newton had various dimensions and analysis of law enforcement agencies. The person had a problem of autism spectrum disorder which is the same as the individual who killed twelve people in a movie theatre in Aurora.

Killer of the twelve people pled not guilty by other means, but the reason was insanity and asked for rehabilitation of mental illness (Davis, 2017). The people when making headlines for violence with mental health issues and often for the irrational and unpredictable acts of mass destruction create a fear in the minds of public. It shows that mental health causes random violence. Despite the small population of individuals having criminal actions, large scale studies found that people with mental health are not violent and they are less in creating violence in the society (Melton et al., 2017). Similarly several measure are defined by the authorities which shows the critical examination of how often symptoms of mental illness impact the crime. It could be the direct responsibility of the symptoms like paranoid delusions which contribute for attacking a stranger.

**Psychological Appraisals of Victims and Offenders**

Scholars and the researchers have focused on the research and intervention on the role of schizophrenia and psychosis for causing violence and crimes. Further, the auditory and command hallucination inflict violence and the delusions are also involved in the persecution. The critical analysis and review of 9000 insanity pleas from the last two decades reflect that defendants were diagnosed with schizophrenia, with 43 percent from the time of intervention. While the insanity defense was thriving among the cases, there was 67 percent of the defendants who were diagnosed with schizophrenia. It does not show that mental illness has no relation with crime instead of issues like depression can cause violence for a person who enters into the depressive rage. Hopelessness and the suicidality could conceivably lead to corruption because of symptoms of hyper-arousal which resulted in aggression. Further, Post-Traumatic Stress disorder also increases the rates of sins, and it is also the symptoms of impulsivity which is a known risk for criminal involvement.

The understanding of the offenders is essential for the law enforcement agencies and those related to law-related activities. The nature of mental illness and the impact on the criminal justice system is considerable (Melton et al., 2017). The recent analysis of 1000 psychiatric patient with repeated incidents of violence showed that psychosis proceeded for 12 percent of the disorder. In-depth interviews with more than 100 probationers about their criminal activity found that 7 percent of crimes were directly motivated by poor mental health. The additional 11 percent are related to the same types of mental illness. All of these cases are the representations of mental health issues which have direct and indirect relation with the offenders, criminals and those having utilizations of various measures for leading the rates of crimes (Papp et al., 2016). Among the 4-12 percent of the cases, more than 90 percent of crimes are committed by people with severe mental illness, and it is related to the symptoms of mental health.

Researchers and scholars are wondered for a small group of people who commit their crimes which is consistently related to the symptoms and for whom psychiatric care would prevent their criminal involvement. The larger group of people with mental health care would have little impact on illegal activity. There were two-thirds of the offenders who committed a crime are directly motivated by symptoms and they committed an additional crime that was also related to these symptoms. Follow-up research models, studies and the investigations illustrate that once the offenders with mental illness enter the criminal justice system, they have a harder time to navigate their way.

The poor offenders have no money to hire their attorney, and they try to sustain with severe mental illness. Their health situation or the condition create troubles for the police investigation and interrogation. These individuals can have false confessions and acceptance of crimes in another way. Mentally ill person navigate the environment of prison than non-mentally and unfortunate counterparts which make it difficult to access the resources and needed interventions. The exacerbations of stress and mental health symptoms is indeed for no exception, and they can also receive the infractions involving aggression with incarcerations (Papp et al., 2016). We can have a rigorous analysis that provides offender activities and breaking of law which directly impacts on the victims. Both contribute to affect the criminal justice system in one or the other way.

In most of the cases, there are various reasons for failure in supervision including the commitment of a new offense or the technical violation (Sjödin et al., 2017). The background also reflects that these people have negative experiences of life which convince them to act against the rule of law. The diversion of the individuals with mental health and the substance use conditions should be controlled through a proper strategy and maintenance of their mental health. The need for unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system requires a comprehensive approach along with the demand for support and effective services. Promotion of fairness through the interaction and dealing with criminals can have a positive impact on the offenders and victims. Legislators, personnel, advocates, prosecutors, defenders and the officers of law enforcement agencies have a more significant role in the improved outcome of justice for all. Various strategies can be part of the rehabilitation services like social support through a social bond.

In the purview of the mental illness and its implications for the criminal justice system, one should not forget the essential role of social bonding. It is significant and imperative support against criminal behavior and factors that involve illegal actions among individuals with mental illness. Even the alienation of friends and families put higher pressure on the mind of a criminal, and it leads to impairing of social support which is again the contributor for the development of criminal behavior. We must not navigate the role of people's interaction and participation in group activities (Sjödin et al., 2017). The sorry state of condition implies that against the high prevalence of mental health problems only about 1 in 3 state prisoners and 1 in 6 jail inmates received intervention in custody. As per the information and statistics provided by the National Institute of Corrections, there is a harder time for a reintegration of mentally ill and substance used persons than those who are not involved in these activities.

Specific measures are taken by the concerned authorities in the form of behavioral health services to reduce the number of people facing criminal acts and influencing the criminal justice system. State mental health agencies are offering services for people who are not ensured or not in need of services for rehabilitation (Theobald et al., 2016). An amount of 44 billion US dollars is already spent on the facilities for mental health of 8 million people. These spending’s have a positive result as per calculations of Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The education for the public at large and especially for the victims is reducing barriers for changes and coverage of mental health services.

According to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the expansion of Medicaid is increasing over the last few years. These resources are varied according to the funding and resources available to the particular state. Among the significant factors for failure in the rehabilitation of services is the lack of information and knowledge about the social, health and criminal justice system. The established data integrated system can maximize positive outcomes, and it prevents the people from falling into gaps and deficiencies, like the people being incarcerated without knowledge of the person’s mental health history and intervention plan. Those individuals that are released without efforts to coordinate with the mental health system are mostly fail in adjusting themselves as vibrant members of the community (Theobald et al., 2016). Technology can also be used to help people experiencing mental illness, and it can guide them to address the crises adequately and positively. It is less harmful incarceration, productive and affordable. Other measures can be adopted for reducing the impacts of mental illness of victims and offenders on the criminal justice system.

**Conclusion**

Concluding the discussion of mental illness have significant relation with crimes and increase violations of law in any society. Same is the case with the United States where different strategies are being adopted by law enforcement agencies, accompanying prosecution and agencies for detaining or supervising the offenders to reduce the negative impacts of mental illness on the criminal justice system. Both the criminals and those who are victims of illegal acts need to be tackled comprehensively and technically. Otherwise, mass killing and increase rate of violence will remain intact in the near future.

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