Correctional Classifications

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**Correctional Classification**

Prisoner classification is a technique used to assess inmate risk which balances the security requirements with the needs of programs. Usually, newly admitted prisoners are transported from country jails to some prison receiving center where risk assessment takes place. This system matches the individual characteristics with the type of correctional facility (“Assigning inmates to prison,” n.d.). Classification of offenders using the proper tools and instruments can result in effective management and efficiency of the correction system. If the classification system handles an increased amount or type of offenders, then the prisons will be overcrowded. Overcrowded prisons result in the number of issues like prisoners mental and physical health problems and lack of good services and supervision.

Prisons overcrowding is one of the key factors that contribute to the problems of prisoners and their poor conditions around the world. It becomes one of the single major problems which prison systems are facing, and it can have the worst consequences while effective prison classification is the solutions to major of the prison problems. The New Jersey Department of Corrections uses an effective classification system and matches the individual characteristics with the appropriate correction facility before putting the prisoner in certain correction (“UnderstandingNJDOCPrisonSystem.pdf,” n.d.). They use the objective scoring method which helps them assess and appropriately recommend the custody status and guides the housing assignments for inmates of both the genders.

The objective scoring system employs standardized evaluation and custody assignment of prisoners based on criteria that are objectively defined. To determine the custody status of an inmate, this criterion is weighted and scored. However, the habitual sex offenders are not dealt with these criteria and are sentenced to the Adult Diagnostic Treatment Centre. This correctional facility determines the treatment and programming assignment of these inmates. The objective classification system defined by the New Jersey Department of Corrections is fair and is effective in providing the prediction about the inmate behavior. In addition, it helps in assigning the least restrictive custody status to the prisoner’s equivalent to their risk and threat for the community.

Classification scoring instruments that contain the assessment scales are used to evaluate the offender’s comparative to objective criteria and to assign rating points on that classification scoring instruments. The sum total which the scoring instrument shows the score of objective classification and then the recommendation is made about inmate custody status. In this way, offenders are classified based on their statistic on violence, and classification decisions are made. The method used also provides periodic reviews of the offender’s allocated custody status. It also allows the prisoner to progress to a less obstructive custody status. The Institutional Classification Committee (ICC) reviews the inmate upon his arrival and approves his status, assignment and determine programming needs. At a minimum they are reviewed by ICC, annually to assess their institutional adjustment.

Jaycee Lee Dugard was arrested on his way to school when she was 11 and was imprisoned for 18 years by a couple who was arrested later. During these 18 years, she was raped and suffered from violence and torture. She also gave birth to kids during her imprisonment. His suspect Garridos are the criminal defendants in her case. Garrido has previously been imprisonment due to the sex crimes he committed. The different parole officer's kept on visiting his failed but failed to judge any irregularities. The sex offenders must be classified after evaluating them on different factors like the nature of the crime and their risks to the general public. Although Garridos have been jailed, her wife is jailed for 36 years. They pose a high risk to re-offend at large and hence must be kept behind bars. If law enforcement has already searched his property, then he must be classified according to the risk level, and Jaycee Lee Dugard could be saved.

**Facility vs. Gender of Correctional Officers**

Cross-gender supervision can be a challenging task for both the male and female officers. The research has been increased on the topic since more of the females are becoming the correctional officers in male prisons. These days much of the states allow the cross-gender supervision in prisons and correction centers. A few time ago, female officers were not allowed to supervise the male inmates but in maximum security and especially in case of mentally ill inmates. This cross-gender supervision becomes more challenging when the prisoners are nude, or they are using the toilet or addressing any personal needs.

Cross-gender supervision, create challenges for both the prisoners and the staff. The notion of sex-appropriate behavior becomes the main point of consideration when it comes to cross-gender supervision in the correction centers. According to a study, prisoners were made for men by men. The male correctional officers in the female prisons do make sense that the female inmates remain under the firm control of male officers (Blackburn, Fowler, Mullings, & Marquart, 2011). In the case of female inmates being supervised by male correctional officers, challenges of sex, rape and harassment come on board. Sex behind bars is becoming a common issue. Different reports indicate that female inmates' offers sex favors to the male officers to get alcohol and cigarettes in return. The issues of sexual misconduct also create challenges for the security and privacy of the female inmates, which should be one of the jail missions. A number of inappropriate relationships have been observed as an outcome of cross-gender supervision. Their relationships are of both homosexual and heterosexual nature.

A study also found that both men and women are similar in their work perceptions and attitudes when it comes to correctional officers. In addition, it also it also found that the only difference in the male and female correction officers was that females were less likely to feel any danger of their occupational environment. In fact, they were more satisfied with their job as compared to the male officers (Lambert, Paoline III, Hogan, & Baker, 2007).

According to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, female correctional officers can supervise both female and male prisoners unless made prisoners are nude for a longer period of time or they have to come in contact with male genitalia. This shows that female correctional officers have to stay; however, their challenges will also stay. Females are considered as weak and cannot fight against the sexually deprived male inmates. There is also an assumption that women are mentally weak and fail to complete the challenges of dealing with mentally ill prisoners. Female also face the obstacles in this industry due to the male officers and supervisors who believe that law and enforcement do not belong to females. However, the reality is that women excel in all the fields including the patrol and correction settings and bring benefits to industry, which their male counterpart fail to do. Some male inmates also respect female officers and like working with them, but some are resentful of them.

In a nutshell, cross-gender supervision in case of correction population can be beneficial in many cases and can be challenging for inmates and officers as well. The same gender supervision also accounts for homosexual relationships between inmates and officers. It is the duty of jail administration to deal with the issue of sex behind bars in both cases of supervision, either same gender or cross-gender. Women can be good correction officer although they face gender bias issues as well. There is a great chance of cohesiveness among female officers and male inmates, and she should simply be considered as an officer who is to be appreciated.

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