Criminal Justice System

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**Introduction**

The criminal justice system must serve its citizens and ensure public safety. It consists of the police, corrections, and the courts giving convict verdicts. The criminal justice system rehabilitates and ensures law and order. It should be impartial, rational, and transparent while giving its services to its citizens. Without a fair criminal justice system, the country is in chaos and develops the inability to serve its citizens and the enforcement of laws. The police ensure law and order at the federal, community, and state levels. The federal police ensure they perform duties within the Federal government's jurisdiction. Usually, they have limited opportunities since their field of expertise is narrow. In addition, the federal police investigate suspects dealing in illegal activities to protect government officials. The community police officers ensure that emergency calls are responded to and assigned areas are patrolled diligently. Lastly, the state police ensure that statewide laws and regulations are followed. The second category is the court system. The court makes rational decisions based on US laws. Once the police have identified an offender, the court takes over to pass judgment on the criminal. The jury or the judge may pass a verdict depending on the offender’s crime. An offender may be found guilty or not guilty in court. Lastly, the corrections ensure that convicts and those sentenced by a court of law are supervised and diligently serve their time in jail. Here, individuals are confined in cells, and their time in prison is meant to reduce the recidivism rate and help them integrate into society.

The criminal justice system has several challenges, like overcrowding and lack of trust. These challenges make it ineffective in serving citizens and promoting a transparent culture in the system. The most prominent challenge that faces the criminal justice system is police brutality which raises criticism and distrust among citizens and reduces transparency. The following is an evaluation of police brutality as a challenge in the criminal justice system.

**Police Brutality Challenge**

Police brutality in the United States has been a hurdle that has caused much chaos and citizens protesting such an issue. It involves the excessive use of force in the form of assault, murder, and torture. Police brutality is a challenge that negatively impacts the criminal justice system. It has been associated with racism, which favors individuals based on their skin color. One prominent case of police brutality was the George Floyd case, which occurred in Minneapolis in 2020. George Floyd was arrested after an employee at a store called the police claiming that Floyd had used counterfeit dollars to purchase cigarettes (Barrie, 2020). The four police officers took the accused man and pinned him to the floor. Videos taken by on-standers showed Floyd gasping for air, but one officer would not hear him. The death of George sparked rage from citizens who interpreted the situation as a case of racism. The police officers were fired as it was concluded that they violated the law. Moreover, the police officers were charged by the court of law and are believed to be currently serving their sentences.

The challenge of police brutality is that citizens never trust the criminal justice system. Police officers are part of the criminal justice system, and the moment they have misconduct, they are violating their mission of being transparent and serving citizens without discrimination. Police brutality leads to protests like the black lives matter, which can lead to mass destruction of properties, and the criminal justice system is left with no choice but to watch. The criminal justice system is constantly criticized on how they conduct themselves. Such accusations make them less effective as citizens have no faith in them. Some social issues that arise due to police brutality, which seems to be targeting black people, impair the growth of the criminal justice system. For instance, police brutality associated with racist motives makes the black community distrust law enforcement. This perpetuates people risking their lives by taking matters into their own hands, further burdening the criminal justice system. Due to police brutality, anti-brutality campaigns have condemned such acts and promoted equality. Police brutality leads to the deaths of many people, which breaks up families. In some cases, it may lead to retaliation, a display of how the system has failed many people.

**Solution**

To solve the issue of police brutality as a challenge to the criminal justice system, some approaches should be considered. One approach would be training the police officers adequately to ensure they are not biased. One cause of police brutality is the lack of proper institutionalized training. The police should therefore be trained to be rational in handling suspects, especially those of color, to avoid controversies in the criminal justice system. The training guidelines should also be updated constantly to ensure quality services. By training police officers, the criminal justice system will have a healthy relationship with the public, and its conduct will not be judged or criticized. Another solution is ensuring accountability and prosecution of police officers. Most of the time, police officers are not charged when involved in community killings, making them fearless and untouchable. Lack of accountability makes these police officers continue their unprofessional behaviors, further tarnishing the reputation of the criminal justice system. Police officers caught breaking the law should be charged in court to face the consequences of their actions and be a lesson to others. Officers should not abuse their power and violate the Constitution to ensure that every citizen is protected and restore their faith in the fullness of the criminal justice system. Another solution is that police officers should be taught the value of communication and being compassionate towards people of different races. Police officers should know that every life matter and discrimination or hatred leads to no good. The criminal justice system should change the police culture by encouraging law enforcement to use verbal warnings before using excessive force. When a suspect is calm and obeying instructions, police officers should refrain from using unnecessary force. Lastly, what can be done is to ensure that police officers are provided with a conducive environment for effectiveness and job productivity. Police brutality can be caused by stress and unconducive environments. Police officers should be given some days off to cool off. Moreover, they should be allowed to access mental health institutions where they can talk, disclose personal difficulties, and get instant help.

**Conclusion**

Police brutality is a challenge affecting criminal justice today. The use of unnecessary force by the police creates trust issues between the criminal justice system and its citizens. Criticism from the public can lead to questioning the criminal justice system’s effectiveness. To solve this challenge of police brutality, training employees can be an effective way to ensure they are familiar with approaching unprecedented situations. Punishing or prosecuting police misconduct can solve the issue of police brutality because it will serve as a lesson to others. Changing the police culture will also solve this issue by ensuring they are not biased and reporting those found violating the law. lastly, police officers should have comfortable working environments to reduce stress and be productive.

Reference

Barrie, C. (2020). Searching racism after George Floyd. *Socius*, *6*, 2378023120971507.