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Evidence based and preventative policing.
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Introduction.

This report will be going over and explaining the importance of effective use of evidence based Policing with a focus on Focused Deterrence otherwise known as a “pulling levers approach” as stated by *College of Policing {2020}-1*. This report will be exploring the quality of the evidence used as well as the importance this model has on supporting the decision making within the Police. Further this report will cover the benefits and strengths as well as the weaknesses and limits of this model. Comparing this model to others like it. Later within the report it will also mention some examples of this model being used both effectively and ineffectively. Additionally going over the history of Focused deterrence and seeing how the model has changed over time for better or for worse. This report will also go over important topics such as Community involvement to create a comprehensive environment for the community to prevent crime as well as clear communication of consequences.

Main Body.

The definition of a Focused Deterrence model as stated by *College of Policing {2020}-2* is Tactics which target dangerous and serial criminals. This model recognises that there is a relatively small amount of the population that are constant reoffenders as portrayed by the Ministry of Justice in (*Gov.uk 2024*) 25.5% was the average reoffending rate from January to march 2022. That number doesn't represent just how bad this issue is with 51.5% of all convicted thefts reoffending within 12 months as well as 25% of Violence against the person offenders reoffending within 12 months. The Focused Deterrence model hopes to target the

rampant reoffenders. Focused Deterrence does this by combining the several core strategies such as Support, Community engagement and deterrence taken from YEF (2019). Each of these strategies have a purpose ranging from support, which covers help and rehabilitation for convicted persons who don't want to reoffend and look for support regarding that. Community engagement is a key strategy engaging and relying on members of the wider community for assistance and also outreaching to victims family members as well as arranging meetings with reformed former reoffenders. Finally deterrence, this means to up the penalty on more common offenses or remind the community that there is a consequence for the crime.

Examples of Evidence based Policing in the UK.

Focused deterrence although originating in the United States quickly found its way to Britain. (TVVPP 2023) Tells us that it was first launched in 2023 to target those under the age of 25 years old. Specifically targeting those who would casually carry knives or those with a criminal history of knife carrying. The program worked towards rehabilitating these young people and working with the community to reduce crime. A different approach was done by the metropolitan police targeting even younger children (Metropolitan Police Service 2023) This approach also included using high visibility patrols and effective non bias use of the stop and search legislation. Targeted interventions also took place within high risk areas known as Hot spots taken from (College of Policing 2022). Hot spots is another crime prevention model which instead of targeting individuals targets a geographical area within a larger area which has a higher concentration of crime. Many studies such as (Home Office. 2024) which saw incredible results from Hot spot based crime prevention such as 120,000 patrols done resulting in 80,000 weapons seized. A final Policing Policy mentioned here in this section of the report is the Zero-tolerance Policing policy adopted in July 2021 as summarised from (College of Policing 2021). This aggressive form of order maintenance as well as offensive law enforcement. This includes local minor disorderly conduct and as shown by (Dur and Van Der Weele, 2013) to be treated more harshly and higher sentences be issued. Although Zero tolerance Policing is a tried and tested model it rarely has any fruition with preventing crime as shown by (RAND No date) This is a primary reason why policing has become increasingly more directed towards rehabilitation rather than hardline punishments.

Benefits of Focused Deterrence.

Focused Deterrence has a very strong impact on crime with a very easy process of implantation making it a very effective and beneficial model for Police to utilise. At a low operating cost it means most if not every constabulary may be able to use it to its highest level of efficiency. The evidence provided has been classified as "High quality" according to (College of Policing 2020-3). With the accuracy of the information gathered using this method having a reputation of being highly accurate and being used for statistical analysis. With the economic situation in the uk right now low cost high impact methods are in need and Focused Deterrence offers moderate crime reduction with lower costs.

Drawbacks and Limitations to Focused Deterrence.

Although Focused deterrence has its benefits like all methods it also has drawbacks and limitations such as its implementation can oftentimes be a difficulty as it requires community engagement. Additionally as Braga, A.A. and Weisburd, D.L. (2012) mentions there is a potential for crime to change its direction or change who it is effecting as criminals shift their goals and plans to avoid the Focused deterrence method. Further if not carefully implemented it may be seen as intrusive to the locals and subsequently the public leading to public outcry against Police intrusiveness. This is why it must be carefully put into place. Finally there is a lack of understanding about this theory that may mean Police may get confused about the method making its implantation that much more difficult. Another limitation is that there is competition for funding within most constabularies and Focused deterrence may not be at the forefront of the consideration for funding which may make the application even more difficult. However there are no drawbacks to the information or evidence provided by this method of evidence based policing.

Focused Deterrence and Crime Opportunity.

Focused deterrence is a proven method of crime reduction which attempts to tackle many different crimes but one this report has found to be most effective against is crime opportunity theory taken from (College of policing 2022) This theory relies on the theory that offenders often make rational choices and pick targets based on relevant factors. Crime opportunity theory has 3 main sides to it. It has the offender, the location and finally the victim or in other words the target. The target can be anything from a property to a person themselves. Offenders often target those who have weakened awareness or are not present to report criminal activities. It also suggests that offenders will always go for the easiest option or an easy opportunity this is backed up by (Home Office 2015) essentially just irritating that Crime opportunity is mostly prevented by making crimes less convenient for criminals this includes car alarms, house alarms or visible cameras. This links back in with Focused deterrence as this evidence based model would use the evidence gathered by these studies and deploy visible officer patrols making the offenders see the opportunity as less convenient. This process is often referred to as "Target Hardening" (The YOU Trust. 2021). This is a proven method of reducing crime and ties in with the goals of focused deterrence. A combination of these different methods of crime reduction allows for a safer community and it's all facilitated based on information and evidence acquired by Police and then used in practice.

Conclusion

To conclude this report the evidence based policing model known as focused deterrence has a high impact on crime and is proven to be a key theory that police may utilise. Although it is best utilised when used in combination with other techniques and theories that allow for focused deterrence to thrive. This report has found that it works best with models such as the hot spots model as well as other strategies. Although Focused deterrence has drawbacks this report finds it as an overall beneficial and effective strategy. The implementation of these strategies has already begun to show a reduction in crime statistics taken from (The Guardian 2024) Shows us Hot spots and focused deterrence has led to up to 33% reductions in violence in comparison to stop and search only having a 5% reduction. All this leads the report to find that this evidence is enough to conclude that Focused deterrence is a benefit to our Policing system.

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