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***BMPL 4001 Evidence
Based Policing and
Decision Making***

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INTRODUCTION

Evidence-based policing (EBP) refers to availability of best available services which are used to challenge and inform practices, decisions and policing policies. Anyone can use the approach of EBP in order to have a strong support for practising the policy of policing culture. This concept clearly relates to the fact that police should practice its duties through a scientific evidence in order to have the best evidence for investigation. Decision making is a process which is categorised into four stages such as anticipation, entry and initial contact, dialogue and information exchange (Boaz, and Davies, 2019). This enables the people to make well informed decisions about projects, programmes and policies in order to deliver best available evidence. This essay will cover the criminal theory of criminology with evidence based policing. It will also cover some models of evidence based policing with strengths and weaknesses of classical criminology.

TASK

1. Using a crime activity of your choice, describe and discuss how classical criminology informs evidence based policing.

Key ideas and theories associated with classical criminology

A scientific study of crime, criminals and punishment is known as criminology. The classical school of criminology had come from Enlightenment period which was from 18th century. It is seen that there are some rational choices made by people while committing a crime with more emphasis on prevention of future crimes.

Cesare de Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham are known as founders of classical criminology.

Beccaria was an Italian philosopher, politician and reformist who had raised voice for smooth and consistent punishment in case of violating or infringing law. He believed people to have free will with a rational mind and also believed in fair and just punishments in consideration of being entitled to basic human rights (Churchill, Yeomans, and Channing, 2021). Bentham who is an English jurist and philosopher had founded utilitarianism, which meant that actions can be considered as right or good if a person is able to get benefit from them or is able to convey happiness. He believed in the concept of hedonism, which was an idea where people were drawn

to seek pleasure and neglect pain. People were made to make such choices which would lead them to greater happiness. Bentham had considered humans as hedonists and had thought that if punishments were effective in practice then humans would be threatened to commit crimes.

The *social contract theory* came around the time of Enlightenment age where the ideas of Beccaria and Bentham were inclined with it. The relationship between citizens and government was emphasised through social contract theory. According to the theory, people were asked to give their consent to rule to the government in order to have an exchange of certain liberties for their protection. The political rule for behaviour with moral order was established through this relationship. Beccaria had argued in relation to social contract where it was differentiated through laws. This showed that if there were stricter punishments, then people were most likely to follow laws. The modern judicial system have been influenced by classical school of criminology in various ways where the rationality of citizens have been assumed in most common way.

The ways this helps us understand crime and criminality

Crime is violation of a law, which is deemed to illegal and unlawful in the eyes of legal justice. The act, activity or event or any criminal behaviour which is punishable by law refers to crime.

Criminality is the involvement in the act of criminal activity or is the quality or state of being involved in being a criminal (Koch, 2019). In 2020, the crime rate in UK have increased to 1.18% where the crime committed by the people was seen to be at 79.52 per 1000 people around the time of 2021-22. Criminality involves commission of violence, consumption of drugs, theft, burglary, etc.

Some models of evidence based policing (POP, SARA, Hot Spot etc.)

There are various models of evidence based policy such as **POP, SARA and Hot Spot**.

POP is Problem oriented policing which is a an approach to develop targeted interventions in order to tackle and prevent crime and disorder which mainly involves recognition of particular problem with deep analysis of it in order to develop a tailored response with appropriate assessment of effects of response. The approach of POP can be used for solving crime and disorder problem and should be used in conjunction rather than alternate interventions.

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SARA consists of scanning, analysis, response, assessment which is a model of problem solving. The root cause of problem is identified and analysed in the model of SARA. There are four stages in SARA model where Scanning consists of recognition and prioritising of crime and disorder problem (Koch, 2019). Analysis refers to analysis of the problem in order to retain appropriate information for identification of actual cause of problem. Response refers to development and implementation of activities in order to solve the problem in legal and justified way. Assessment refers to appropriate measurement of response in order to make appropriate changes for solving of problem.

Hot Spots are the prevalent areas where crime is conducted on a large or high level. These are the areas where commission of crime and disorder are very much active. Hot spots policing is a strategy which is applied for reducing crime in the areas which are most affected by the criminal activity. The activities and resources are targeted in hot spots where the strategy is mainly based on the idea that there is no equal spread of crime and disorder among neighbourhoods but it is more of conjuncted in small locations which arises the activity of crime. These problems of crime can be prevented through focusing of resources on more of high crime areas.

¹ **How classical criminology is used to understand the reasoning behind these methods**

Classical criminology mainly uses the idea of free will in order to provide an understanding of deterring or punishing the offenders in case of more engagement with crimes and one of the best way to control criminals or prevent the commission of crime is to make the situation so uncomfortable against the offenders that they are bound to agree to their crime or approve of being guilty. The modern judicial system is very much affected with the classical theory of criminology as it comprises of modern justice systems in order to assume rationality with principles of human rights and due process. In classical view of criminology, crime is often referred as free will by the offender in order to make a criminal choice. The application of pain pleasure principle is applied in this choice in order to spread peace and justice in the society with reducing of pain and increasing of pleasure (McGee, and Farrington, 2019). The classical theory of criminology is based on three main principles such as Utilitarianism which is a purposeful that is not much motivated by supernatural forces, Punishment and sentences which is more of proportional to the seriousness of crime and deterrence. These principles had a more rational

approach to punishment in order to prevent the commission of serious or severe crimes. In UK, theft is an criminal act in which the accused is liable for the commission of offence.

Crime activity of theft and application of ideas of evidence based policing and classical criminology.

Theft is dishonest misappropriation of property with intention of depriving other person of their own property and permanently removing it. Under *Theft Act, 1968* if a person has committed the offence of theft, then he is liable under the act with the punishment of seven years imprisonment which is triable by the judges of Crown Court. *Section.1 (1) of Theft Act, 1968* makes a person guilty of offence of theft in order to deprive the other person of his right. The offence of theft is an criminal act which talks about the behaviour of criminal against public peace and social justice (Scott, and Clarke, 2020). The elements which are included in offence of law are appropriation, of property, belonging to another, dishonestly and with intention of permanently deprive.

There are different types of theories associated with the offence of theft which are rational choice theory, strain theory and social disorganisation theory. When thieves have rationalised their decision of steal something, then is known as *Rational choice theory*. In social or peer pressure, when younger thieves are provoked to commit crime then it is known as *Strain theory*. There are many other people who have come from poor or disadvantaged neighbourhoods which prevents them to have a normal access of life, then it is known as *Social disorganisation theory*.

According to *Clarke and Cornish*, an offender who is seen to use bounded rationale decision making in order to specify how, when and where to commit the crime, which are even seen to be guided by opportunities in relation to commission of crime. Therefore, the opportunities presented to offender will be varied on the time, place and process of commission of crime. The main idea of evidence based policing is laid upon the idea that the practice of police should more of be based on scientific evidence which helps in analysing what may work best for them in order to investigate a case in an appropriate manner. It basically means that evidence should be used in such a way that police or authorised officer is able to find the original offender who had caused the crime (Sidebottom, and Tilley, 2019). There are basically five main purposes of policing such as preserving of order, protecting of life and property, preventing of commission of offenders, duty of police which have arise from common or statute law in order to

provide justice to victims by punishing criminals. The idea of classical theory of criminology is to recognise crime as a free will decision which is to be made by an offender in regard of criminal choice. The punishment which is offered for crime can be deterrent as long as it is proportional or fits the application of crime. The classical school of criminology have even introduced various ideas such as the free will of humans and are referred as rational actors, inalienable rights provided to humans with social contract among citizens and state.

1 The strengths and weaknesses of classical criminology and evidence based policing.

The strengths of classical theory of criminology is that there has been decrease in rates of crime in order to provide a deterrent and by means of which individuals are able to successfully rebel against the system. It also includes clear structure for operations, management and functions. The productivity can also be enhanced with division of labour in order to ease the task in order to efficiently accomplish a task.

The weakness of classical theory of criminology is that overstating of the influence or ¹¹ impact of penalties on human conduct. The weak influencer of criminal justice is deterrence as there are very low apprehension of odds.

The strengths of evidence based policing is that users are allowed to witness the impact of different interventions on crime with appropriate understanding of implementation of work in regards of how, when and where to implement it (Sidebottom, Bullock, Armitage, Ashby, Clemmow, Kirby, Laycock, and Tilley, .et.al 2020). Evidence based practices have proven to have better institutional outcome with less costs and enhanced consistent care.

The weakness of evidence based policing is that there are time limitations with lack of motivation, patient compliance, changes in work with various issues of organisation in relation to cost. The experience of police is ignored which is not considered suitable for frontline officers which leads to bias ness in the public.

CONCLUSION

From the above essay it is concluded that, the best available evidence which is mainly used for informing and challenging of policing policies with certain decisions and practices, is referred as evidence based policing. It helps in suggesting the best evidence which can be used by police as a guide in order to evaluate the actual truth. The models of evidence based policing with ¹ strengths and weakness of classical criminology and evidence based policing have also been covered in it.

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