

The Supervision of Women

Name

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Due Date

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Even though the population of men in prisons and jails still exceeds that of women, Holtfreter and Wattanaporn (2014) note that the women's population in the criminal justice system has been increasing steadily since 2000. According to the article, over 1.2 million women are currently imprisoned, jailed, or under community supervision. In spite of this, traditionally, criminal justice laws, methods, and programs devised for men are applied to women without regard for their unique needs. Based on research, although gender-neutral approaches can be effective in lowering recidivism, better results are obtained when programs are designed to meet the specific needs of each gender.

According to Calhoun et al. (2010), the increasing number of women in the criminal justice system has been largely because of drug-related offenses, which have intensified over recent years due to the zero-tolerance policies on drugs. Unfortunately, the commonly used therapeutic community (CT) model in prison has been shown to be relatively ineffective in women compared to its success with men (Calhoun et al., 2010). Notably, given that the modes of addiction, crime, and recovery are different in men and women, the TC program designed to address addiction in men has not been effective in helping women overcome drug-related issues. According to the study, drug use trends in women are more linked to their social relationships, histories of childhood physical and sexual abuse, and interpersonal violence. Thus, I would like to propose an alternative program that is responsive to women's needs, acknowledges factors that influence their recidivism, and considers factors that influence their resilience.

The program will entail assessing the individual needs of women prior to being released from prison to help them transition effectively from the prison to the community. The program will incorporate the important needs linked to women including social support, housing, food,

income and employment, familial relationships, and substance use treatment (the textbook). The program will also incorporate risks distinct to women, such as housing safety, mental health, and relationship conflict. According to table 10.1, most women released from prison choose relatives' homes or their own apartments as their preferred post-release housing arrangements because of the stability and support they offer (the textbook). According to Calhoun et al. (2010), meeting the needs and addressing the risks faced by women leaving prisons reduces the likelihood of recidivism. Hence, designing a program that enhances the self-efficacy, familial support, suitable housing, and mental health of women leaving prison will ensure successful re-entry into their communities and lower recidivism.

Another vital aspect of the program will be incorporating resilience factors that lower the probability of female ex-offenders recommitting the crime. According to research conducted by Calhoun et al. (2010), female ex-convicts reported that they were concerned with mending their family relationships, being better parents for their children, and being better partners to their significant others. Hence, this program will create awareness among mothers regarding the impact of their drug abuse behavior and lifestyle on the well-being of their children and the measures they can implement to address the issue and avoid recidivism. Also, the program will address the personal relationships that matter to the women, the impact of the incarceration on their loved ones, and why it is important to address the drug use problem to avoid recidivism and prevent further negative impacts on family, children, and partners. Accordingly, by addressing underlying problems that make women vulnerable to drug use and integrating factors that motivate women ex-offenders to avoid criminal behavior, this program will help reduce the recidivism rate while promoting successful re-entry.

References

- Calhoun, S., Messina, N., Cartier, J., & Torres, S. (2010). Implementing gender-responsive treatment for women in prison: Client and staff perspectives. *Fed. Probation, 74*, 27.
- Holtfreter, K., & Wattanaporn, K. A. (2014). The transition from prison to community initiative: An examination of gender responsiveness for female offender reentry. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 41*(1), 41-57.