Selective and Collective Incapacitation

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Explain selective and collective incapacitation and discuss the advantages and problems with each strategy

Incapacitation is a punishment for a criminal offense, that entails capital punishment, imprisonment, or restricted freedom. It aims at protecting the society from further criminal acts by the offender, by removing him or her from society for some time. However, the justice system varies from one country to another regarding how the particular offense is punished because the risk criminals pose to society is a matter of perception. As a result, in modern society, incapacitation may also include the death penalty, probation, parole, Day reporting centers, and ankle bracelets with GPS tracking devices.

**Selective Incapacitation**

Selective incapacitation correction strategy seeks to protect society from criminal activities by targeting only those offenders who pose the greatest threat to society. It is based on the assumption that habitual offenders commit the most significant percentage of crimes, so crime could be significantly reduced by identifying them and plucking them from society. It aims at saving limited corrections resources and ensuring efficient use of prison space. It is determined using risk assessment instruments, which determines the number of offenses committed by a particular offender, the quality of the offense, and the likelihood of re-offending (Laqueur, 2019).

**Advantages of Selective Incapacitation**

One advantage of this strategy is that it results in a significant decrease in the number of convictions and the crime rate in the society. This is because it leads to a more extended imprisonment period of a significant number of criminals, as the imprisonment period increases with the number of crimes an individual commits. Secondly, it ensures crimes are reduced at a
lower cost. This is because only selected cases are investigated, and the crimes of a single offender are consolidated in one case. It, therefore, cuts the cost of the investigation. Thirdly, it reduces prison congestion, thus preventing violation of the rights of prisoners and the mortality rate.

**Problems of Selective Incapacitation**

It is not an accurate approach as if it is based on predictions, and if the predictions are false, the notorious criminal goes unpunished, thus compromising the society's safety. The approach only targets habitual offenders and neglects new offenders, who pose an equal danger to society. The decisions are based on an assessment of individuals' juvenile records, which is a violation of individuals' privacy. It has been predicted that the accuracy of the approach varies with the availability of resources; therefore it is compromised when funding is minimal

**Collective Incapacitation**

Collective incapacitation correcting approach entails implementation of policies that ensure a wide range of criminal offenders receive uniform sentence, regardless of the quality and number of the crimes, or the probability of future recurrence. It is based on the assumption that the only way to...
Problem of Collective Incapacitation

The approach results in a dramatic increase in already overcrowded prison populations. This results in poor hygiene, thus high infection rate and mortality in prisons. The method also accords offenders a chance to join the society after a short period. Those convicted for significant crimes are likely to re-offend after release, thus endangering society. Since cases are handled collectively, there is no consideration for offenders that may not benefit from imprisonment. For instance, drug offenders may benefit more from treatment and rehabilitation than Incapacitation.

Conclusion

Both collective and selective incapacitation are based on the perspective that you cannot rectify crimes that have already been committed, but you can prevent future recurrence. However, they work differently for different countries depending on the availability of resources and the crime rate in the country.
References

