

Reading Assignment

Introduction

Incarceration in prison often results in a tense, volatile environment where violent gangs scramble to gain power and control. These gangs can make life inside the prison dangerous, leading to riots and disturbances that leave both inmates and prison staff vulnerable. To reduce violence in the prison system, it is important to develop strategies to reduce gang activity and its associated risks. The paper examines prison gangs, violence, and strategies that might be necessary to resolve these.

Response 1

Prison gangs are organized groups of inmates within correctional facilities that have their own set of rules and regulations (Butler et al., 2018). They often form around mutual interests, such as ethnicity or race, but can also be based on other factors such as criminal affiliations. These gangs are a major source of violence in prisons, though the reasons for their existence may not be immediately obvious. Prison gangs are typically formed when inmates come together to protect themselves from other prisoners or from authorities. This is especially true for groups formed around shared ethnicity or race, which provide a sense of solidarity in a hostile environment. Additionally, some individuals join these groups because they want to feel powerful or to control the prison population. In some cases, individuals may join a gang simply to survive while they are incarcerated (Lessing, 2017). Once established, prison gangs become an influential force within correctional facilities. They may control certain areas within the prison, manage drug trafficking and other illegal activities, and even dictate how other inmates behave. Often times due to overcrowding issues in prisons and a lack of resources such as staff members,

prison gangs become more powerful than the authorities that oversee them. Some even extend beyond the walls of correctional facilities through illicit networks that reach outside countries.

Response 2

Prisons are a unique environment, as they contain people of varying levels of criminality, with many inmates having been convicted of serious crimes. As such, the environment can be site of violence and riots. Prison violence is often attributed to overcrowding, lack of staff resources, and inadequate security systems (McGuire, 2018). Overcrowding leads to an increased level of stress among inmates as there is less space for them to move around in than would normally be expected in other environments. This can lead to a sense of insecurity among inmates due to the lack of control over their living conditions. It also puts more strain on prison staff who must manage larger numbers of inmates with fewer resources available.

Additionally, prisons often have inadequate security systems which makes it difficult for staff to identify potential problems before they become violent incidents. For example, if there is no effective system for monitoring inmate behavior or screening new prisoners upon entering the facility then it becomes more likely that violent incidents could occur without any warning signs being noticed by prison staff beforehand (Belur et al., 2020). Additionally, if there are not enough staff members available at all times then it becomes harder for prison officials to intervene.

To reduce violence in prisons, both prison staff and the government must work together to ensure that adequate resources are provided and proper security systems are put into place. One key strategy involves increasing staffing levels so that there are always enough members available to monitor inmate behavior as well as respond quickly during an emergency situation. Additionally, improving security measures such as installing surveillance cameras or implementing stricter drug policies can help reduce the risk of violence occurring within the

prison walls. Finally, providing more educational opportunities for inmates so that they have ways to occupy their time constructively can also help reduce incidences of violence within prisons (Auty et al., 2017).

Conclusion

The prison environment can be problematic and can lead to issues within the system. There is a need for proper measures in place to resolve negatives associated with prison gang formation and overall violence. The decision-makers must have relevant strategies in place to minimize the impact and secure the premises.



College Essay

References

- Auty, K. M., Cope, A., & Liebling, A. (2017). Psychoeducational programs for reducing prison violence: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 33*, 126–143.
- Belur, J., Thornton, A., Tompson, L., Manning, M., Sidebottom, A., & Bowers, K. (2020). A systematic review of the effectiveness of the electronic monitoring of offenders. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 68*, 101686.
- Butler, M., Slade, G., & Dias, C. N. (2018). Self-governing prisons: Prison gangs in an international perspective. *Trends in Organized Crime, 1–16*.
- Lessing, B. (2017). Counterproductive punishment: How prison gangs undermine state authority. *Rationality and Society, 29*(3), 257–297.
- McGuire, J. (2018). Understanding prison violence: A rapid evidence assessment. *Analytic Summary*.