

Navigating Social Mobility Through Reintegration of Crime-Involved Individuals

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ABSTRACT

Crime can have a significant impact on individuals' social mobility, affecting their chances of moving within higher social strata. Individuals involved in crime often face social stigma that hinders their access to employment, education and other social opportunities. This stigma creates difficulties for individuals to be accepted back into society and improve their social status. More inclusive social reintegration processes can help them improve their social status, but are often hindered by continued negative views of them. Policies that support rehabilitation, skills training and stigma reduction are needed to open up opportunities for individuals involved in crime to move towards higher social strata. Society needs to support these individuals by giving them a fairer chance to participate in social and economic life again.

INTRODUCTION

Crime is a significant social problem in many parts of the world, potentially affecting various aspects of people's lives, including social mobility. Social mobility refers to the movement of individuals or groups from one social layer to another, either up or down the social structure. One of the major influences on social mobility is an individual's socio-economic condition, which is often affected by involvement in crime. When an individual is involved in criminal activity, it can affect their chances of getting a good job, bring them closer to the possibility of being trapped in a cycle of poverty, and hinder their ability to progress in social life. Some individuals born into families with criminal backgrounds are also likely to face difficulties in improving their social status (Abrams & Terry, 2017).

Crime is often seen as a significant barrier to social advancement in many societies. This phenomenon is individual in nature, and is closely linked to existing social structures. Individuals involved in crime may face social stigma attached to them, which reduces their opportunities in various areas of life, including access to education, employment and higher social status. This creates a gap between those involved in crime and those who are not. The impact of crime on social mobility risks reducing for transformation,

and can exacerbate existing social inequalities, creating a cycle of poverty and inequality that is difficult to break.

One of the main issues that arises in the relationship between crime and social mobility is the stigma attached to individuals who have been involved in criminal acts (Denver & Ewald, 2018). This stigma is often a major barrier to employment, better education, or access to social services. In many cases, individuals with criminal records tend to be viewed negatively by society, even after they have tried to improve their lives. This makes matters worse as they are often not given a second chance, which ultimately hampers their efforts to improve their social standing. Social stigma is an important barrier to achieving upward social mobility.

The presence of crime in a social environment can also affect individuals who are around the perpetrators of the crime. People in high-crime-influenced neighborhoods, such as high-crime areas, may feel limited in their efforts to progress socially. These neighborhoods can create fear, mistrust and a lifestyle that does not support socio-economic improvement. Children growing up in such neighborhoods are likely to have fewer opportunities to get a quality education and develop the skills needed to participate in wider economic life, ultimately hindering their social mobility.

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This issue should be observed because the relationship between crime and social mobility greatly affects the ability of individuals to improve their lives and address inequalities in society. In many countries, social inequalities are widening, and those caught up in crime are often trapped in a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break. It is important to understand the social impact of crime on individuals' opportunities for social mobility. Through a better understanding of this relationship, it is hoped that more effective approaches can be found to provide individuals, regardless of their background, with more equal opportunities to achieve a better life.

The aim of this research is to understand how involvement in criminal activity can hinder an individual's chances of moving to higher social strata, and how social stigma and crime-influenced environmental factors affect social mobility. With a deeper understanding of this, it is hoped that solutions can be found that can help individuals trapped in the cycle of crime to get a second chance and improve their quality of life in society.

RESEARCH METHOD

In analyzing the relationship between crime and social mobility, a desk-based approach can provide insights into how crime affects individuals' opportunities to move within the social structure. This approach focuses on reviewing existing research that investigates the impact of crime on individuals and communities in various social settings. Through the literature review, researchers were able to identify common patterns that emerged from previous research, as well as discover relevant theories on social stigma, environmental influences and structural barriers that impede social mobility. This method allows researchers to explore various perspectives that have been expressed by experts in sociology, criminology and other social studies (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Liska, 1992).

This literature review also served to identify gaps in the existing literature, which could provide direction for further research. Through the review of existing studies, researchers can develop an understanding of how socio-economic and criminogenic factors affect individuals' ability to improve their social status. Social theories such as anomie theory (Merton, 1938) and symbolic interaction theory (Becker, 1963) provide an important basis for understanding the relationship between crime and social mobility. The literature review approach provides greater insight into this complex and multifaceted topic and offers a basis for formulating more effective recommendations to mitigate the negative impact of crime on social mobility opportunities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Navigating social mobility through the reintegration of individuals involved in crime means that there is an effort to understand and manage the process of individual movement in society, especially for those previously involved in criminal activity. This process aims to enable these individuals to reintegrate well into society.

Navigating in the sense of directing or managing an individual's social journey, which includes social mobility. Social mobility refers to the ability of individuals or groups to move between different social positions in the social hierarchy, be it upward or downward movement in social, economic or educational status. Reintegration is key, where previously isolated or marginalized individuals, such as those involved in crime, seek to regain acceptance and function in society. This reintegration process includes various aspects, such as social support, education, and employment opportunities.

Individuals involved in crime often face significant stigma and challenges when trying to reintegrate into society. It is important to develop effective strategies and approaches to assist them to participate positively in social life. This sentence reflects the importance of efforts to support individuals who have been involved in crime so that they can improve their social status and quality of life, and contribute back to society.

Crime and social mobility are two interrelated aspects of the social structure of society. Crime can affect an individual's chances of moving within higher social strata due to factors such as social stigma, criminal convictions, and limited access to resources. Individuals involved in criminal acts often experience social exclusion, which makes it difficult for them to get decent jobs, access better education, and other opportunities to improve their quality of life. In many cases, a criminal record becomes a major obstacle in the process of social mobility, keeping individuals more trapped in low social strata.

One of the main impacts of crime on social mobility is the stigma attached to individuals involved in criminal acts. This stigma often prevents individuals from being accepted back into society, especially when it comes to employment. Most companies and organizations are more likely to reject a job candidate with a criminal record, even if the person has served their sentence or is on probation. This rejection creates a cycle of inequality that hinders their social mobility. Individuals involved in crime have fewer opportunities to improve their social status due to limited access to economic and social resources (Pager, 2003).

Involvement in crime also often has a negative impact on education and skills training. Many individuals involved in crime, especially those without access to formal education or adequate training opportunities, end up trapped in informal or low-income jobs. This makes it more difficult for them to achieve higher social status as they lack skills that are acceptable to the wider labor market. Unequal access to education and professional training further exacerbates their social mobility, creating a gap between higher and lower social classes (Western, 2006). These inequalities exacerbate social and economic polarization and hinder the creation of a more just and inclusive society.

From a social perspective, crime also disrupts relationships between individuals and groups in society. When individuals commit crimes, especially crimes that threaten the security or stability of society, the relationship of trust between them and society and legal institutions is often damaged. This makes it difficult for such individuals to rebuild the social networks necessary to advance themselves in higher social structures. Individuals involved in crime are often unable to build a positive reputation, which is indispensable for gaining social or professional support that can increase their chances of achieving social mobility (Sampson & Laub, 1993).

Social mobility in many societies is strongly influenced by pre-existing social and economic positions. Crime often serves as a structural barrier that makes it difficult for individuals to transcend their low social status. Individuals involved in criminal acts often not only miss out on better educational or employment opportunities. Crimes committed often make individuals more vulnerable to strict legal scrutiny and social policies that restrict them from interacting with the wider society. The inability to prove change or rehabilitate themselves in many cases impedes their access to the various social opportunities required to move to higher social strata (Hagan & Palloni, 1999).

Crime often exacerbates existing poverty and inequality. Individuals living in poverty or in crime-ridden neighborhoods are more likely to engage in criminal acts as a means of survival or as a result of an unfavorable social environment. These socio-economic inequalities further reduce their chances of attaining higher positions in the social structure. These factors exacerbate social inequality, with individuals from lower social strata finding it increasingly difficult to access opportunities that can improve their status (Bourgois, 1995). Crime is one manifestation of existing inequalities, exacerbating existing social inequalities and making social mobility more difficult to achieve.

The role of the legal system cannot be ignored in this regard either. The legal system tends to punish individuals involved in crime in a more severe manner, even if they have shown a change in behavior. Harsh law enforcement without consideration for rehabilitation often worsens their social conditions, making it more difficult for them to find employment or access social services. The inability of the legal system to offer effective rehabilitation or social reintegration opportunities hinders the social mobility of individuals previously involved in criminal activities (Travis, 2005).

Limited access to economic resources is also a factor that hinders the social mobility of individuals who have been involved in crime. Without adequate access to credit, training and decent work opportunities, such individuals remain trapped in poverty. These limitations make them less able to improve their social status, even after serving time or experiencing positive changes in their lives. In many cases, individuals involved in crime have few options to escape the cycle of poverty and social hardship (Piven & Cloward, 1971).

Despite the negative impact that crime can have on social mobility, there are also opportunities for change and rehabilitation. Programs designed to help individuals who have been involved in crime to return to society, including skills training and education programs, can provide opportunities to improve social mobility. The success of these programs depends largely on the extent to which society accepts individuals who have been convicted and the extent to which they are given equality of opportunity in the labour market and education (Visher, 2002).

The social stigma attached to individuals involved in crime can be long-lasting, even after the individual has demonstrated positive change. Although individuals involved in crime are trying to improve their lives, society often continues to perceive them as part of a marginalized social group. To encourage higher social mobility, it is imperative to change society's perception of individuals involved in crime and give them a fair chance to better themselves (Goffman, 1963).

Although crime can hinder social mobility, individuals involved in crime can still thrive through strong social support and policies that support reintegration. Rehabilitation programs that offer education and training opportunities can improve their skills and expand access to better jobs. The negative impact of crime on social mobility is not necessarily permanent, and there are avenues for individuals to bounce back if given appropriate opportunities to integrate into society productively (Sampson & Laub, 1993).

Ultimately, while crime can worsen social mobility for individuals involved, there are opportunities to overcome these barriers. Support from family, community and policies that support social reintegration can accelerate the rehabilitation process and help individuals move towards higher social strata. It is important to design social policies that can help individuals who have been involved in crime to have a fair chance in their efforts to improve their social mobility. Policies that support social rehabilitation and reintegration can break the cycle of poverty and criminality, paves the way for individuals to obtain better opportunities. This is crucial in providing fair opportunities for them to develop and contribute positively to society.

CONCLUSION

Crime has a significant impact on an individual's opportunity to move within higher social strata. The process of social mobility is often hampered by the social stigma attached to individuals with criminal records, as well as their limited access to education, employment and other economic opportunities. Societies and legal systems that tend to view individuals involved in crime negatively make the process of social reintegration more difficult. In many cases, individuals involved in crime are trapped in a cycle of poverty and inequality that makes it difficult for them to improve their social status. There are opportunities for rehabilitation and change, provided there is strong social support and policies that support reintegration.

Promoting improvements in the social mobility of individuals involved in crime requires a more inclusive approach and policies that provide second chances. Policies that support rehabilitation, skills training and social reintegration can help individuals rebuild their reputations and improve their chances of advancing in society. It is important for society to reduce stigma against ex-offenders and provide them with equal opportunities to participate in social and economic activities. Success in improving their social mobility will largely depend on the willingness to change social perceptions and provide fairer opportunities for them.

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