Group Dynamics in the Criminal Justice System

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Introduction

Given the complex nature of different forms of organizations in the society, it is clearly evident that it takes a group to achieve more of the set objectives than it would an individual. For this reason, most organizations tend to encourage team or group work in their business operations. However, it is necessary to point out that one of the factors that make it possible to pull through is embracing group dynamics in the diversity of organizations. With the Criminal Justice Field as the main group of emphasis, the main aim of this essay is to present a discussion that focuses on the key role that group dynamics play in this particular field. As an exhibit of the understanding of group dynamics, it will be necessary to provide an analysis of the potential pitfalls that may be associated with group-related work. Other key areas to examine include the structure and roles of the Criminal Justice field, the leadership tasks and goals involved in the field, efficiency, intragroup conflicts, and inter-group relations, as well as, the potential negative effects associated with this particular grouping.

Group Dynamics in the Criminal Justice System

Different researchers and scholars have dedicated their time and effort in looking into the role that group work and group dynamics play in an organization. Nazzaro and Strazzabosco (2009) define the term "group dynamics" as that form of interaction that takes place when people are talking while in a group setting. There is a need to mention that regardless of the nature of the group setting, group dynamics play a key role in ensuring that the set goals and objectives are attained. While different members of the team are different in their nature and possess different characteristics, working together in

a team and creating room for group dynamics makes it possible to embrace diversity in a positive manner.

With respect to the Criminal Justice System, working together in a group possesses many advantages, all which the system can use to their benefit. For instance, working together in a group and embracing group dynamics create room for more information from the different members involved. In addition to this, team work in the Criminal Justice system also assists in stimulating creativity among the team members, as well as, enhancing the development of interpersonal skills among the different team players (Trevithick, 2005).

Structure of the Criminal Justice System

It is necessary to provide an analysis of the group structure as expressed in the Criminal Justice field. Dresden (2015) points out that the Criminal Justice system has a structure that comprises of agencies at various levels including the local, state, and the federal levels. In order to efficiently and effectively prevent or handle crime, it takes a combined effort of the three branches of the government and these include the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. Regarding the structure of the Criminal Justice system, the key parts of this field include the police departments, the court system, as well as, the corrections department.

The various departments or branches of the Criminal Justice system are entrusted with various roles, tasks, or responsibilities. For instance, the Police Departments assists in the process of enforcing laws, maintaining order, and providing various services to the citizens that may be in need. In addition to this, police officers also have the mandate to assist in the prevention of crime in their various areas of jurisdiction. Courts on the other

hand are entrusted with the duty of ensuring that the people who have been accused of committing crime are tried. In this case, it is evident that the responsibility of the court is to ensure that truth and justice is sought in matters relating to crime. Lastly, there is the corrections department, and this is the branch of the Criminal Justice system that tends to offer punishment and rehabilitation to the offenders that are found guilty of the crimes that they have been accused of. Some of the correctional institutions include halfway houses, jails, and prisons. Apart from the offenders being taken to the correctional institutions, other sanctions like tracking devices and house arrest can also be administered on the offenders as they serve their sentences (Dresden, 2015).

Leadership Tasks, Roles, and Goals

Another key area of concern with respect to group work and group dynamics in the Criminal Justice system is that which is related to the leadership goals and tasks involved. Being a diverse field makes the roles, tasks, and goals in the Criminal Justice system diverse as well. In order to effectively respond to the critical issues related to Criminal Justice and to gain the trust and confidence of the public, it is necessary for this particular field to exercise proper management practices and effective leadership skills. This will also have positive effect on other results like those related to the issue of consistency and timeliness, as well as, collaboration between the Criminal Justice system and the community. There is also a need for the Criminal Justice system to embark on proper team building and strategic planning backed by sound leadership and organizational management so as to enhance effectiveness in the field. It also takes efficiency and effectiveness in leadership in the Criminal Justice among other fields so as to gain trust and confidence from the public. One of the suggestions usually given with

respect to having the public to gain confidence in the Criminal Justice system is that of

the employees having greater experience in the field (Walle, 2009). There is a need to

mention that one of the main areas of emphasis in an effort to ensure that various team

players work on their roles and tasks is that of embracing education and law enforcement

training. While part of the training is devoted to effective leadership in the criminal

justice system, specific skills to assist in dealing with crime reduction and solutions is

also given to the professionals involved (Moriarty, 2009).

Efficiency in the Criminal Justice System

Of great importance in any organization is efficiency and effectiveness and the

Criminal Justice System is not an exception. According to Dandurand (2014), there are

several factors that may affect the Criminal Justice system's efficiency and effectiveness.

One of the methods that this particular field among others may enhance efficiency in their

work places is by ensuring that they embrace team work and maximize on the strengths

of each team member. Failure of the Criminal Justice system to operate efficiently may

lead to dire consequences like losing the trust of public confidence, having collapsing

trials, and experiencing unnecessary delays with respect to the court room and the

procedures therein.

One of the ways that the Criminal Justice system may enhance efficiency in their

operations is through having a successful system whose contents include mechanisms

that are integrated, strategic, and sustainable. In addition to this, there is a need to ensure

that the Criminal Justice System embraces transparency and accountability in all their

undertakings as this will enhance effectiveness in the field. Implementing performance

measures to enhance efficiency in the Criminal Justice system is also essential.

Intragroup Conflicts in the Criminal Justice System

It is necessary to examine some of the intragroup conflicts that may exist in the Criminal Justice System. According to Cronin and Reicher (2009), public order policing is one of the areas that the Criminal Justice System is concerned with, one that calls for team work in order to attain efficiency and effectiveness. However, given the complex nature that comes with the decision-making process, it makes it inevitable to experience intragroup conflict within the Criminal Justice field. In addition to this, the officers in the Criminal Justice System due to the differences in their position may also subject them to having accountability concerns that are different in nature hence the occurrence of intragroup conflicts.

In order to enhance the organization's operations and work out meaningful team work, Prowse (2011) points out that organizations like the Criminal Justice system may deal with the intragroup conflicts by operating within a system that has rules and regulations governing the group members. In addition to this, there are several norms that may be designed in order to assist the Criminal Justice system in the process of addressing any intragroup conflict that may arise, and this will assist in ensuring that efficiency is attained.

Intergroup Relations

There is a need to provide a discussion of the intergroup relations that may take place within the Criminal Justice System. Enhancing the process of team building is one of the key factors that my assist in ensuring that there are operational intergroup relations within the Criminal Justice system. The identifiable stages of group development that may be employed in the Criminal Justice system include the forming, storming, norming,

performing, and adjourning stages, all which are necessary to enhance the development of a group.

Pratto, Sidanius, and Levin (2006) observe that positive intergroup relations play a vital role in enhancing the operations of organizations and the Criminal Justice field is not an exception. Regardless of the dynamic nature of the different team players in an organization, it is the role of the management or the leaders of an organization to ensure that the necessary measures are embraced in an effort to enhance group relations and ensure that there are positive outcomes of working together as a team. In addition to this, it is necessary to point out that group dynamics play a key role in enhancing group effectiveness and positive team characteristics. In any case, previous research studies conducted indicate that one of the factors that enhance intergroup relations and the performance of the team in an organization is group dynamics.

Potential Pitfalls or Negative Effects of Grouping

With respect to the Criminal Justice, there is a need to discuss some of the potential negative effects of this particular grouping. Despite the fact that group work and group dynamics play a key role in enhancing the operations of an organization, there is a need to point out that there are some pitfalls that are likely to occur in the process. For instance, Burke (2011) observes that one of the negative effects or pitfalls of grouping is the fact that the different team members may face the possibility or pressure of having to conform to the majority especially when it comes to making decisions. In most cases, this usually takes place since people working in a team are usually in fear of having to get into conflict with other members hence the pressure to conform even when the decision in question is not in accordance to their thoughts.

Another major pitfall that may affect the Criminal Justice system especially in relation to group work is that of having a particular member dominating and this may make the other members to feel alienated. In addition to this, Freeman and Greenacre (2011) points out that while in a group, there are some who tend to rely on others to do all the work and this usually happens if the different members of the group are not given various roles and responsibilities to take up.

Conclusion

As evident in the above discussion, group work and dynamics play a key role in enhancing organizational success. However, one of the factors that seem to affect the performance of various groups like those in the Criminal Justice field is that of intragroup conflict. One of the ways of ensuring that organizational goals and objectives are met is that of ensuring that proper intergroup relations are enhanced, and that the management comes up with rules, norms, and regulations to reduce on the intragroup conflicts. In addition to this, the Criminal Justice system may also identify some of the major pitfalls that seem to affect the grouping and deal with them effectively. Ensuring that various team members are aware of their different tasks, roles, and responsibility also goes a long way in ensuring that work is done effectively and efficiently.

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