

Offender Rehabilitation and Reintegration: A South African Perspective

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ABSTRACT The reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders is one of the main objectives of the Department of Correctional Services in South Africa, yet this aspect is of primary concern of the community and the public at large. This is primarily due to the perceptions that many people have about the criminal justice system which is often gleamed from daily news reports on television, newspapers and various social media coverage of crime, offenders and victims in South Africa and internationally. Although the purpose of the South African Correctional system is not punishment, but the protection of the public, promotion of social responsibility and enhancing human development in order to prevent the rate of recidivism, the correctional population continues to escalate. Most incarcerated offenders will eventually be released from custody and return to the community from which they came. The purpose of this paper is firstly to examine the prison population in South Africa and secondly to explore the different rehabilitation and reintegration programmes available to offenders.