

Overcrowding, Drugs Abuse and Violence vs. Rehabilitation Interviews and Perceptions of a Sample of Prisoners

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Abstract: Based on the interviews collected and conducted during the data gathering process for the documentary "11 days: within the prison walls", some inmates from the prison of Nerio Fischione based in Brescia (Italy) decide to share their stories to a microphone and storytellers. The voices provide a sincere look, suitable for investigating the subjective perceptions that inmates have regarding the prison environment, exploring the complexities of their experiences. What emerges from the stories is a place that is far away from the rehabilitation purpose that it should have. The enormous issue of overcrowding, drug pills treatment abuse, and, above all, the pervasive violence within the corridors of the facility.

The punitive function seems to prevail and is doubly enacted: firstly, through the nature of the prison itself, and secondly, through the prison conditions that prevent from any possibility to start a positive path. This article aims to contribute to the existing academic debate providing an insight from the prisoners' perception about their personal experience, focusing on the issues that most frequently emerge from their testimonies: the lack of significance that they experience on a daily basis.

Keywords: Prison, penal system, overcrowding, drugs abuse, violence, rehabilitation, restorative justice.

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

During the early months of 2023, within the framework of the "Human rights and restorative justice" workshop at the facility of Nerio Fischione located in Brescia, Italy, a group of inmates expressed the wish to share their prison experience with young people to become the active part of an efficient crime preventive strategy, even if in prison.

The idea emerged as a strong need to perceive themselves as human being still able to be useful to the external community through the implementation of positive actions that have a double value: on the one hand they contribute to the collective well-being and on the other hand they function as opportunities for redemption against the widespread prejudice, linked to those who have committed a crime.

The initial goal of academic researchers and professional video makers was to transform the inmates' idea into a cinematic documentary of significant social and cultural resonance, capable of offering an authentic and profound insight from the prison life. This project, shortly after named "11 days: within the prison walls", became the milestone of a research aimed at exploring and documenting the complexities of prison and the incarceration process from the eyes of the involved ones.

Data collection within the prison environment is notoriously challenging for the existing restrictions linked to security reasons.

Such a peculiar context requires a sensitive approach, successfully navigating the challenges of building trust with the inmates and penitentiary police while respecting the dignity and privacy of people living and working inside the facility.

The video footage and interviews provided an important window into the complexity and diversity of the inmates' experiences.

The direct contact with the inmates offered a unique and valuable perspective on their lives behind bars, enabling a deep understanding of the challenges, aspirations, and hopes that characterize their daily existence, as well as the major issues they encounter.

This article, moving from the words and perception of inmates, tries to find possible answers to the following question: is the rehabilitation still possible even in the presence of all the described challenges or, in such conditions, should it be considered utopia?

The research on the field gave to the inmates the opportunity to share their stories and experiences with the outside world (that is not common in the media representation that tends to give more space to the narrative of people that work in prison rather than people that are sentenced). For the Authors, it became the starting point to discuss about what works in the field of rehabilitation.

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As well known in the relevant literature, the rehabilitation process has not a certain outcome in terms of reducing reoffending: individual factors play surely a pivotal role to the likelihood of achieving a good level of adherence to the proposed rehabilitation path but also of making it fail.

Previous researches, focusing on the link between the prison experience and recidivism, are limited in size and quality and do not offer a unified view of the possible effects of the incarceration experience. They fail to clarify “why a prison term might be criminogenic or preventive and [...]why imprisonment might have differential effects depending on offenders’ personal and social characteristics” (Nagin *et al.* 2009).

Anyway, some systematic researches are able to build a convincing argumentative framework about the criminogenic effect of prison (Cochran *et al.*, 2014; Wermink *et al.*, 2018; Bales, Piquero, 2012).

Since the definition of the original “pains of imprisonment” by Sykes (1958) and their enlargement with the inclusion of additional elements in more recent years by other researchers (MacKenzie, Goodstein, 1986; Zamble, Porporino, 1988) the exposition to violence and the possible victimization were investigated in order to better understand their role in the prison experience but without giving enough space to the possible link with reoffending.

Also, some variables such as mental health issues, personality disorders and prior violent behavior (Schenk, Fremouw, 2012) must be certainly considered when designing a program also because the enforcement of the “convict code” (Trammel, 2012) applied inside the facility can contribute to the normalization of the violent environment among the prisoners.

Moreover, Personal characteristics such as age, gender, age and previous criminal history, if added to the institutional issues like overcrowding (Biaggio *et al.*, 2020), lack of work and educational programs can be strictly correlated with higher rates of violence, emphasizing the urge of consistent and fair management practices in minimizing violence (Wooldredge, 2020).

Finally, it seems useful to underline that a recent study (van Ginneken, Palmen, 2022) offers the opportunity to consider also the specificity of the place of incarceration as an element that can positively or negatively affect recidivism, showing how it is not only

the overall penitentiary system of a State that makes the difference but also its local declination, understood as both the facility and quality of life related to it. In this sense, the level of experimented violence seems to be obviously detrimental to a healthy environment.

The available literature (an exhaustive literature review can be found in Nagin *et al.* 2009) shows how preventive as well as reactive strategies must be applied in order to reduce the pains of imprisonment and enhance desistance paths through prisoners. This of course emphasizes the need for continued research and innovation in the field.

As the understanding of prison evolves, so have to do the methods for addressing the sentence in a useful way, with a focus on creating safer and more rehabilitative environments both for all inmates and prison staff.

2. STORIES, NARRATIONS AND PERCEPTION

Before going into the details of the interviews and the considerations evoked by the inmates' testimonies, it is worth to underline a more in-depth analysis of the perception issue.

Perception, as the process through which the human subject interprets and understands the surrounding world, represents a field of study of great relevance both in philosophical and scientific contexts. However, its comprehensive understanding poses significant epistemological challenges as it lies at the intersection of epistemology, logic, and language analysis (Vaiana, 1989).

In this complex and articulated context, perception theories emerge as ground for philosophical and scientific inquiry. Contrarily to the “direct perception” (Micella, 1982) and “Gestalt” theories (Ginger, 2004), already widely internationally recognized, the first modern philosophical inquiries date back to the work of George Berkeley.

According to Berkeley (*ibidem*), reality exists only as it is perceived and objective reality has no more than little relevance. Subjective reality represents the only dimension worthy of investigation since space and time are also subjective. This perspective, although controversial, has opened new avenues of research in the field of perception, offering a radical and innovative interpretation of the relationship between the subject and the external world.

From a philosophical standpoint, this conclusion assumes crucial importance for the research conducted during the material collection for the "*11 days: within the prison walls*" documentary. It not only highlights the importance of subjective perception in delicate contexts such as the prison environment, where narrative and reality representation are significantly influenced by individual perspective, but also proves its essential because the subjective perception of the prison place feeds its own narrative.

Furthermore, it underlines how the perception of one's sensations and the surrounding environment is essential to provide a comprehensive view that an external observer, unfamiliar with the prison reality, could hardly fully understand.

However, a fundamental question remains still open: are perceptions truly reflections of external reality? In other words, do they correspond to objective reality? The answer to this question, though complex, can be partly found by directly visiting the prison context.

Nonetheless, it is undeniable that some narrated dynamics emerge with much frequency and intensity than others. In this regard, what arises (and how it does) represents an authentic and sincere look into the world and life behind bars, thereby contributing to the understanding and reflection on a complex and sometimes misunderstood reality, thanks to the interviews conducted to the inmates.

3. METHODOLOGY

For the realization of the documentary, an extensive use was made through the typical qualitative approaches, particularly referencing to social ethnography as a method of investigation (Cardano, 1999; Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio, 2002). According to Rahola (2002), ethnographic activity is built around two main moments: the one of direct experience in the field and the one of writing. What happens turns out to be a binomial of experience and direct representation and the other of written and mediated representation.

In this regard, ethnography gives the opportunity to fully immerse and dive into the social and cultural context (Cardano, 1999; Cardano and Gargilio 2022), as particularly suitable to explore the complexity of life within the prison structure and to give voice to the inmates and their experiences.

Researchers met quite a large number of prisoners in an informal way and had the possibility to raise their awareness in the field of prison conditions, in order to be able to better evaluate the information collected formally. Between all the involved persons, 32 of them were the ones with the judicial characteristics required by the prison administration to take part to the project (the requirements were: being in prison to serve a sentence or, at least, having already finished the first degree of trial) in a written and oral form. For the purpose of this paper, only the part of these information that are strictly linked with the highlighted aims are considered here.

The research techniques employed primarily included the participant observation and discursive interviews, in various forms such as free, guided, and structured ones (Kvale, 1996). As well known in relevant literature (Semi, 2010), the best advantages of these techniques lie in the fact that, thanks to a constant presence and a lasting observation of the subjects in the analysis, it is possible to reach a deep knowledge of the object of study, as well as the specificities. Furthermore, since the participating observation is one of the longest-standing research tools in anthropology and sociology, it is an exceptional tool for research within penitentiaries.

Participant observation also allowed direct immersion into the prison environment, interacting with inmates and closely observing daily dynamics: this approach permitted to get different nuances and details (ibidem) that would otherwise run from superficial analysis.

Discursive interviews provided the interviewees with a privileged space to express their experiences, opinions, and perceptions (Denzin, Lincoln, 2011). Moreover, the use of hermeneutic interview techniques facilitated a deep and contextualized interpretation of the collected testimonies, enabling the grasping of the profound meaning of what was expressed by the interviewees themselves.

The reason for this outcome lies into the idea that the «purpose of hermeneutic interview, [is] letting exploring the everyday life universe through non-directive techniques» (Montesperelli, 1998).

The access to the prison facility was made possible thanks to the formal authorization from the Regional Prison Administration (PRAP) and the Central Department of Prison Administration (DAP). This

permission was obtained through a long and rigorous process, regulated ensuring compliance with the rules and procedures established for research within penitentiary institutions.

Using qualitative techniques and the immersion in the prison context, it was possible to offer an authentic, innovative and comprehensive representation of what the incarceration experience means for the involved people.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE INVOLVED SAMPLE

The demographic profile of the prison population reveals a complex and multilayer situation: during the interviews, the facility had a regulatory capacity of 185 places while it was hosting 320 inmates. Of those, approximately 200 were serving a sentence, while the others were still in pre-trial detention, foreigners represented a relevant part of the total population (almost the 70%) (<https://www.giustizia.it/giustizia/>).

The situation in Brescia was perfectly in line with the national prison system data: in June 2023 the prison population was of 57.525 people held in 198 facilities (instead of 51.187). Foreigners, at national level, represent the 31.6% of the total prison population and came from 146 different Countries (<https://www.giustizia.it/giustizia/>).

This huge variety of different nationalities creates a large number of difficulties in the managing of this specific part of the prison population, in particularly in regard of existing language barriers, cultural differences and specific religious habits.

The concern about the specific needs of the foreign prison population is well addressed in almost two relevant documents: the ad hoc recommendation of the Council of Europe (CM/Rec (2012)12) and the UNODC (2009) "Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs".

This specific issue appeared to be transversal to all the interviews carried out in prison, confirming how a lack of specific planning for the management of these prisoners entails a disvalue for the same interested parties but also negative repercussions on the entire inmate population.

Participation to research was offered to inmates who were part of the "*Human rights and restorative justice*" project group. Among the course participants, a significant group of 17 individuals chose to submit in oral interviews, and approximately 15 others opted for

written interviews. The inclusion in the project was guided by the principle of voluntariness within the group of persons authorized by the prison administration, on the basis of the aforementioned criteria. The type of crime committed was not at stake, in order to guarantee an inclusive and differentiated participation.

Among the 17 inmates who participated in the oral interviews, 9 were from Italy (52%), and 8 were foreigners (48%). Furthermore, the analysis of the ages of the inmates reveals a varied distribution, which can be grouped into three main categories:

1. First group: ages 19-30;
2. Second group: ages 30-45;
3. Third group: ages 45 and above.

All interviews were conducted in rooms inside the facility according to the provisions of the prison itself. Before the beginning, each participant was given a detailed explanation of the interview context. The duration of the interviews varied from a minimum of 30 minutes to a maximum of 2 hours.

The interview guide was developed during the preparation phases, aiming to identify key questions that could serve as stimulus for personal narratives. In order to encourage participants to share their experiences in detention, the interviews were conducted with a particular emphasis on leaving freedom in the narration of daily lives and on exploring aspects considered utterly relevant to paint a realistic picture of incarceration.

As previously mentioned, the oral interviews were complemented by a written questionnaire divided into 33 sections, aimed at collecting descriptive data regarding personal experiences and daily life within the prison walls. The questionnaire was split into two parts: one descriptive and the other evocative (using imagery for descriptions). It was sometimes used as a starting point for the oral interview, but also often set aside to facilitate a more free-form and participatory narrative.

A key element of the adopted methodology was the absence of video recordings during the interviews, with the only use of microphones for audio recording. This choice was motivated by the desire to ensure an environment free from external pressures and to promote spontaneity in participants' responses. The exclusion of cameras contributed to create a trustful

and comfortable atmosphere, thereby facilitating the discussion of sensitive and personal topics.

Through oral and written interviews, it was possible to explore the multifaceted aspects of daily life within the prison, offering valuable insights for the analysis and the understanding the penitentiary system.

5. MAIN ISSUES OF THE NERIO FISCHIONE FACILITY

Despite the fact that the initial project was wanted by the inmates themselves as a tool for the prevention of juvenile delinquency, the material collected during the meetings also made it possible to highlight some issues that appear to be mainly relevant for them in the management of daily life inside the prison.

In the collected written and oral words, it is clear how certain topics emerge with greater frequency and consistency from the interviewees' perception of their life in prison.

While concepts and themes such as guilt, rehabilitation, sentence reduction, re-education, restorative justice, relationships with other inmates, daily life and mainstream considerations on punishment were frequently discussed, some issues stand out as more common and recurrent. These key issues can be broken down into three main areas: overcrowding, abuse of psychiatric drugs and violence.

In regard of the first perceived problem (prison overcrowding), a primary element revealed by the interviews concerns the complexity of the relationships between convicted persons, made particularly complex by the forced cohabitation in confined spaces with a high number of persons. This issue generates a series of consequences that negatively impact interpersonal dynamics: lack of understanding of culturally and religiously different practices (Ravagnani, Romano, 2024) for people that, coming from different countries, are forced to share tiny spaces; the impossibility to taking advantage from effective educational programs (Ravagnani, Durnescu, 2023); non-existent interaction with the prison staff in charge of the implementation of reintegration paths (Ravagnani, Romano, 2022); the problematic management of space, in search of an intimacy that is impossible to conquer, especially in relation to the enjoyment of affectivity, as reiterated by a recent pronouncement of the Constitutional Court of Italy (Sent. 10/2024 Corte Cost.). All these unsurmountable challenges foster tensions and conflicts within the prison community, also fueling the

discomfort and tensions among the convicted persons and the prison staff.

Due to the above-mentioned obstacles, a strong competition makes its way among the prison population in order to ensure the access to the limited resources provided by the prison system. This competition can culminate in violent conflicts and assaults, leading to a pervasive climate of violence involving both inmates and penitentiary staff.

The so-called "social group of inmates" (Maculan, Vianello and Ronconi, 2023) is ultimately unified by the inherent heterogeneity of the group of people themselves, exacerbated by the enforced promiscuity within the confined and suffocating spaces that heighten suffering and friction (Crewe, 2011).

The second recurrent topic is related to the generalized abuse of psychiatric drugs within prison facilities that is considered to be, according to the prisoners, one of the elements most affecting the number of critical events inside the prison. The validity of the perception described by prisoners can also be found in empirical data from recent research that account for how about 40% of the Italian prison population resorts to the use of psychiatric drugs during their incarceration (Miravalle, 2022). This problem is strongly connected to that of overcrowding because many sentenced people decide to resort to hypnotic drugs as a fallback element against days marked by a forced vacuum (Vianello, Grezzani, 2021) that destabilizes the psychophysical balance little by little. In this perspective, «the drug comes to take on – in the eyes of both those who prescribe it and those who take it – situational meanings that take on significance only within the material and symbolic framework within which they are circulated, that is, the penitentiary one» (Sterchele, 2023).

The third pain perceived by people in prison is strictly linked to the concept of violence, whether it is directed towards others, or directed towards oneself. It is not difficult to understand how, in a situation of extreme promiscuity and chronic lack of space, tensions can quickly develop into aggressions by individuals against individuals or even by groups against other groups, recognized as problematic or rivals. In some ways, this accentuates the perception of mistrust towards the people with whom one shares detention (Faccio, Costa, 2013), feeding the feeling of loneliness which becomes often a contributing cause for the abuse of psychiatric drugs.

The three elements highlighted by the interviewees can be considered - although they retain a clear specificity if considered individually - truly and deeply interconnected in the creation of a prison environment characterized by violent tensions and emotional instability.

6. THE REPRESENTATION OF REALITY IN THE WORDS OF THE DETAINEES

Although declined in personal, specific and different ways, the issue of overcrowding often comes up as the first theme, perceived and seen as one of the central topics in interviews, sometimes constituting the starting point of the stories.

“They throw everyone together like sardines in a can. 60 inmates in a section corridor, about 30-35 meters long. You ask: ‘Why don’t you walk?’ [There are also] tables for cards games in the corridor.” [Stefan]

In this regard, it is useful to highlight the structure of the NerioFischione prison. It is divided into two main sections: north and south, each consisting of four floors. At the time of the interviews, the sections were still “open”, meaning that each inmate had the opportunity to leave their room and walk in the corridor of their floor from 8.00 a.m to 8.00 p.m. This principle, called “dynamic surveillance” and “open custody” (Fabini, Pascali, 2019), was introduced in July 2013 as a consequence of the ECHR sentence in which the Court sentenced the Country for the inadequate conditions in which the prison system has been living for years, forcing Italy to take in serious accountability the inhumane treatment and overcrowding in penal institutions, imposing structural changes in the organizational setup.

Institutions and penitentiary staff were directly asked for «a commitment to experimenting with the management of new spaces and a new *modus operandi* that changes the way of relating to the user and the workgroup, enhancing their respective professional potential» (Garro, Pace, 2017). But the existing situation is completely different and in line with the outcomes of the Garcia – Guerrero and Marco (2012); «the lack of intimacy creates a higher feeling of anxiety which implicates more general aggressiveness and conflicts with the cell mate. Consequently, the lack of intimacy is more than a discomfort and may influence on the normal coexistence within the prison».

Another interviewed describes the problem in a more detailed manner:

“The four-person cell, theoretically, should be a two-person cell. But it is used for four people. Others find themselves in one-person cells occupied by three people.” [Andrea]

The issues raised by the presence of elderly in prison are well considered both at international (UNDOC, 2009) and national level (Corbi *et al.*, 2020; Romano *et al.*, 2020). It is clear that in a system characterized by chronic overcrowding the logistical and health management of people with a physiological higher level of frailty becomes particularly complex and often results in assistance that is not adequate for the adequate protection of the rights of the elderly. Another participant confirms that this condition does not help in any way the rehabilitation and re-education process:

“In this institution, we cannot have any of this [specialization courses]. [The reason is] not because the administration doesn’t want it, but because the structure simply doesn’t allow it.” [Stefan]

The attentions related to the difficult conditions due to the overcrowding returns to another, already mentioned, aspect of daily life: the troubled relationship with other inmates (Maculan, Vianello and Ronconi, 2023), often based on violence and abuse of power.

“It’s a violent place, no doubt. It’s a place that feeds on violence. It’s forced cohabitation, damn it. [Renato]

As highlighted also above, violence is a daily occurrence, deeply marking the experience within the prison with indelible episodes:

“I saw three people slit their throats in front of me. I don’t even count other types of cuts because they’re incalculable. There were people self-harming their arms and legs every day. People who burned or flooded cells, I can’t count them. Because I really can’t”. [Andrea]

As anticipated in the previous paragraph, violence, however, is not only horizontally directed at inmates, but also vertically towards penitentiary prison staff:

“[There’s] continuous violence even against the prison staff. There are those

who, in two months they've been here, have set fire to their cells twice." [Martino]

The elements that can negatively influenced violence in prison have been deeply studied and the emerged links with prison overcrowding, turnover and general prison conditions seem to be very clear about the close causal link (Baggio *et al.*, 2020).

Although:

"Not everyone can do it. Some lay down in bed all day. Some give up into psychotropic therapy treatment. Some give up into despair or violence. And some lose trust in this system and then in themselves." [Ioan]

A perception strongly confirmed by another interviewee, who asks himself:

"Where did I end up? 80% of the section had psychological problems. These people need help" [Igor]

Mental health becomes, as seen, the first element of concern within the walls of the prison, both for those directly involved and for those who, thanks to greater physical, psychological and social resources, are able to face incarceration with clarity of thought (Edgemon, Clay-Warner, 2018). Mental illness becomes a structural part of the incarceration experience for a large part of inmates and contributes to the exacerbation of the above mentioned problems but, above all, represents a significant obstacle to post-sentence reintegration, due to the frequent recurrence that characterizes some pathologies. (Kendler, Thornton and Gardner, 2000)

The consequence of such a disturbing situation is suggested by an interviewee from the first age group:

"[The prison system] doesn't work...because we are overcrowded [...] You have to do bad things to be listened or at least... to be treated." Rami]

The testimony of a person from the third age group concludes on the difficulties encountered regarding the conduct of re-educational processes, which become of course impossible, in the mentioned conditions:

"Two educators for 360 inmates, of which 200 have sentence. When do you expect

the educator, come to see all of us?" [Stefan]

According to the UNDOC Handbook to Reduce Overcrowding in Prison (2013), and in line with the prisoners' perceptions «overcrowding impacts also on the quality of nutrition, sanitation, prisoner activities, health services and the care for vulnerable groups. It affects the physical and mental well-being of all prisoners, generates prisoner tension and violence, exacerbates existing mental and physical health problems, increases the risk of transmission of communicable diseases and poses immense management challenges [...]». Similar positions are presented by a sample of prisoners in Durban: «There are more than forty of us in one cell sharing one shower, basin and toilet. We have to wake up at 4 am to queue for the shower so we can be done in time for breakfast"[...] Living with so many frustrated people who are always stepping on each other's toes, you just never know what to expect. You need to be always in defense mode»(Nkosi, Maweni, 2020).

From the above-mentioned words, it seems clear that the life experiences of people in detention are related by very similar experiences, although they are very distant from a geographical and cultural point of view. Bearing in mind such findings, it seems necessary to ask whether a penitentiary system that struggles to solve the main causes that favor the adoption of deviant behavior should not be profoundly reformulated or even replaced with more effective responses.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the heavy assertions made during the interviews, there is a need to further explore and contextualize some critical and analytical reflections.

Firstly, the phenomenon of prison overcrowding generates a series of well-known interconnected waterfall issues (Baffour, Francis, Chong and Harris, 2024). Then, the consequences reverberate and spread widely within the prison structure, creating a complex of implications involving inmates, custodial and prison management staff.

A second notable observation concerns the central role that violence assumes within this complex and multilayer context. It is not merely an individual or sporadic phenomenon, but rather a cohesive element capable of merging and permeating all internal critic

spots of the prison system, acting as a catalyst for tensions and latent conflicts that emerge more prominently in situations of overcrowding and forced cohabitation.

How can a system contribute to promote positive changes and behaviors, asking to leave violence as a way of life, if to survive in places in which the legal authority held people that should be rehabilitate, one need to use violence on a daily basis, if she/he doesn't want to be victimized?

In situation like these, prisoners feel to have (and probably they really have) just few alternatives: by one side, the temptation to engage with violence the daily life within the prison; by the other, the abuse of psychotropic substances as a means of survival and subsistence within a hostile and degraded environment.

The essential need to consider the issue of perception becomes evident when examining the words of the interviewees, highlighting the central role that it plays. Perception, indeed, is not merely a passive phenomenon through which sensory information is processed, but it represents a filter through which people interpret and give meaning to the world around them. It is an intricate and subjective process influenced by a multitude of factors providing people where it can be directed an intervention.

Therefore, considering perception is fundamental to fully understand how people interpret and react to certain situations, events, or information. Its centrality in the academic and social research field is evident as it provides a complete and more detailed framework of human complexity and social interactions.

Two trends emerge clearly. The first is how the prison environment, instead of being a place of rehabilitation and social reintegration, transforms into a perpetuating machine of suffering and inequality, fueling a vicious circle of which the main victims are the individuals that the institution aimed to rehabilitate and reintegrate. The second is how the prison not only inflicts the punishment, but it exacerbates it, imposing an additional penalty: the one from prison environment itself (Durnescu, Montero Perez de Tudela and Ravagnani, 2017; Haggerty, Bucerius, 2020)

The clear ineffectiveness of the current approach of the system of enforcement of the sentences to achieve the constitutionally sanctioned resocialization purpose (art. 27 of the Italian Constitution) is an issue that has

been discussed for years now (Castellano, Stasio, 2009). The words of the prisoners, collected in the development of the project presented in this article, confirm once again the urgency of a review of the strategies to co-produce desistance (Weaver, 2013), favoring more effective probation paths and alternatives to prison, as well as implementing exit strategies that are now only sporadically present in the national experience.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest to report.

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Received on 20-07-2024

Accepted on 15-08-2024

Published on 09-09-2024

<https://doi.org/10.6000/1929-4409.2024.13.18>

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