

ABSTRACT

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Treatment and social reintegration of prisoners: the case of the Youth Detention Center of Nisida

The debate on the real chances of young inmates to reintegrate into society is a sensitive and contemporary issue, that needs to be included in the identification of effective strategies to reduce and to prevent the social disadvantage of the population of prisoners. Starting from this assumption, the study, supported by empirical research at the Youth Detention Center of Nisida (Naples), is an in-depth analysis of the ways in which the young inmates are rehabilitated. Specifically, the research targets two goals: first of all, it intends to understand if vocational and educational training during the prison nowadays allows young inmates to acquire working skills, that can be spent on the labor market. Secondly, it intends to observe the positive and critical aspects of treatment practices and social reintegration of prisoners.

The research was based on a case study and it was carried out through a mix method approach based on both the use of direct observation and analysis of secondary sources and the use of multiple techniques in the data collection and analysis. The work concerned two types of social actors in the youth detention center: the young inmates and the educators.

In general, data analysis conducted by a multidimensional approach, underlines that the prison doesn't rehabilitate: essentially, the social reintegration of the offender by the detention structure, is disastrous, even more so when it is measured in terms of psychophysical suffering, labeling and risk of criminal recidivism. At the end of term of imprisonment young offender's employability is difficult, due to missed transparency of communication with society, unsatisfactory vocational training, ineffective and obsolete activities during the imprisonment compared to the employment environment, lacking support for young inmates after their release, legislative void, limited teamwork for the protection of young inmates and other critical issues. To these conclusions, it is added that the juvenile justice is subject to a class politic which is discriminating against the most disadvantaged segments of the population (the poor, the foreigners, the nomads). The careful data triangulation shows that, although there has been a tendency to decarceration for children over the last few years, and in spite of more favorable laws towards them by incorporating of international ones, this rule doesn't apply to everyone: the criminal system works for a strong social selection.

It is necessary not only to propose reforms for a better jurisdiction and alternative sanctions to the prison, but also to think a penal system based on reparation and reconciliation rather than on punishment and revenge. Above all, the only real alternative would be to build the type of society that doesn't need prisons: a redistribution of power and income is essential in those environments of poverty, marginalization and degradation that produce delinquency.