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**EDUCATION IN PRISONS; A COMPARATIVE EXAMINATION OF
EDUCATIONAL PRISON-BASED PROGRAMMES IN THE PRISON
SYSTEMS OF NORWAY, ENGLAND AND WALES**

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ABSTRACT

Research has found that the prison population has lower levels of literacy and numeracy skills than the average population which in turn leads to connections with high rates of unemployment and ultimately with crime. For this reason, education within prison has been traditionally regarded as a way to accomplish the rehabilitation of offenders. However, there is less agreement about the broader purposes of education which, in turn, influences how education is conducted in prisons. This research has reviewed the educational prison-based programmes as displayed in the websites of each of the prisons in Norway, and England and Wales, data on the topic of interest published by government sources and the relevant literature on the evaluation of prison education of the two systems examined. The comparative analysis of this content has revealed that Norway has a holistic approach to prison education whereas England and Wales have developed an approach which is based on employability and risk prevention. The research has also established connections between these two styles of prison education and two different models of criminal justice system, the rehabilitative and the punitive respectively. The results also suggest that some structural factors which are a result of particular models of criminal justice systems and are already socially and culturally established strongly influence the style of education provided in the two systems examined.

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Chapter 1- INTRODUCTION

This dissertation aims to explore education in prisons from a comparative perspective. Education has been traditionally acknowledged as a way in which to accomplish the rehabilitation of inmates and ultimately to reduce recidivism. It has been found that the prison population has lower levels of literacy and numeracy skills than the average population which in turn leads to connections with rates of unemployment and ultimately with crime (Ward & Tittle, 1994). For this reason, education has been consistently one of the targets of prison-based programmes within Western criminal justice systems (European Commission, 2013). However, there are other aims that education can fulfil and depending on the engagement that prison system's policies have with them, they can condition the style of education carried out in prisons. Styles of prison education can be varied and can also include mixed models with diverse philosophical aims of the learning process itself. But there are two tendencies that have been prominent in recent years (Warr, 2016). This would mean a prison education that is connected with employability and risk prevention and a holistic approach that would entail a broader perspective of learning, such as for example, learning for learning's sake. This study has chosen two representative models of Western criminal justice systems to compare these two learning models. On the one hand, England and Wales are representatives of a system which is regarded as punitive. With large rates of incarceration, long sentences of imprisonment and a combined system of public and private prisons, in recent years it has been experiencing problems of safety as a result of overcrowded facilities and shortage of staff because of budgets cuts. The other system examined is the prison system in Norway. Norway has relatively low rates of incarceration and the lowest rate of recidivism in Western Europe. Its prison system is popularly known as one of the most humane and successful in the world (e.g. James, 2013; Sterbenz, 2014).

This research aims firstly to review the organizational development of educational prison-based programmes in these two representative, different models of Western criminal justice systems. Educational prison-based programmes are reviewed through a broad perspective that includes theoretical education (basic and higher education), Information and Computer technology, vocational training, work, behavioural programmes, living skills, leisure time, the arts and other forms of education which can include, for example, co-learning groups formed by prisoners and students from universities. Secondly, it is intended to establish comparisons between these models in order to evaluate the quality of the systems in accordance with the general purpose

of rehabilitation and also in relation to a broader understanding of the process of learning itself. Finally, it aims to establish connections between the nature of educational programmes in the prisons of Norway, England and Wales and the way they are carried out with regard to the type of criminal justice system of the country and the philosophy that underpins it.

The Literature Review (Chapter 2) looks at research conducted which examines the purposes of prison education. Two different models of learning at prisons are identified: the holistic approach and one that narrows the prisoner's learning curriculum around employability and risk prevention. Both models are put in the context of literature on the Desistance Paradigm (McNeill, 2012; Maruna, 2001) and the European Prison Rules model (Council of Europe, 2006) as opposed to the Risk, Needs and Responsitivity model (Andrews and Bonta, 2010) in order to set the base for evidence that connects the differentiated criminal justice systems with rehabilitation styles. Finally, the Literature Review outlines research on the current state of prison education in Europe and the challenges faced by it.

Chapter 3 on Methodology gives the reasoning behind the use of methods based on secondary research of primary sources - educational prison-based programmes as displayed in the websites of each of the prisons in Norway and England and Wales - and secondary sources - relevant literature on the evaluation of prison education of the two systems examined which has been undertaken through library-based research-.

The first section (4.1) outlining the dissertation's findings (Chapter 4) introduces the Norwegian prison education system. It reviews the provision of prison-based educational programmes in Norway and puts them in context with a particular style of education. The chapter, then, continues with a literature based review of the evaluation of Norway's prison education. Section 4.4 develops the same pattern as the first but in relation to England and Wales. Section 4.7 compares the most relevant findings displayed in the previous chapters. Firstly, it is intended here to answer the first Research Question in this study which seeks to answer what are the educational prison-based programmes deployed in prisons of Norway, England and Wales. Secondly, it is then intended to answer the second Research Question which seeks to compare both models of prison education and show correlations between Norway's holistic style of education and the rehabilitative philosophy of its penal system. Similar connections are shown with regard to the English and Welsh punitive penal systems and the provision of education which narrows its curriculum to employability and risk prevention.

Finally, the discussion in the conclusion (Chapter 5) draws attention to the structural factors found in this research which influence both the Norwegian and the English and Welsh prison education system and that are both a result of the existing cultural and economic conditions but also of the type of penal system that those countries have.

This research will cover a possible gap in the evaluation of educational prison-based programmes by looking at their connection with the different perspectives of the learning process and its understanding. These perspectives are examined through their correlation to two models of criminal justice systems functioning today in Western countries. This comparative perspective will serve to enrich our understanding of education in prisons and will contribute to the debate about the appropriate theoretical and policy frameworks that underpin the programmes of education which are ultimately connected with the aim of achieving rehabilitation of inmates and their desistance from crime.

My own experience in the prison system of Catalonia, first as a prison guard, then as a social worker, made me decide to explore two other Western criminal justice systems which share similarities with the Catalan one: some punitiveness of the English and Welsh penal policies and the humanitarian approach of the Norwegian prisons. I have always been interested that these contradictory elements can co-exist in the same system and the consequences that this has in terms of being successful for the rehabilitation of inmates or just the opposite. I believe that by looking at the two extremes of these tendencies we can improve our understanding of how the diverse factors that influence the prison system are put into play and thus find ways to counteract the particular conditions that prevent the achievement of its desired outcomes.

Chapter 2- LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Prison education and the rehabilitation of offenders.

Education in prison has been traditionally regarded as a means to accomplish the rehabilitation of offenders. There is an overall agreement among researchers that there is a strong correlation between low academic attainment, unemployment and crime (Ward & Tittle, 1994; Sampson & Laub, 1993). However, the direction of this causality, that is, what comes first, has not been clearly established (Duwe and Clark, 2014). Studies that link the effects of prison-based educational programmes with recidivism acknowledge that little research exists that analyses the impact of prison-based educational programs on criminal offending behaviour over a life course (Ford and Schroeder, 2010). The lack of programmes' evaluation in this field restricts any conclusions that can be made about the effectiveness of prison education. In addition, common methodological flaws in research conducted so far have been recognised, for example, the bias of self-selection in educational programmes participation (Hui Kim and Clark, 2013) or the use of no reconviction as the only measure of success (Gerber and Fritsch, 2008). Therefore, there seems to be agreement among researchers that long term research is required that takes into account these particular methodological difficulties. But despite this, evidence seems to suggest that prison-based education could play a key role in offenders' re-entry (Duwe and Clark, 2014) by reducing recidivism (Wilson *et al.*, 2000), increasing job opportunities and having an impact on other aspects of the sentence such as the presence of fewer disciplinary faults on inmates which can lead to quicker access towards the granting of penitentiary benefits such as parole (Gerber and Fritsch, 2008). For this reason, lack of education has been commonly addressed as a risk factor and the improvement of the level of the education of prisoners has become an undisputed target among Western prison systems which ultimately seek to reduce recidivism (European Commission, 2013).

2.2 The purpose of prison education

There is less agreement about the broader purposes of education which in turn influences how education is conducted in prisons. That is to say, although education is always present in the prison system, the fundamental focus of the programmes diverges considerably (Bouffard *et al.*, 2000) and the way that these programmes are delivered differs as well. Just by looking at definitions it is possible to recognize differences. Provision of education, according to the

Council of Europe (1990) should include formal education, vocational training, cultural activities, sports, social education and access to libraries. However, some countries or particular prisons in some countries consider any activity that is not paid work as education (e.g. cleaning tasks in the wing) (Costelloe, 2014). This lends itself to confusion since those activities are reflected as educational in the reports used to evaluate participation. In addition, according to Costelloe we should draw a distinction that makes explicit what we mean by training - acquiring skills for employment purposes or education in a broader sense as the development of critical thinking skills. This distinction is key because it recognises the difference in meaning between two approaches of education that are in dispute and which this dissertation explores: the one that favours employability as an end and therefore focuses on vocational training and the one that conceives education as an end in itself. However, these strong dissimilarities within the organization of prison-based educational programmes in Western criminal justice systems could be better understood if we take into consideration that learning, particularly in the context of adult education, can be addressed very differently. It can imply, for example, different conceptions of the student, as a person or as an offender, and also, from a political perspective, learning can be seen both as empowering; for example when education is addressed to gain skills that allow inmates to think critically, or as a means for oppression (Freire, 2000), when prisoners become pure receptacles of formal education and 'are not taught to be learners who can escape their offender narratives (as they are required to do) but are rather chained into educational processes that reproduce, reaffirm and reconstitute the prisoner's reified identity' (Warr, 2016:24)

From the perspective of lifelong learning, learning is not just the process of acquiring memories and skills, but it is concerned with participation in the community (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Learning arises from the fact that meaning is somehow negotiated by a community of practice, such as a prison. According to Freire (2000), a "banking concept of education" that would imply that individuals are only receptacles of knowledge - docile and disciplined - is rejected in a liberating concept of education. Men do not educate others or are educated by themselves but educate each other when interacting with the world. Following the same line, Mezirow claimed in his transformative learning theory that the way that adults learn is by making meaning of their own experiences (1991). To do so, the role of educators should be to encourage learners to challenge their own assumptions and to develop critical thinking in order to reach liberation through education (Behan, 2007). Hodge *et al.* (2017) claimed that lifelong education should promote a more diverse concept of education that goes beyond formal

education and which overcomes the idea of the economic man only interested in being prepared for the labour market.

Education can also be seen as one of the few places in prison where it is suitable to address the detrimental effects of imprisonment. For example, where life is on hold education can be a broadening experience to overcome the stagnation of maturation and it can also provide a positive identity which helps to counteract the criminal identity that prison fosters (Clark, 2016). In addition, there are other purposes that education in prison can fulfil. Wilson (2007) claimed that education could be a space in prison where the meaning for the inmates would be totally different from the one assumed by the institution, the educators or society itself. The author introduced the concept of 'educentricity' which refers to holding a particular view of education 'usually based on what we (or they) think education is or ought to be and is tied strongly to the value placed upon it' (ibid: 185). Her research on prisoners and educational provision in prison suggested that education is a space where inmates seek to maintain their social identity within an institutionalized environment. So, in this sense, inmates attend educational activities not only for learning purposes but, 'many (re)construct prison education primarily as somewhere to get warm, be a human being or get away from the cockroaches as well as a centre for learning' (ibid:191).

2.3 Two models of prison education: the employability and risk prevention model and the holistic approach.

The employability and risk prevention model, which is based on the idea that prison works and which has taken the 'what works' approach in rehabilitation, relies mostly on the 'RNR model' (Risk, Needs and Responsivity) (Andrews and Bonta, 2010) which focuses on identifying and addressing the risk factors that predict criminal behaviour. This model holds a deficit understanding of learning as it does of the person imprisoned and therefore the result is a deficit view that denies the detrimental effects of prison (Warner, 2007). By conceiving education merely as a functional tool, it focuses on employability, vocational training and programmes such as those designed to address anger-management or substance abuse, which pathologize inmates rather than empower them. This model is embedded in the current penal trend which takes recidivism rates as the principal reference to evaluate the effectiveness of education in prisons (Behan, 2007). This also assumes that educational programmes are provided in a neutral setting and therefore the damaging effects that prison can have on the individual and

which can vary in grade or intensity (human conditions, severity of the prison regime or length of sentence) are minimized. However, the detrimental effects of prison are recognised even in the most advanced and pro-social penal systems such as those of the Nordic countries and therefore it would be unrealistic to evaluate rehabilitation solely on the impact of the education received in prison (Warner, 2007)

There is a distinctive current of thought regarding prison education research that agrees with the lifelong learning perspective and that advocates the delivery of a prison education that goes beyond formal education. It is recognised that the provision of numeracy and literacy skills is necessary but the provision of education should not be restricted to this (Warr, 2016). Against a narrow perspective that only considers rehabilitation of inmates from a labour market perspective, it is claimed that the curriculum offered by prison systems should not over-rely on courses that only address formal education, vocational training or offence-focused programmes. Other transversal skills should be addressed, which focus on aspects of the person being considered as a whole, such as cultural activities, sports or social education (Warner, 2007). As Warr pointed out (2016), learning for learning's sake enables an increase in those skills which are necessary to achieve a pedagogical transformation of the individual. However, although this idea may seem very innovative, it is actually mandatory by international conventions together with the duty to provide education in prisons (Costelloe, 2014): 'to take into consideration in adult education the whole person in the totality of his or her social, economic and cultural context and for that purpose further reduce any existing contrast between general education and vocational training' (Council of Europe 1990:12)

Some countries have adopted a criminal justice system model inspired by the European Prison Rules (Council of Europe, 2006) and other policies developed by the Council of Europe and the Commission of Europe. This model recognises that the provision of education has to follow a holistic perspective. It takes into account the prisoners' aspirations, suggesting an individualized approach. It advocates for an acknowledgement of the person's humanity and conceives education from a broader perspective that entails developing personal and social skills as well as the students taking responsibility for part of the process of educational provision as equals. It also recognises the need for positive discrimination, given the existence of prisoners with special needs but also for the young population which require of a major focus in education.

In addition, Recommendation No. R(89) 12 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Education in Prison recognizes the right to education as a fundamental human right

necessary for the integral development of the individual and the community and acknowledges the power of education to humanise the prison environment and to ameliorate the conditions of imprisonment. With this preamble, it establishes the need to address the provision of education in prison from a broad perspective that addresses the individual as a whole without distinction in the exercise of this right to education compared to any non-incarcerated citizen. Following this perspective, the resulting criminal justice system model claims that a prison education that goes beyond the provision of numeracy and literacy by addressing 'soft skills' is equally important in the interests of prisoners and society. The advantages of those 'soft skills' tend to be overshadowed by the more instrumental benefits that formal education and vocational training provide.

2.4 The holistic approach and rehabilitation and desistance from crime

According to McMann (2016), prisoners should be engaged in purposeful activity in order to achieve rehabilitation. This activity should include education in a broad sense, but the question is whether this activity is merely to keep the inmates occupied or to pursue the achievement of substantive changes in their lives and this, being linked to public policies, depends largely on the political ideology of the current governments. Rehabilitation is a problematic concept, which is used in different and even sometimes antithetical ways (*ibid*). The provision of rehabilitative measures in prison, such as education, is connected with the collective imagination that the governments and the society hold about prison, which does not necessarily correspond with what research and practice suggest works. However, even for people who directly work in prison settings, the concept of rehabilitation varies substantively. For some it implies a transformation of the person that involves some behavioural change and for others rehabilitation necessarily implies remorse and regret. From a legal perspective it only requires absence of reconviction (*ibid*).

The holistic model of prison education would be connected to a new approach advocated in recent literature on rehabilitation and desistance which conceives desistance as a process of personal and social changes that 'exist before, behind and beyond interventions' (McNeill, 2012:13) and which are connected to factors such as age or social bonds as well as to shifts in the person's narrative identity (McNeill, 2012; Maruna, 2001). Education in this sense would be understood as an intervention that plays a part in empowering the internal change of the desister by reinforcing his potential and social capital resources in order to achieve a replacement of the label of offender that is required to achieve desistance. Maruna and Lebel

(2010) also argued that personal transformation has a strong component of seeing oneself through the eyes of others. The Pygmalion effect¹ would therefore play a part in inmates' attitudes and beliefs of themselves, whether we consider educational outcomes or the rehabilitation process itself. Therefore, the way that education in prisons is delivered and the approach used - holistic or centred on employability - matters. On the other hand, as the authors also acknowledged, society, in order to achieve desistance, has to recognise that the person has changed and formally announce this fact. One way to do so is by certificating formal achievements in education. A tension would appear here between the two approaches that are considered in this work in relation to the best way to empower inmates and to encourage them to engage with education: by focusing on employability through certification of training or by broadening the focus to other, less, formal aspects of the learning process.

2.5 The relationship between models of prison education and models of a penal system.

Warner suggested (2007) that there is a connection between narrow perspectives in learning and the models that underpin the criminal justice systems. Dignan and Cavadino (2006) compared Western criminal justice systems, identifying four different models in advanced capitalist societies. The aim of this typology was to find similarities within a group in its economic organization and social structure. The comparison was based on the idea that societies that share the same type of social and economic organization will have similarities in their criminal systems as well. The proposed types are the Neo-liberal state whose top representatives are USA, England and Wales, Australia and New Zealand; the Conservative corporatism with Germany, Italy, Holland and France as the major representatives, although Spain, as a differentiated model of late incorporation into the modern welfare state, could be added to this group; the Social democracies such as Norway, Sweden and Finland, and finally the Eastern Corporatism with Japan on its own as it appears as an exception as a result of its socio-economic peculiarities.

Neo-liberal countries seem to have a clear correlation with a punitive model in their penal systems just as the Nordic social democracies have developed criminal justice systems based on a humanistic conception of rehabilitation and prisons. Conservative corporativist countries, however, present mixed models of justice, characterized by combining highly punitive aspects

¹ The Pygmalion effect is a form of self-fulfilling prophecy that states that higher expectation of our performance affects positively such performance.

(such as severity in punishment duration) with clearly progressive trends in the application of sentences and, therefore, of interventions. Looking at criminal justice systems from this perspective would allow the review of educational prison-based programmes with a comparative approach as their purpose and configuration can vary significantly depending on the representative model examined. As suggested in Dignam and Cavadino's theory (2006), the present dissertation compares the prison education systems of Norway and England and Wales as representatives of the rehabilitative and punitive models of penal systems respectively.

2.6 The current state of prison education in Europe and challenges it poses

The European Commission conducted a study analysing the current state and challenges of prison education and training in Europe (2013). It acknowledged that prisoners are one of the groups most excluded from society and one which also hold low levels of education. Although there is a general recognition of this and of the necessity of using the prison sentence as an opportunity to develop skills, improve employability or facilitate re-entry, the levels of participation of adult prisoners in education in most countries of Europe are below 25%. Access to education is limited in several ways, some of them are institutional, e.g. prison overcrowding, shortage of security and training staff or lack of infrastructure. Indeed, prison systems often assume that security can be better achieved by investing in disciplinary measures rather than by investing in education (Baratov, 2014). Others are associated with personal circumstances such as low self-esteem or special needs held by some sub-groups. But over and above these factors, it is significant that the report recognized the priorities of policy makers as a constraint to access to education in prisons. Many prisoners have had negative previous educational experiences and left school at an early age (*Ibid*, 2013; SEP, 2013,) so it is important that provision of education is adapted to the individual by providing alternatives to traditional schooling. The report advocated for a contextualized approach to educational provision in prisons that takes into account the particularities of each country but is able to offer a broad curriculum of basic and transversal skills - those which can be learned in a particular context or situation but can be transferred to other contexts - with a comprehensive and person-centred approach that includes human rights education and where the use of technologies is both part of and facilitates the curriculum expansion.

As part of the European Union agenda for adult learning and its recognition of prisoners as an important target group, the European Commission conducted research regarding the access to education in prison (Downes, 2016). This study ultimately looks for the establishment of structural indicators that facilitate the evaluation of prison systems for comparative purposes and also the self-assessment of each country. One of the principal structural indicators proposed, which is already well established in Norwegian prisons, is the principle of normality in prisons. The principle of normality assures the same rights for education for prisoners as for all other citizens. Other structural indicators would be opportunities for E-learning in prison, individual education plans for prisoners, sufficient facilities in prison for education and support for teachers' professional development.

Chapter 3- METHODOLOGY

3.1 The methodological approach

In order to answer the questions posed by this research, this study has undertaken a systematic analysis of data collected from governmental internet websites and academic literature obtained through secondary research. Two main primary and secondary sources have been explored. Firstly, educational prison-based programmes as displayed on the websites of each of the prisons in Norway, England and Wales have been reviewed and analysed using a broad category perspective that included theoretical education, basic education (literacy and numeracy skills) and higher education. Searches were also carried out for information and computer technology, library access, vocational training, paid work, behavioural programmes, living skills and leisure time, sports and other forms of education (which can include more creative aspects such as music or drama courses). In addition, data on the topic of interest published by government sources - Home Office reports and up to date policy practice -have been reviewed. Secondly, an extensive review of relevant evaluations of the prison education in the two systems was undertaken through library-based research. The research strategy included studies and reports with both a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology and the time-frame included in the search was 2005 to the present. Secondary analysis of qualitative research has served the purpose of critically comparing the prison education systems of two representative models of western penal systems.

3.2 Primary sources, strengths and limitations

The information collected from the websites of each prison regarding educational prison-based programmes is an inadvertent primary source of data. Its original purpose is not to inform research and, therefore, its data are not exhaustive and do not take the form of statistical compilation. Its aim is to inform the general public about the characteristics of the establishment (its philosophy of work and regime). One of the challenges that this poses is that, although there is a general pattern about the information that appears displayed, there is a relatively wide margin of difference in the quantity and type of information provided by each prison (e.g. in some prisons the information about education provision is scarce or it focuses on one particular aspect. In some cases the vocabulary utilised for the same concepts varies). For this reason, the categories used in this study are not exhaustive; different but very similar

concepts were included in order to allow comparison. The purpose of collecting these data has been to identify the styles of education that Norway and England and Wales provide in their respective prisons. This is why this research has also looked to other parameters beyond the type and quantity of programmes available. For example, statements regarding the ethos of the prison regime or other aspects, such as the style of presenting the provision of education, have been examined. As the analysis of web content is qualitative, attention has also been paid to the latent content (Ackland, 2013)

Another caveat that this source of data poses would be the update of information. Although all prison websites in England and Wales indicate that they were updated in July 2017; in the case of Norway, the updates are more randomly made explicit and are less recent. In any case, it is possible that some types of programmes taught in the past that are no longer available for inmates appear on the website, whereas others that have recently started have not yet been added. In addition, some educational activities, in particular those provided by external prison collaborators such as charities, are usually not reflected on the websites. However, the collection of information about the educational prison system displayed on the website of each prison provides enough information to, on the one hand, draw out the educational tendencies of both systems and critically compare them and on the other to establish connections between those educational styles and the type of criminal justice system of each country.

3.3 Secondary sources, strengths and limitations.

Secondary analysis examines existing data in order to re-analyse them through a different lens. This can imply, for example, focusing on a concept that was not particularly present in the first research or collection of data, or answering a different research question from the one posed in the original study (Hinds et al, 1997). It can use data that other researchers have collected or data collected by the Government for statistical purposes (Bryman, 2004). The present study draws on both types of sources of information with the purpose of, firstly, shifting the focus of individual country analysis to a critical comparative perspective between Norway and the English and Welsh prison education systems. Secondly, it attempts to answer a new research question; that is, whether there are any connections between the nature of the educational programmes in the prisons of each country and the way they are carried out with regard to the type of criminal justice system of the country and the philosophy that underpins it.

Re-using qualitative data raises some dilemmas in research such as possible misinterpretation. Indeed, the reports that this study reviews on prison education evaluation were intended for other purposes than comparing two particular prison education systems or connecting them with particular penal tendencies, and therefore, the interpretation of data can be misleading by being out of context or compromised by the 'distance' of the researcher in relation to them. However, secondary analysis can be understood as re-contextualising, rather than analysing, pre-existing data (Irwing and Winterton, 2011). This study has brought together the most relevant reports on prison education evaluation and has analysed them through a different lens (e.g. comparative analysis) which in turn provides a new criterion of validity for the results.

Chapter 4 – FINDINGS

4.1 Prison education in Norway

The Norwegian prison system advocates for the rehabilitation of inmates as a means to fighting crime. A punishment that works is one which reduces recidivism (Norwegian Ministry of Justice, 2008). The theoretical inspiration of the legal framework that covers the prison system vision has a strong basis in a humanitarian perspective but it also rests in an utilitarian sense that acknowledges that prisoners will eventually come back to the community and for the general good of society it is necessary that the prison sentence provides them with a wide range of skills and opportunities to ensure desistance. This is why prison education, which has a long tradition in the Norwegian prison system since being set up in the Seventeenth Century (Schenk, 2005), is central to accomplish the rehabilitation of offenders and it is considered as an investment in crime prevention.

The Ministry of Education assigns the overall national responsibility for the education provision that takes place within prisons in Norway to the County Governor in Hordaland (County Governor of Hordaland, 2017). The Governor is the link between the State and the counties and allocates the funding they need. Since 2001 the responsibility for prison education has been decentralized from the Central Prison Administration to the regional and local levels giving each regional Director of Prison and Probation Service the duty to ensure the provision of educational activities according to the national strategic plans. At a local level, each prison and the organisations that work in co-operation with it agree an individual learning plan with each prisoner according to his needs and aspirations (Schenk, 2005).

Prison education in Norway works as an administrative co-operation model, which connects prisons to the public services available to civilian society. An upper secondary school is responsible for the education provided in each prison, which is delivered through a branch of the secondary school-, which employs the teachers and issues all certificates for students. However, some prisons that are considered to be transitional homes, as they allocate inmates in the final phase of their sentence, do not have schools of their own. They work as ‘open prisons’ and therefore, education, work and recreational activities for inmates are meant to be provided by community resources.

The Education Act (1998) had important implications for prisoners as it stated that all citizens had the right and duty to complete basic education and the right to follow up these studies with three years of upper secondary school. In addition, adults who were born before 1978 have the

right to upper secondary education (which affects an important number of prisoners). An amendment to this Act in 2002 also gives adults the right to supplement their basic schooling and to receive special education. The law, therefore, frames the objectives of the Norwegian educational prison system which is to provide inmates with basic and upper secondary school education. Access to Higher Education is supported by the Prison Service but has to be financed from the inmates' own account. Although employability is seen as a major target and therefore there is a special effort in providing vocational training and paid work at prison to inmates, the recognition of the need for informal skills has led to the organization of curricular designs that include a wide range of life skills, e.g. team work or life skills, which are delivered regularly in prisons as an informal course. Indeed, the wish to implement the concept of 'the village prison' is part of the strategic prison rehabilitative plan: 'The village prison shall be a training arena for the Mastery of life skills. It shall provide a holistic perspective on penal implementation and give the inmates influence over important decisions in their own lives' (Norwegian Ministry of Justice, 2008)

According to the normality principle, which is central to the Norwegian prison system, the only restriction that prison can inflict on an individual is that of liberty. Therefore, all other rights of the person are preserved in the same conditions as every other citizen. This is why life in prison should resemble the outside world as closely as possible. At the same time, prison education and training have to be a reflection of the ordinary system provided for the rest of society.

One of the points in common among all the Nordic educational prison systems² is that education and training will help the personal development of the prisoner but will also become a central tool to help cope with re-entry and desistance from crime (Schenk, 2005).

4.2 Educational provision as reported in the official websites of the prisons in Norway

4.2.1 Theoretical education

Most Norwegian prisons say that they provide the inmates with elementary and upper secondary school education. Depending on the capacity of the prison, education delivery is

² Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden

organised differently. Of the 64 prisons and transitional homes, 30 have a capacity that ranges from ten to thirty inmates. The largest prisons in Norway accommodate a maximum of 286 inmates and the medium-sized ones usually have between 50 and 80 places. Smaller prisons have more use of self-study, on-line or supervised teaching where private exams are conducted and the rest follow the standard way of classroom teaching, with staff employed by the main exterior school on which the prison depends. Attending school or some other form of training should not be an impediment for working or attending other courses.

Higher studies are facilitated through the connection with universities. Outside the school curriculum, other common general courses that are provided are mathematics, science, economics, health, social studies and history; for example Halden prison remarks on its emphasis on interdisciplinary co-operation with external partners and the high academic level of their educational provision (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017a).

In relation to languages, prisons report that English and Norwegian are usually taught, although sometimes adapted according to the population e.g. English for foreign inmates and Norwegian as a second language. There are also courses in Spanish and Esperanto for beginners, for example Bjorvin prison and Hedmark prison (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017b; Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017c)

Some prisons understand the need for follow up and counselling on education and others remark as well that their educational offers vary according to the prisoners' and society's needs, for example Bergen Prison (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017d)

4.2.2 Information and computer technology (ICT)

The management of digital tools has become part of the curricular design, so all prisons report providing ICT training and the possibility of certification. In addition, the Norwegian prison system has worked for several years to introduce and spread the use of e-learning in prison. The structure used provides internet access through the platform called 'It's Learning' which allows prisoners to reach all sites that are relevant for educational reasons and blocks websites that do not belong to this category (Hammerschick, 2010)

4.2.3 Library

Not all prisons report having their own library, although this facility is generalised among closed prisons and it is always categorized as part of the leisure possibilities offered.

4.2.4 Vocational training

The amount of vocational training provided in Norway's prisons is large and diverse. It is possible to find workshops that offer both paid work and opportunities for vocational training. In addition, many workshops are accredited educational institutions where it is possible to receive theoretical education in the prison school and the training in the workshop (Schenk, 2005). Co-operation with external stakeholders is usual, for example, with the N.A.V or private organizations like Vox³. Most of the common training offered is in carpentry and general woodwork, mechanics, scaffolding, welding, construction, TIP (technique and industrial production), electrical engineering, industrial painting, cooking and hospitality. Other workshops provided depend on the characteristics of the prison and its particular circumstances (e.g. farming or agriculture training). There is also other vocational training provided which has a different orientation: design and handicrafts, flower arranging, sewing, candle making or soap production. Two prisons offer the possibility to get a truck driving licence.

4.2.5 Paid Work

Paid work in Norway's prisons usually involves prison maintenance, such as cleaning, laundry or kitchen services. In the prisons located on islands and others with natural surroundings, paid work also consists of forestry related tasks, sailing or farm animal care.

As mentioned before, some prison jobs are approved training sites so the inmate can have his practice and learning certificated. There is a wide range of opportunities for paid work in prisons which accords with the duty of activity that all prisoners are committed to. Carpentry, gardening, textiles, ceramic, car wash and repair, assembly of electronic components, mechanical workshops and welding are the most common.

4.2.6 Behavioural programmes

Behavioural programmes do not seem to be as central in the educational curriculum as formal education, vocational training or work. However, every prison offers some kind of activity that would fall into this category. The most common programmes are related to the treatment of drug abuse, violence-related crime and stress or anger management. These can be conducted individually or in groups. Conversation groups for women are also common. Some of these

³ N.A.V. : Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration. Vox: Today called Skills Norway. It is the Norwegian agency for lifelong learning

courses are officially accredited in order to ensure a professional level of teaching (e.g. Crime Break). The idea is to provide prisoners with motivation for change. Participation in these programmes is voluntary in prison, whereas it can be mandatory as an element of community sanctions.

4.2.7 Living skills and leisure time

There are programmes that focus directly on living skills. But the aim of enhancing living skills is also addressed through the principle of normality. For example, it is possible for inmates to use their recreation time in activities such as preparing meals in their own space and eating together. Therefore, there is a constant effort in each prison in Norway to provide a wide range of leisure activities for inmates that resembles, as much as possible, all the activities carried out by any citizen in ‘the outside world’. It is also very clear that leisure time comes after work and study in accordance with the rule of the duty of activity. Leisure activities depend on the level of security of each prison and the possibilities of getting out for an activity. They are mainly connected with three areas:

1. sports-access to a training room is almost always available in each prison and organised group sports such as football or volleyball are very common,
2. nature-related activities such as mountain walks, kayaking, climbing, swimming, fishing or weekend trips and
3. cultural activities that can be organised indoors- film nights, concerts or using the local amenities such as museum and cinema visits. In some cases the participation in these kind of activities is mandatory, for example at Hassel prison (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017e)

4.2.8 Other forms of education

It is also possible to follow courses that connect with other aspects of formal and informal education such as music, handicrafts or other general arts. Other less common courses that are found would be acrobatics, acupuncture and physiotherapy.

One subject that is reported to be addressed in almost every prison in Norway is parental guidance. Under different titles it is possible to find courses that offer counselling in parenting, education and family guidance and conversation groups about being a father in jail.

The information extracted from the provision of education as reflected in Norwegian prison web pages shows a holistic approach in the style of education. The indicators that most clearly reveal this tendency are the compensated offers of theoretical education, vocational training and paid work together with non-formal education through different kind of arts or alternative therapies. General courses on different theoretical subjects that do not belong to the school curriculum would reflect the possibility of accessing education for the sake of learning, which also agrees with a type of education that is not instrumental. This access to a wide offer of activities characterised as 'Leisure activities' reflects the principle of normality in Norwegian prisons but also the aim to facilitate training to inmates in life skills. This would also be a characteristic of the importance given to transversal skills as a means of achieving rehabilitation.

4.3 Evaluation of prison education in Norway

Norway has the lowest re-offending rate in Europe. Only 20% of those released from a Norwegian prison re-offended within two years (Kristoffersen, 2013). A recent study that analysed the social costs of incarceration looked at how incarceration affected recidivism in Norway. The target of the study was the entire prison population and it concluded that incarceration reduced the odds of a person re-offending within five years by 27% (Bhuller *et al.*, 2016). The researchers found that for inmates who were unemployed before entering prison the decline in re-offending was greater and concluded that the programmes conducted in prison that addressed employability have a direct effect on discouraging future re-offending.

However, Norway has an average sentence of eight months, with over 60 % only being up to three months (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017h). This brevity of sentence length could also indicate that the detrimental effects of prison, which are associated with further criminal behaviour on release, could have less impact on Norwegian prisoners. The relationship with others who have a criminal background, the weakening of family bonds and social networks or the reinforcement of a criminal identity are aspects fostered by imprisonment that have all been acknowledged as discouraging the process of desistance (McNeill, 2012). The brevity of prison sentences in Norway's prisons could indicate that the damaging effects of incarceration have less impact on its prison population and its rates of recidivism. But in the same way, the positive effects promoted by prison interventions would also have a limited impact. Thus the direct relationship between the model of prison education and desistance of crime would appear less obvious.

Hedland *et al.* (2007) looked at the educational background of the prison population in Norway and noted that 92.8 % of prisoners had completed primary school and lower secondary school, 30.6% of prisoners had finished upper secondary school and 12.9% had completed higher education. (Manger *et al.* 2006) highlighted that only 25% of inmates under 25 years had completed one of the three levels of upper secondary school while 74% of the equivalent general population had completed them all. Although Norway follows a similar pattern to other countries with most inmates having some experience of being school drops-outs or being disadvantaged in some way regarding educational access, the percentage of inmates having completed primary school is high compared with other countries. For example, in Spain only 28% of the prison population reported in 2005 that had completed primary school (Gutierrez *et al.*, 2010)

Other research conducted on the educational backgrounds of inmates from Norway's prisons showed that female and male prisoners have similar educational backgrounds although men complete significantly more vocational training programmes than women and it is more common to find women who have Higher Educational qualifications (Manger *et al.*, 2009). The same research found that 30% of prisoners had attended some kind of educational activity and from those over 50 % had been in upper secondary school and 40% in vocational training. The factors that motivated inmates to attend education were improving their chances of employment after release, but also just learning for learning's sake and spending time in a meaningful activity. The reasons for the low participation in education were related to structural barriers such as the suitability of educational activities with the prisoner's needs or, to a much lesser extent, with individual difficulties, such as learning disabilities. The inmates' evaluation of the educational activities was mostly positive, although some reported poor access to computer equipment. Manger *et al.* (2009) recommended that educational activities should be more diverse, with more opportunities for vocational training and upper secondary school-level education to be offered in prisons. This means that, although access to the right to a prison education in Norway is equal 'in principle' to all citizens, the reality falls short of this ideal. In fact, it has been reported that there are structural barriers, such as a lack of funding, that impede the access to education for all inmates in some Norwegian prisons (Downes, 2016). Other research has suggested that, although the foreign prison population in Norway has reached 34%, there is no structured plan for the provision of education to minorities in prison. The main barriers that foreign inmates experience are the lack of information about learning opportunities in a comprehensible language together with long waiting lists to access school as

their preferences in courses and training are not available in all establishments so they must wait to be transferred to a prison that can offer those preferences (Westrheim and Manger, 2014)

4.4 Prison education in England and Wales.

The purpose of prison education in England and Wales is to improve the employability of offenders in order to reduce recidivism. Education should provide the inmates with skills that help them to be more employable (House of Commons, 2012). Evidence shows that prison populations in England and Wales have remarkably lower levels of basic skills when compared with the general population (Creese, 2016). Taking into account research that showed how education can support a reduction in re-offending by providing the skills needed to successfully enter the labour market, the Ministry of Justice (2014) designed a strategy for prison education that set out a clear pathway into employment. This is why the provision of basic literacy and numeracy skills in prison, especially for those below Level 2 of competence, together with the spread of vocational training, are greatly emphasised. Despite the comments already highlighted by the Education and Skills Committee in Prison Education (House of Commons, 2005) on the inconvenience of the narrowing of the core curriculum in prison education with the over-emphasis on basic skills and the importance of addressing prisoners' needs from a broader perspective, the purpose of prison education in England and Wales has remained generally connected with developing skills on the grounds of employability.

The review on offender learning "Making prisons work, skills for rehabilitation" (Ministry of Justice, 2011a), put the focus on the development of vocational training in line with the demands of employers: "alongside making prisons increasingly places of meaningful work, we will place a much greater focus on developing the vocational and employability skills associated with that work and for which there is demand from employers in the areas to which the prisoner is released". (p3)

In the same vein, the paper "Breaking the cycle: Government response" (Ministry of Justice, 2011b) put the emphasis on work as a tool to make more effective a punishment that should be robust and oriented towards making inmates face the consequences of crime. Prison education was envisaged as the provision of skills that would increase opportunities for inmates to find a job after release which in turn would break the cycle of re-offending. This approach translates to an ethos of work that is repeatedly noticeable when looking through the prisons' mission as described in their official webpages. In this context, a big transformation in prisons'

rehabilitation was forecast. However, the two main reports on prison education in England that have been conducted recently - "Unlocking potential" (Coates 2016) and "Transforming rehabilitation?" (Stickland 2016) - clearly showed that the so-called 'rehabilitation revolution' has not yet taken place.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) managed The Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) until October 2016 when the Ministry of Justice took over this responsibility. OLASS was set up in 2006 and is the organization that brings together all prisoners' educational services in England and Wales. OLASS currently has contracts with four organizations that provide learning for offenders across the country - People Plus, Manchester College, Milton Keynes College and Weston College.

A prison education reform in England and Wales was planned to take place this year and following the recommendations of Coates' influential review (2016), Prison Governors were going to take over full responsibility for the provision of prison education. In this way, it is expected that they would be given full power to hire providers for offenders' learning. However, according to information extracted from the Media, but not confirmed yet by the Government, the reform of prisons' education has been put on hold for one more year and the existing contracts that OLASS holds with prison learning providers have been extended for this period (Burke, 2017)

4.5 Educational provision as reported on the official websites of the prisons of England and Wales.

4.5.1 Theoretical education

Almost all prison establishments in England and Wales report having some kind of provision of theoretical education, predominantly of basic skills, which comprises literacy and numeracy. Only five out of 123 prisons specifically report teaching literacy and numeracy (often referred to as Maths and English) on a Level 3 (GCSE), while possibilities to access higher education through Open University are mentioned more often. English as a second language (ESOL) courses are reported to be available in twenty-two prisons.

Prisons from England and Wales are usually large. The smaller male adult prisons host around 300 inmates, with a few women and young offenders' prisons having capacity for around 100 inmates. The largest establishment, the prison of Berwyn in North Wales, has a capacity of

2106 places and there are thirty-five prisons with a capacity of over 1000 places. Whether this has an impact on the way that educational courses are delivered is not certain but in some cases the number of educational places available are remarkably small when compared with the prison capacity. For example, the prison of Swale side in Kent, with a capacity of 1112 inmates, reports having only 110 places for full time education (Justice.gov.uk, 2017a). Distance learning is usually mentioned but the established way of classroom teaching for groups of students seems to be more usual.

Many prisons report running courses specializing in employability, such as ‘Key Work Skills’, ‘Preparation for Work’ or more commonly ‘Functional Skills’, for example Newhall prison and Northumberland prison (Justice.gov.uk, 2017b, Justice.gov.uk, 2017c).

4.5.2 Information and computer technology (ICT)

Almost all prisons report the delivery of ICT courses with the possibility of receiving certified qualifications. Other courses such as Graphic Design or Interactive Media are often highlighted. Some prisons make reference to the Virtual Campus which is a Web -based intranet with a range of courses and other content related to rehabilitation available for inmates. The internet is enabled when required, for example, for online examinations, but always under highly restricted and supervised conditions.

4.5.3 Library

Only twenty-five prisons report having a library, although according to the National Offender Management Service) (NOMS) and its instruction PSI/2015, it is mandatory, and therefore assumed, that all prisons are provided with a library and that prisoners should be able to access library books and exchange them.

4.5.4 Vocational training

Emphasis on vocational training is remarkably important in all prisons' description of their educational provision, for example High down Prison (Justice.gov.uk, 2017d). Some of them do not mention any theoretical education or other educational activities, but there is always at least some reference to the vocational training provided in these establishments.

What is on offer is very wide and includes a range of courses that cover different sectors of the industrial economy and of the service industry: for example, construction, hospitality, agriculture, food production or environment are the most common sectors covered. All training

offers qualification, often including NVQs diplomas at Levels 1 or 2. Some training courses offer embedded learning for Maths and English within the workshop.

4.5.5 Paid work

Paid work in prisons seems to be available for all inmates, although sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between vocational training or working sites. There are many paid workshops that provide workers with qualifications, although wages are only specified in two prisons, and this is to highlight that they pay slightly above the average. The average weekly wage in prison is £10 although the minimum is £4 pounds per week (HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 2016).

Apart from paid workshops which offer qualifications, there seem to be a significant number of contract services with exterior employers. Some examples would be light assembly, computer building, packaging, printing, sewing or preparation of fly-ties for angling.

The other most common workplaces provided by the prison itself are related to the general services involved in prison maintenance: kitchen, laundering, general cleaning or waste management.

Several prisons mention that inmates are required or expected to work, for example. Sudbury Prison: ‘Sudbury adopts a work ethic and all prisoners are expected to work, unless unable to do so due to age or they are registered disabled’ (Justice.gov.uk (2017e))

4.5.6 Behavioural programmes

All prisons provide behavioural programmes and emphasise these as part of the offenders’ management strategy. There is a wide range of programmes, most of them accredited and therefore replicated in different prisons. The most common are those addressing offending behaviour: Enhanced thinking skills (ETS), Controlling anger and learning to manage it (CALM), Reform men convicted of violent offences (RESOLVE), Thinking skills programme (TSP), Sex offender treatment programme (SOTP) and substance abuse: Prisons addressing substance related offending (PASRO) and the drug and alcohol rehabilitation programme (FOCUS). There are many prisons that report having a special unit for drug addiction treatment and several have programmes involving therapeutic communities. Most of the prisons claim to have resettlement programmes and guidance. These include occasional courses on different topics such as developing a CV, accommodation issues or using links from the community, for example Ranby prison (Justice.gov.uk, 2017g)

4.5.7 Living skills and leisure time

A quarter of the prisons report having courses on life skills or personal and social development, but it is not specified which elements are addressed on these courses.

Remarkably, there is no category in the websites covering "leisure time" or "recreational activities" in any prison. The regime section, which includes education, always mentions the services of the chaplaincy and visits or organizational activities related to the functional aspects of the prison such as the provision of meals or healthcare. However, there is no reference to leisure time activities for inmates other than sports.

4.5.8 Sports

All prisons report having sports facilities available to all inmates such as gyms or sport tracks. Sport is an activity that seems to be of great importance within prison education in England and Wales. It is referred to in two ways: as a recreational activity but also as a site where prisoners can achieve qualifications in the fitness sector. There are many accredited courses in this field, such as gym instructor or personal trainer, but also courses related to health and safety; for example, first aid instruction or wellbeing courses.

4.5.9 Other forms of education

There are other courses that connect with other aspects of formal and informal education. Music, arts and drama courses are the most common examples. There are other activities which are found less frequently such as acupuncture, yoga or Tai-chi practice. Some prisons report providing parental guidance courses and there are peer mentoring schemes in several establishments. Alongside these, there are some examples of innovative practice, such as the Storybook Dad scheme where inmates record stories on CDs which are sent to their children or grandchildren.

The information extracted from the provision of education as reflected on English and Welsh prison web pages shows an instrumental learning approach in the style of education. The indicators that most clearly reveal this tendency focus on both employability and vocational training. Indeed, they appear with much greater detail than the theoretical education provision which is also mainly at lower levels. Although living skills courses are available in several prisons the provision of behavioural programmes is much more generalised. There is no section

dedicated to leisure activities, and recreational time is mostly mentioned in relation to sports. However, even the sports category appears to be more orientated to employability.

4.6 Evaluation of prison education in England and Wales.

For prisoners in England and Wales the re-conviction rate within two years after release is 59% (Fazel and Wolf, 2015). The detrimental effects of imprisonment, such as isolation from family and personal networks, the lack of purposeful activity and the stigmatization of prisoners, have been found to have an impact on re-offending rates (Doob *et al.*, 2014). The re-conviction rate for prisoners released with no previous offences as compared with those with up to over ten offences, increases gradually from 19% to 60% (Ministry of Justice, 2011c). However, when considering re-conviction by looking at the length of the sentence, short-term prisoners have a higher rate of re-offending (*ibid*, 2011c). The average sentence in England and Wales in 2016 was a determinate sentence over four years. Approximately 43% of the prison population was serving this type of sentence. Twenty-five percent of inmates were serving a determinate sentence between one and four years and only 8% were serving less than one year (House of Commons, 2017). Compared to Norway, considering the average length of the sentence, the relationship between education as a fundamental factor of the prison's regime and rehabilitation, can be explored more straightforwardly in England and Wales.

According to Stickland's report (2016), access to education, the learning performance of inmates and the quality of education have deteriorated in recent years. Indeed, for some of the indicators evaluated, this deterioration has been considerable. In relation to access and participation in education, there were more prisoners who reported spending less than two hours out of their cells in 2014/15 than prisoners who spent more than ten hours and this difference has increased since 2008/2009. Access to education is therefore more limited now. The inmates' participation in education in prison was estimated to be 23% in 2014, whereas in 2008 the estimated participation rate was 42%. The most commonly acknowledged barriers related to access to prison education are the constant mobility of prisoners (transfers of inmates between prisons for different purposes), issues related to the physical space allocated to education, the conflict between education and other aspects of the regime and issues concerning prison staff, such as shortage of staff or staff's attitudes regarding education (House of Commons, 2012). Prison officers were found to be far from a 'learning ethic', undertrained and working under pressure (House of Commons, 2005).

There are also more people studying at lower levels of education (Stickland, 2016). Although there is an increase of students participating in English and Maths below Level 2, the number of students that participate in Level 3 has fallen by 83% (ibid). According to a report by the Prison Education Trust (PET) report 'Brain Cells' (2014) the group that has lower engagement in education are those who hold qualifications above Levels 2 or 3. The reason for this would be the lack of courses at a higher level, the absence of subjects of interest and the long waiting lists for those subjects available. In England and Wales only 53% of inmates reported having any qualification, as compared with 85% of the general population (Ministry of Justice, 2012a). Creese's assessment of the English and Maths skills levels of prisoners in England (2016) found that although numeracy skills were very similar to the general population, the levels of literacy were significantly poorer: 86 % of the general population have literacy skills above Level 1 whereas only 50% of prisoners attain that level.

Stickland drew on data from the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and concluded that there was a substantial decline in the quality of education provided by prisons. According to the Inspectorate 72% of the prisons were graded as inadequate or requiring improvement in 2014/15 and poor quality provision was the overall consensus.

Coates' Review (2016) was more oriented to provide recommendations on how the reform of prison education could be conducted and the Government, by ordering this report, was committed to follow the advice given. By looking at her recommendations it is possible to see indicators of the state of prison education in England and Wales too. One of the most remarkable changes suggested by Coates was the transfer to Prison Governors of the whole responsibility and accountability for the provision of education. Although acknowledging the importance of employability in reducing re-offending and the need to assure that vocational training meets employers' demands, the report suggested that employability does not have to constitute the only focus of the curriculum. According to Coates, there is a need 'to include greater provision of high quality creative arts provision, and Personal and Social Development (PSD) courses' (ibid:ii) as they improve the odds of achieving desistance by enhancing self-awareness and self-confidence in inmates. Evidence about the positive outcomes achieved through arts courses within the criminal justice system context shows that they 'play an important part in changing individual, institutional and social circumstances which sponsor criminal behaviour' (Hughes, 2005:9).

Another factor that was highlighted by Coates is the need for a meticulous assessment upon the prisoners' arrival of their educational situation. This will be essential for the elaboration of a Personal Learning Plan, the progress of which should be followed throughout the inmate's sentence and assessed with the involvement of all relevant prison staff. However, this recommendation is not new. Indeed, this is how it is supposed to work today in all prisons in England and Wales (House of Commons, 2005). But, according to the PET report (2014), of the inmates who participated in the research, 54% reported that they did not have or did not know if they had an individual learning plan.

The report also noted that the progression to Higher Education should be encouraged and therefore the current funding restrictions should be tackled. The sources for funding Open University or other higher education learning courses currently come from the prisoner's private funds, a third party, such as family or a charity, or the Prisoner's Education Trust (PET) (Ministry of Justice, 2012b). Furthermore, the vocational path should be offered as part of a progressive learning journey, thereby helping to raise the inmates' aspirations.

It is important also to encourage a professional culture among all staff in prison, not just teachers but also other prison officers or instructors in order to maximise the potential of all interactions with prisoners as educative encounters and also to ensure professionalism.

In addition, a standardized curriculum to achieve GCSE qualification that is flexible and organized in a modular way would be helpful in order to overcome the barriers to education presented by the mobilization of inmates from prison to prison.

Finally, the use of ICT should be improved, especially in the regulations of restrictions. The Virtual Campus is reported to be under-used and normally located in rooms which cannot be accessed during most of the day. Also, it is reported that there is a lack of training among staff and although it is possible to use it in 105 prisons in the country, the number of active users is low.

The PET Report 'Brain Cells' (2014) indicated that from the population surveyed for their study in 2013, over 70% reported that better access to a computer and to on-line courses would have helped with their learning. Eighty-three percent reported that the Virtual Campus is not easily accessible and only 23% indicated that it actually improved their IT skills. One third of the survey participants reported to be undertaking some kind of distance learning, but only one out of ten had completed any learning provided by the Virtual Campus.

The Coates' review also addressed the situation of minorities in prison regarding education. For the Black, Asian or Minority group of ethnic learners (BAME) the report did not find evidence of a lower participation rate in education. For young Adults (18 to 21 years old) it

only acknowledged a challenging population with a lack of maturity and responsibility for their own actions. No major changes were proposed, which is surprising as according to the Prison Rules, particular attention should be paid to the provision of education for young offenders (Council of Europe, 2006). For women, it highlighted the need to avoid stereotypes regarding to the provision of courses for this group, such as hairdressing or beauty related courses.

With regard to the motivations for learning, The PET Report (2014) found that among the participants surveyed, 81% of inmates looked for a way to occupy their time with a useful activity, 71% and 70% were looking for qualifications and employability skills respectively and 60% were motivated by learning for its own sake.

4.7 Norway and England and Wales, comparative analysis

The physical size of prisons is one of the most remarkable differences between the Norwegian and England and Wales prison systems. With 85,863 prisoners and 146 prisoners per 100,000 of national population (at 28/07/2017), England and Wales rank number one for prison population in the European Union and third in Europe after the Russian Federation and Turkey (Prison Estudies.org, 2017a). The largest prison in England and Wales, Berwyn Prison (Justice.gov.uk, 2017f), accommodates 2,106 inmates while the largest in Norway, Ullersmo Prison (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017f), has a capacity of 286. The occupancy level in prisons of Norway is 89.8% whereas the England and Wales prison system has exceeded its maximum capacity by 12.9%. There are 64 prisons in Norway (including transition homes) and 123 in England and Wales (including open prisons). Norway, with a prison population of 3,874 and 74 prisoners per 100.000 of national population (at 28/09/2016), ranks number 32 in Europe (Prison Estudies.org, 2017b). With its prison population over 22 times smaller than in England and Wales, Norway has more than half of the number of prisons in which to accommodate inmates. Research has found that access to education, together with academic achievement in prisons, is more likely to occur within a small therapeutic environment (O'Neill, 2007). It seems, therefore, that Norway's performance in the field of prison education has the best of scenarios in order to achieve the desired outcomes. With small prisons, many of them located in rural environments, the possibilities of developing a holistic approach to education increase. The famous prison located on Bastoy Island (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017g) is the major example of the concept of a 'village prison' where training in life skills is regarded as being as important as vocational training or work. In addition, England and Wales face serious security problems

because of overcrowding. As security is the major priority in prison systems, it is expected that educational performance in these conditions will be always a secondary aspect of the regime. But despite Norway's better environment for learning activities and the level of satisfaction of inmates with regard to prison education appearing to be overall positive (Manger et al. 2009), the access to education remains at 30% (ibid) which is not that much above the European average (European Commission, 2013) and the barriers to this access are similar to the ones found in European prisons generally. In addition, the trend in the prison population in Norway has in recent years been very similar to the majority of Western prison systems, growing from 2000 to the present by 146% (Prison Estudies.org, 2017b).

Prisons from Norway are managed within the public system. The provision of prison education is based on a model of administrative co-operation between the prison system and the public services available in the community that are accessible to prisons as well. This model seems to provide uniformity for the system. In England and Wales, 14 out of 123 prisons are private. They are managed by the companies G4S, Serco and Sodexo (HM Prison Service, 2017a). However, the provision of education for those prisons is delivered by the four prisons learning providers (OLASS 4) of England and Wales, which is the same for all public and private establishments. Therefore, there is a level of uniformity in education provision, regardless of the type of prison. Confirmation is awaited of the outcomes of the new prison education reforms, which are expected to include the termination of those OLASS 4 contracts and to give full power of decision-making to each prison governor for the provision of education; therefore the uniformity of educational contents may be affected. Despite the level of uniformity, the quality level of the England and Wales prison education has found to be generally poor (Stickland, 2016) without any significant difference between public and private prisons.

The educational level of the prison population in Norway is much higher than the level in England and Wales. Over ninety-two percent of Norwegian prisoners have completed primary school and lower secondary school, whereas only 53% of prisoners in England and Wales report having any qualifications. However, when compared to the education levels of their own population, prisoners from Norway similarly present significantly poorer performance on the completion of upper secondary school, especially for inmates under 25. It is likely that work opportunities after release will correspond to the qualifications of the general population thus making access to work a major obstacle for resettlement in Norway as it is in England and Wales.

The cost of higher education has to be covered by the prisoners in both systems and, in general, is funded by charities such as the Prison Education Trust in the case of England and Wales.

The use of ICT seems to be extended similarly in both systems. The use of virtual platforms is available to all establishments. However, in both systems inmates have been reported to have difficulty accessing computer equipment. In England and Wales, 83% of the inmates reported that their access to the Virtual Campus was poor and 87% said that they did not get support from staff to use it (PET, 2014). In Norway, access to computers was qualified as 'inadequate' according to 49.5% of prisoners' evaluation of education (Manger *et al.*, 2009).

Another similarity is that in both countries over one third of inmates are reported to have a range of literacy difficulties. However, when they were asked about barriers to education, more problems were related to their experience with the learning environment than with their own learning difficulties (Manger *et al.*, 2009; PET, 2014).

Both the systems in Norway, and England and Wales, show a clear emphasis on vocational training and work as essential tools for the rehabilitation of inmates. When looking at the aims of each prison as displayed on their web pages, Norwegian prisons often use the expression 'duty of activity'. For example Hedmark prison (Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2017i), whereas English prisons uses 'ethos of work'. In the case of Norway, it is possible to more often find humanitarian messages in the general information provided for each prison, such as references to the principle of normalization and to the belief that all convicted persons can change their behaviour, e.g. Bergen prison (Kriminalomsorgen.no n.d. d). In the case of England, there is a constant emphasis on the orientation towards employability; for example Hindley prison: 'The curriculum we deliver has been designed to be attentive to the employment market needs and therefore emphasize strong progression routes which will enable employability chances and furnish skills upon release' (Justice.gov.uk, 2017h); Frankland prison: 'employability and enterprise is at the heart of rehabilitation' (Justice.gov.uk, 2017i). Even for those prisons with less specification of their regime activities (where education is included), there is a reference to work training opportunities. Messages such as 'all prisoners are expected to work' or 'working prison ethic' are a constant, for example, Northumberland Prison: 'The working day has been extended to encompass the working prison ethos' (Justice.gov.uk, 2017j).

In Norway, the activities specified under the label 'leisure time' are always on prisons' web sites. They seem to be an important part of the regime, as they are presented as opportunities for the inmates to socialize and to learn life skills. The activities on offer are varied and, when the security level of the prison allows it, always allow for activities outside the prison, either

making use of community services or practicing nature sports such as hiking or water sports. They reflect the kind of leisure activities that the general public takes part in. In England and Wales, however, there is no mention of leisure time activities except for sports, but in many cases this seems to be more oriented to training for employment purposes than to recreation. The duty of activity is a general principle in the execution of the sentence in Norway (Government.no, 2004). This includes 'work, education, programmes and other activities. All of these activities are considered equivalent and as satisfying the requirement by which prisoners are obliged to participate in activities' (Schenk,2005:74). The duty of activity in Norway involves a more holistic comprehension of the educational needs of the person whereas in England and Wales the ethos of work reflects more a partial and instrumental understanding of it.

The quantity and diversity of behavioural programmes that England and Wales prisons offer is high and also present in all prisons' report of activities. The reliance on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) seems to show a focus on identifying factors of risk which are believed to contribute to re-offending. This focus on behavioural programmes corresponds with the approach of 'what works' in rehabilitation which relies mostly on the 'RNR model' (Risk, needs and responsivity) (Andrews and Bonta, 2010). This model focuses on identifying and addressing the risk factors that predict criminal behaviour. According to Costelloe and Warner (2003) 'overfocusing on so-called criminogenic factors, and on the prisoner's short-comings, is a limiting and negative approach' (2003). Norway offers significantly less of this kind of programmes although both countries address drug abuse issues from a similar therapeutic perspective. The risk predictor model agrees more with an instrumental style of education that seeks to reduce recidivism. However, the desistance paradigm, which understands rehabilitation as a shift in the person's narrative identity (Maruna, 2001) would be more connected with a holistic style of education that incorporates the lifelong learning perspective and learning for learning's sake.

Coates' review on prison education in England and Wales outlined the importance of professional development for all prison staff; not just teachers but also governors, team leaders, instructors, peer mentors and prison officers in order to capture innovation and good practice. Encouraging inmates in learning by holding positive attitudes towards the different activities offered in prison and promoting them should be a key part of the role of prison officers (European Commission, 2013). Indeed, one of the common barriers to accessing education at prisons is the attitudes of staff (House of Commons, 2005). Prisons in England and Wales have

suffered in recent years from a shortage of staff. There has been a gradual reduction of 30% in operational prison service staff since 2010 (Ministry of Justice, 2017). In contrast, the number of staff that work in prisons and remand units in Norway is 102 per 100 inmates (Kristoffersen, 2016). For prison officers, Norway has a scheme of recruitment that involves two years of training and the studies in the correctional services of Norway staff academy include, among other subjects, law or ethics and professionalism (Nsd.uib.no, 2017). In England and Wales the training regime for prison officers is only ten weeks (HM Prison Service, 2017b). In addition, although private prisons are evaluated by the HM Chief Inspectorate of Prisons in the same way as public prisons, the recruitment process conducted by the private sector is more difficult to assess. Several scandals, reported by the media, have revealed serious problems of staff shortage and under-trained staff (Dean, 2017). A style of education has better prospects of success when is part of a system that is oriented in all its components under the same philosophy. Norway's style of prison education is in line with the general aim of its prison system. The holistic approach in education accords with the normality principle and the humanitarian concept that prisons in Norway have. This is carried out through all aspects of the system, from the provision of education, to the kind of facilities and services available and the style of work of the staff. In the case of England and Wales, the punitive and managerial aspects of the prison system are reflected through its general performance. The neglecting of training and poor provision of staff, in this case, negatively affects the access and quality of educational interventions (Braggins and Talbot, 2005).

Research that examined the motivations of inmates to attend education in Norway found that getting a job after release was one of the most rated factors, but not the most important. 'Spending time doing something sensible and useful' was rated 'very important' and was the answer most often given. The second most popular answer was 'to learn about a subject' (Manger *et al.*, 2009). Other research found that among the motives that prisoners reported for participation in education, 'social reasons and reasons unique to the prison context' scored more often for inmates with low education while inmates with higher education were more motivated to attend education 'to acquire knowledge and skills' (Manger *et al.*, 2010). Similarly, research in England and Wales on the motivation to attend educational activities found that wanting to spend time usefully scored above wanting to improve job opportunities on release. However, 'the challenge of learning', which could be considered to be in the same category as 'to learn about a subject' or 'learning for the learning sake', was rated under employability reasons (PET, 2014).

Finally, Norway's study of prisoners' evaluation of education concluded that inmates are mostly satisfied (Manger et al., 2009) whereas in England and Wales the results were more ambivalent (PET, 2014).

Despite the negative evaluations of Coates' report (2016), many examples of good practice within the educational activities delivered in prisons in England and Wales (as well as of the management of education) were highlighted. Many of these took place through collaboration between the prison system and charities or other external organizations. One example of good practice were the 'Learning Together' groups. This is an initiative that gathers, within the prison environment, university students and prisoners in order to co-create learning spaces such as reading groups (Amstrong, 2016). Norway also has examples of good practice that are the result of collaboration between prisons and the third sector or public agencies. For example, Vox (today called Skills Norway), which is the Norwegian agency for lifelong learning, between 2009-2013 developed programmes in collaboration with the training and school sites of prisons that addressed the basic skills of those inmates with little or no competence in English and Norwegian. Thus, in spite of the opposite tendency in the educational styles that reflect the prisons of Norway, England and Wales there are examples of good practice in the latter that would resemble the rehabilitative and holistic approach in the educational system of the former.

Chapter 5 - CONCLUSION

The press has spoken often, in recent times, of Norway's prison system describing it as the one 'that works' (Benko, 2015). With a 20% rate of recidivism, which is the lowest rate in Europe (Kristoffersen, 2013), Norway does seem to have put into practice a prison system that is actually rehabilitating offenders. In addition, its rank for prison population is among the lowest in Europe (Prison Estudies.org, 2017b). When compared to England and Wales, with a 59% rate of recidivism (Fazel and Wolf, 2015) and with the highest prison population in Europe (Prison Estudies.org, 2017a) it is apparent that the prison system in there is not fulfilling the aim of rehabilitation. However, the prison system is not an independent system from which conclusions can be drawn whose causality depends exclusively on it. On the one hand, it is part of a penal system that also involves the law - and its application through sentencing - and the supervision system, which includes probation, parole or community sanctions. On the other hand, the prison system and the crime figures are also affected by structural factors, such as the economy or social and cultural aspects (Garland, 1990). For these reasons, it is difficult to establish comparisons between countries, especially for those like England and Wales and Norway which are remarkably different in terms of their social and economic structures and dynamics. When compared to other Western European countries, Norway has a relatively low level of crime. The largest proportion of crimes reported to the police is theft-related. Violent crime, although continuing to grow, is still considered rare (OSAC, 2013). In 2016, reported offences to the police declined, reaching its lowest level in 24 years (Statistics Norway, 2017). A powerful social welfare system that reduces the gap between rich and poor and a traditionally rural society with a low population and a relatively strong sense of community that contributes to informal control could explain to a great extent the positive crime figures of Norway (Scharff and Ugelvik, 2017). On the other hand, the England and Wales' shift in penal policy - to 'tough on crime' - that started to take place in the mid-1990s has contributed to exponentially increase the size of the prison population, even though crime figures have started to decrease (Newburn, 2007). Indeed, since 2002, crime in England and Wales has been falling steadily (Home Office, 2017).

In addition, comparing recidivism rates internationally has been found to be problematic, as there are differences in the definitions and reporting practices of reoffending in different Nordic countries, such as Norway, do not include fines in their reconviction measures, whereas England and Wales do. This could largely explain the difference in the recidivism rates of these countries (Fazel and Wolf, 2015).

When looking at a particular aspect of the prison system, such as education, we acknowledge the difficulties that comparison across countries poses because of the lack of standardised indicators of evaluation. This is also reflected at the national level, when comparing the performance in prison education among prisons actually in the same country. The need for structural indicators that scrutinise the access to education in prison has been acknowledged by the European Union, which has created an agenda that addresses this purpose (Downes, 2016). The 'structural indicators can offer transparency not only for comparative purposes but also with regard to self-assessment on progress over time' (ibid, 2016:8). Once these difficulties have been acknowledged, the comparisons between the education prison systems of Norway and England and Wales have been conducted in this study by looking at non-exhaustive categories such as types of education provided or the level of satisfaction of inmates with the education system. It has been found that although Norway, England and Wales show similar emphasis on the accomplishment of vocational training in prisons as part of their educational strategy, the inclusion of this category within the core curriculum varies. In Norway's case, it forms part of a more holistic conception of education, as it is understood that theoretical education, non-formal education, life skills and recreational activities are also important in the learning process. England and Wales have an orientation that focuses on employability with little or no consideration of recreational aspects of education. In addition, its emphasis in conducting behavioural programmes highlights the managerial approach to the learning process.

Despite this, this study has found other factors that seem to be more directly responsible for the performance and the evaluation outcomes of the education system achieved in each country (Chapter 4, section 4.6). Remarkable differences between the Norwegian and England and Wales prison education systems are those which have resulted from structural factors that condition the provision of education and which are closely linked to the type of criminal justice system that each country holds.

The physical size of prisons has been found to be one of the main differences between the systems studied. Norway's establishments generally accommodate small numbers of prisoners which facilitates a holistic educational approach (Johnsen *et al.*, 2011). Small environments enable inmates to interact with staff and with each other more closely. In addition, the staff has more time to spend with inmates which in turn makes time spent in education, or in any intervention, of higher quality. In addition, the effects of institutionalisation on inmates are reduced by enabling them to have more space for decision-making. Small prison wings are

easier to adapt to different forms of regime, such as 'Wings of respect' or intra-penitentiary therapeutic communities which have been tested successfully in the prison contexts (Valderrama, 2016). These types of regimes allow prisoners to participate in the organization of activities (both regimental and for treatment) and to self-regulate the conflicts that may appear in such co-existence. They enhance the autonomy and self-esteem of inmates and help them to develop organizational skills. They also help to ensure safety as such environments have lower levels of violence when compared with regular prison wings (ibid). Smaller prisons also contribute to the principle of normalization which, in the case of Norway, underpins the philosophy of its system. For example, small establishments make it possible for inmates to prepare their own food and to share meals. This is regarded as part of the process of training in living skills but it could also be seen as helping to offset the detrimental effects of imprisonment, such as institutionalization. But the size of prisons is closely linked to the size of the prison population that the system maintains. In the case of England and Wales, prisons are coping with large numbers of prisoners and overcrowding and the Government's efforts in prison educational reform do not involve building smaller establishments but the opposite. Four new prisons are planned to be built with a capacity for more than 1000 inmates. The construction of super-sized prisons in England and Wales has been driven by cost-benefit decision-making (House of Commons, 2014) although there is evidence of better performance for prisons holding 400 or fewer inmates (HM Inspectorate, 2009).

Another structural factor that can influence the performance of prison education is the level of education of the prison population. In Norway, with 92.8% of inmates having completed primary school (Hetland et al, 2007), the educational curriculum for those not interested in higher education can expand easily to other forms of non-formal education such as music or arts which have been shown to have beneficial effects in the rehabilitation of offenders (e.g. Brewster, 2014; Gussak, 2009). It can also facilitate access to more qualified vocational training and paid work at prisons. England and Wales, with 47% of their prison population reporting that they do not have any qualifications (Ministry of Justice, 2012a), need to concentrate their efforts on providing basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Finally, the number and preparation of staff is another aspect that varies considerably when comparing the two systems. In Norway, the ratio of operational prison service staff to prisoners is 1:1 (Kristoffersen, 2016). In addition, the training provided to prison officers, who play an important role in the provision of education, is extensive and of high quality (Fredwall, 2017; Nsd.uib.no, 2017). However, England and Wales has been suffering problems of a serious

reduction of operational prison service staff and a lack of trained staff with all the security problems that this entails, especially in a prison population with an overcrowded system. Prison officers in the English and Welsh prison service have training that only lasts ten weeks (HM Prison Service, 2017b). They also have the perception that their role is not clear and that they are 'an under-utilised resource' (Braggins and Talbot, 2005: 24). This could explain why, in 2004, the prison service recorded the highest sickness level in the English and Welsh government staff (National Audit Office, 2004).

The second research question posed by this study aimed to establish connections between the nature of educational programmes in the prisons of Norway, England and Wales and the way they were carried out with regard to the type of criminal justice system of the country and the philosophy that underpins it. These structural factors which extensively influence the provision of prison education are connected with the type of prison system to which they belong. This type of prison system is, in turn, a reflection of the type of criminal justice system of a particular country. England and Wales, following the neo-liberal socio-economic pattern of the USA is the major exponent of the punitive model within the European context (Dignam and Cavadino, 2006). The most apparent punitive characteristic is the tough style of sentencing and its severity in relation to the years of imprisonment imposed (Ibid). The expansion of the Western penal system, which has involved an unprecedented increase in incarceration, is a characteristic that has affected generally all countries in Europe and Norway has not been an exception. However, Norway keeps its prison population low partly because of its policy of sentencing. For example, 30% of the prison sentences imposed in Norway in 2014 were served by using electronic monitoring outside prison (Statistics Norway, 2016). In fact, the principle of the Norwegian penal system of using prison only as a measure of last resort means that is only put in operation when other tools of the welfare system have failed (Ugelvik, 2016), but even then, the average prison sentence in Norway (Kriminalomsorgen.no n.d. h) is remarkably low when compared to those in England and Wales (House of Commons, 2017).

Despite the general punitiveness of the England and Wales penal system, there have been recent efforts to work towards a prison system that facilitates the rehabilitation of inmates. The prison policies shifted to 'What works' in rehabilitation (House of Commons, 2012). The focus has been put on employability but also on the resettlement of inmates, acknowledging the importance of supporting ex-prisoners to re-integrate into their communities (HM Prison Service, 2001). At the same time, the prison education system is currently in a process of reform. Coate's review on education, whose recommendations are to be followed by the Government,

acknowledged the necessity to broaden the concept of learning. However, the report dealt more with aspects related to the poor performance of the system by suggesting ways to increase the level of quality of what already exists; for example, the improvement of accountability through the collection of data. Structural factors which affect education, such the high numbers of inmates that require access to education, have not yet been addressed. Indeed, changes in this regard would require a reform much broader than just educational reform. Norway's penal system holds a rehabilitative spirit that permeates all its policies, documents and official discourses with regard to the prison system and its educational provision. This study has found that education in Norway is conceived from a broader perspective that acknowledges the importance of employability for the means of achieving desistance, but that equally puts weight on other aspects of the process of learning, such as non-formal education or the acquisition of living skills. This style reflects the criminal justice model inspired by the European Prison Rules (Council of Europe, 2006). The structural factors of Norway's criminal justice system, together with the country's socio-economic situation, favour, in this case, the provision of this style of education. However, there are examples of other countries that have similar approaches to education but have different socio-economic characteristics and criminal justice systems of a different kind. Such is the case of Catalonia, which combines a punitive style in its sentencing policy with a very progressive prison education system (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2016).

This study has reviewed Norway's and England and Wales' prison-based education programmes and has found connections between two different styles of prison education and two models of criminal justice system, the rehabilitative and the punitive respectively. Indeed, some structural factors which are a result of particular models of criminal justice systems and are already socially and culturally established, influence the style of education provided in the two systems examined to a great extent. Reversely, it would be interesting to find out in future research to what extent the outcomes achieved through one particular prison educational style contribute to perpetuate the same structural factors that are conditioning its existence. That is to say, to examine if there is a circular causality between prison education models and the factors that facilitate them.

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