Where are we in resettlement research?

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ABSTRACT

Prison and reentry programs have been developed over the last decades, mainly in the United States and the United Kingdom, in order to tackle reoffending. At different stages during their imprisonment and after release under probation or supervision, offenders are expected to carry out their reintegration into society through several measures and under the guidance of various professionals. However, even if research has shown that employment is one of the key factors towards a successful life without new offences, we still know too little about what really works under which specific conditions and for what type of person. This paper aims at providing a critical overview of resettlement research, and it suggests new directions for further studies.

KEYWORDS

Resettlement, prison work, reentry programs, desistance, community and networking.

INTRODUCTION

The term *resettlement* is used in this paper as 'the process of reintegration back into the community in a positive and managed way' (Mead, 2007: 268) after serving a prison sentence. The term is more morally neutral when compared to old terminology such as *aftercare* or *throughcare* (in England and Wales, see critical: Raynor and Maguire, 2006; 'Übergangsmanagement' in Germany, Roos and Weber, 2009), all of which imply that ex-offenders are in need of care. Furthermore, *resettlement* covers all programs or interventions run inside or outside prison that aim at overcoming the obstacles or at assisting the ex-prisoner in the reintegration process. In this sense the term *resettlement* is synonymous with the American concept of *reentry* as it was defined by Petersilia (2003): all activities that cover how prisoners spend their time during confinement, the process of release and their supervision after release.

Although the concept and its associated practices have already a long tradition, the certainties regarding what is effective and what is not in resettlement are still scarce (Wincup and Hucklesby, 2007). There are numerous reasons why 'hard knowledge' about effectiveness of

reentry programs is so limited. We will highlight some that seem more influential than others. Firstly, it is only recently that prison and probation organizations have started to develop a culture of scientific curiosity about resettlement. It is rather difficult to find reliable studies on effectiveness conducted by these organisations before the 1980s. Secondly, robust methodologies are still to be developed in the social sciences. According to some scholars (Losel, 2001), one of the most reliable research designs is random trial research. One critic of this approach is that in measuring treatment impact, random trial tends to oversimplify the social realities. For instance, most of these experimental designs focused almost exclusively on measuring differences between the control and experimental groups in terms of re-arrests or re-convictions. Far from being always accurate, these indicators fail to capture other changes that might have been caused by the prison treatment and that may represent progress for ex-offenders, their families or communities, too. Travis (2003) makes this point very clear when evaluating the impact of the Drug Court. One of his conclusions is that Drug Courts impact on offenders not only in terms of re-offending but also in terms of health. For instance, children of Drug Courts participants are more likely to be born drug-free and are therefore not facing less health or developmental difficulties. Furthermore, the multi-modal programs (e.g. therapeutic communities) are more effective than those exclusively targeting addiction. This has been confirmed by Martin et al (2011) considering offenders up to 18 years after release from prison, and for gender-specific programs by Grella and Rodriguez (2011). Another important criticism of the experiments design is that it cannot be fully and accurately employed in the social sciences. Even if some variables are controlled, every unit (subject) is unique and does not fully compare with others. Difficulties around sampling are also significant. When working with human beings it is often the case that the eligible subjects either refuse to participate, or that they are not accessible or easy to be found. Therefore, research on effectiveness should also employ other research designs that are less sophisticated, and their assumptions are less utopian in real-life situations. Research employing more qualitative methods and 'realistic evaluations' (Tilley, 2000) should be encouraged in order to advance our knowledge about what contributes to less crime after release. At this point, realistic evaluations favour small-scale interventions and consider their effects before implementing reform programs on a large scale. Since random allocation between experimental and control groups is almost impracticable, realistic evaluations focus on the question "What works for whom in what circumstances?" and allow limits and critical comments on their results.

The third potential explanation is that funding for resettlement programs is very scarce. For instance, President Bush and the US Congress passed the Second Chance Act in 2008, which allocates $200 million per year for prison-reentry programs (Nayer, 2009). According to Wacquant (2010), this sum is less than one-quarter of one percent of the country's correctional budget. In concrete terms this means about $20 monthly per new prisoner released, which is enough to buy him or her a sandwich every week. This appalling level of funding for reentry-programs makes Wacquant (2010) state that 'prisoner reentry is not an industry but a bureaucratic charade' (615) meant to preserve the machinery of hyperincarceration. Since the level of funding for reentry programs is so low, the budget for independent and sophisticated research is next to none.

One last reason for the paucity of reliable research is that almost all studies focus on one or two components of the resettlement process. Yet, as it will be demonstrated later in this paper, resettlement is not a program but a process that involves ex-prisoners with multi-level problems and with a myriad of obstacles he/she has to face in reentering the community. Therefore, to provide a full picture of the effectiveness of resettlement, a more

comprehensive approach should be taken to capture all the elements of the treatment, the process in which the treatment is delivered, and the context in which all players interact.

It seems that different groups or distinct age cohorts respond differently to treatment interventions. This hypothesis should also be taken into consideration when designing and evaluating programs for women (McIvor, 2007, 2009), juvenile (Lauterbach, 2009) or ethnic minorities.

To better illustrate this point, this paper will first present the theoretical models of resettlement, then give a short overview on three major components of resettlement with a special focus on employment, stigma, family and community. In the concluding part, the paper allows for discussions and proposals leading the way.

For structuring the paper, an adapted version of the Taxman (2004) Five-Step Offender Active Participant Model will be used. Since in the Taxman structure, the first step – the message towards offender – and the fifth step – the surviving strategies – are rather principles and not concrete interventions, this presentation will be based on the steps 2 to 4: the Institutional Treatment, the Pre-release Stage and the Post-release Stage.

THEORETICAL MODELS

Current research has shown that interventions based on the *Risk/Needs/Responsivity* principles (RNR) can reduce reoffending. A number of meta-analyses (Cleland et al, 1996; Dowden, 1998; Hanson et al, 2009) demonstrated that interventions based on all these principles are associated with reductions in recidivism between 26-30% (Dowden and Andrews, 2004, for female offenders Dowden and Andrews, 1999).

Based on the work of Gendreau and Ross (1979) and on the meta-analysis by Andrews et al, (1990), Petersilia (2004) has summarized the effectiveness principles with the following key aspects: cognitive behavioural approach, positive reinforcements, intensive services (3-12 months, 40-70% of the offender´s time), targeting higher-risk offenders, actuarial-based assessment instruments, intervention in the community, specific responsivity in terms of staffing.

In recent years a new model of working with offenders has emerged in Europe – *the desistance paradigm* (McNeill, 2006). Instead of starting from the question of how practice should be constructed, the new paradigm begins by asking how change can take place. A useful summary of this paradigm is provided by Maguire (2007):

1.   Agency is as important as – if not more important than – structure in promoting or inhibiting desistance from crime.

2.   Individuals differ in their readiness to contemplate and begin the process of change.

3.   Generating and sustaining motivation is vital to the maintenance of processes of change.

4.   Desistance is a difficult and often lengthy process, not a momentous 'event', and relapses are common.

5. While overcoming social problems is often insufficient on its own to promote desistance, it may be a necessary condition for further progress.

6. As people change, they need new skills and capacities appropriate for their new lifestyle, and opportunities to use them (408-409).

Most of these premises are based on empirical studies conducted by, among others, Maruna (2000), Farrall (2002, 2004), and Burnett (2004).

Other models are also present in the literature, such as the promising *Strength-Based Model* (Maruna and LeBel, 2003) and *Good Lives Model* (Ward, 2002), but they were not enough evaluated in terms of effectiveness (exception: Harkins et al, 2012) or they do move the focus from 'what works' to 'how change works' (Maruna and LeBel, 2010) and are therefore not included into this paper.

INSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT

One important principle that informs current research is that resettlement should be planned and managed early in the sentence and not left as a 'rescue job' for the probation service or other post-prison services (Maguire and Raynor, 1997). Different studies have focused on different components of imprisonment that can be associated with recidivism: moral quality of prison life (Liebling, 2004), continuity between prison and probation programs (Broome et al, 2002), prison misconduct and recidivism (French and Gendreau, 2003; Losel, 1995; Motiuk, 1991), cost-effectiveness of prison programs (Aos et al, 1999), prisoner classification and risk assessment tools (Buchanan et al, 1986; Hannah-Moffat, 2004; Nedopil, 2010), and education in prison and recidivism (Motiuk, 1991; Proctor, 1994).

In particular, it seems that staff is a critical resource for any prison intervention. As Serrin (2005) suggests, it is important to consider, for instance, staff beliefs about inmates and change (punitive attitude will reduce program effectiveness), fundamental skills (fair but firm, empathic, good inter-personal skills), and so on. Further, the perceived social distance between offenders and staff increases in offenders who consider the latter as not very involved in the relationship, while the issue of social distance may not be regarded as a problem by the community corrections officers. This difference in perception creates a gap and, eventually, mistrust between both groups (Gunnison and Helfgott, 2011). One important message that comes from research is that the most successful interventions are those based on the assumption that the offender 'controls his/her own destiny' (Taxman, 2004). As message to the offender, this is very close to the concepts of agency and hope developed in the desistance literature (Maruna and Farrall, 2003).

Based on rigorous assessment and classification tools, prisoners have to develop reintegration plans (sometimes called sentence planning, individualization of prison sentence etc) that aim at developing basic skills and build up transitional arrangements for after release (Taxman, 2004; Matt and Hentschel, 2008). According to Taxman et al, (2004), such a plan should include issues that are most important for the offender, but it should never incorporate more than three components. So far, the process or the content of the reintegration plans has not been in the focus of research; therefore an assessment of whether they are good practices or promising exercises is unfeasible (Lösel, 2001). What seems to be reasonable to assume is

that the reintegration plans rationalize the process of implementing different treatment interventions.

As for important components of prison treatment, work or vocational training are central. Seiter and Kadela (2003) identified seven evaluated programs that dealt with vocational or work training. Their conclusion was that vocational and work programs are effective in reducing recidivism and also in improving job readiness for ex-offenders. Education is another important treatment component from at least two perspectives. Firstly, it appears that the level of education is a good predictor of institutional adjustment (Proctor, 1994; Motiuk, 1991). Secondly, improvements in the educational area seem to be associated with lower recidivism after imprisonment (Porporino and Robinson, 1992). The latter observation is apparently more controversial. Seiter and Kadela (2003) for instance identified only two studies that focus on this component, and the results were not very convincing as to whether increasing education leads to reducing reoffending. They concluded that education programs increase educational achievements, but do not decrease recidivism. However, those educational programs that link a prison program with community-based resources after release seem to be promising.

PRE-RELEASE STAGE

This stage usually lasts 90 days leading up to the day of release. The aim of this stage is to help the prisoner to plan in a concrete manner for transition into the community. According to some authors (see for instance Taxman et al, 2004), this stage is characterized by intensive preparation for release, formalizing the reintegration plan and establishing solid links with the community. The core of the reintegration plan should ensure the so-called survival needs – food, shelter and legitimate sources of financial support. Apart from these welfare needs, resettlement literature also mentions other relevant targets, such as: training and employment; mental and physical health; drug and alcohol abuse; finance, benefits and debts; thinking and behavior.

An important number of studies (see Simpson and Brown, 1999; Broome, Simpson and Joe, 2002) demonstrated that when in-prison services are followed up by community-based treatment, the client outcomes are significantly improved. The same principle seems to be crucial also for the programs that run in American corrections. The Step-Down Program, for instance, was evaluated by Fretz et al, (2005) and found to be very effective in reducing re-offending for high risk offenders when prison activities were followed by post-release interventions.

Towards the same aim of promoting continuity and offender engagement, other programs use mentors or volunteers who start working with offenders while in prison and continue cooperating after release. Clancy et al, (2006) demonstrated that post-release contact with mentors in the Pathfinders (UK) was associated with lower reconviction rates than expected within one year after release (see also Lewis et al, 2003, 2007). Furthermore, mentoring should be included in a global reentry strategy for male and female offenders alike (Brown and Ross, 2010).

Case-management principles seem to be employed by more and more resettlement interventions since they support consistency, continuation and coherence (Koch, 2009; Matt, 2010). Another important advantage of this approach is that through case management the

offender develops a stable relationship with one key worker, who will navigate him/her through the community resources (Taxman, 2004; Clancy et al, 2006; Hammerschick and Krucsay, 2007; Lewis et al, 2007).

In their systematic review, Seiter and Kadela (2003) identified two pre-release programs that met the evaluation criteria. The PreStart program in Illinois led to a re-arrest rate of 40% among those who participated in the program, with 48% of re-arrests in the control group. The return to prison rate showed an even greater difference between the two groups: 12% for the treatment group and 32% for the control group (Castellano et al, 1994). The idea of the PreStart program was to provide releases referrals to social services instead of surveillance and supervision, the latest being kept for specific individuals. Another study identified by Seiter and Kadela (2003) was LeClair and Guarino-Ghezzi (1991), who demonstrated a significant difference between the offenders who participated in the program (consisting in regular temporary absences and prison leaves) and those who did not in terms of recidivism within twelve months – 11.8% of the treatment group and 29% of the control group. Finally, Seiter and Kadela (2003) also identified four halfway house programs that had been evaluated. The conclusion was that such facilities help the transition and reduce recidivism after release. All in all, these evidence-based results represent a strong message towards release programs involving scaled-transition processes between custody and community.

POST-RELEASE STAGE

As has been illustrated above, most of the resettlement programs start while the prisoner is still in prison. At the post-release stage, therefore, one of the most important challenges is to ensure the participants' engagement and continuation of contact. However, aftercare can only be effective if maintained over a longer period – according to a recent study, there is no significant difference in recidivism rates if aftercare is carried only 30 days or not at all (Kurlychek et al, 2011).

As some classical studies have shown (National Council of Social Service, 1961; Morris, 1965), short-term prisoners experience loss of integrity at the point of release as well as serious material losses, problems with employment and family support, distress with wife and children, and psychological difficulties. Studies of long-term prisoners have concluded that the problems for this category of prisoners are the same as for short-term prisoners, but to a different degree. Bank and Fairhead (1976), for instance, observed that 38% of the short-term prisoners in their study had experienced problems with accommodation compared with 14.5% of the medium and long-term prisoners.

The problems of women released from prison are mostly similar to those of men, but they are amplified by problems related to childcare, family issues and discrimination on the labour market (Hamlyn and Lewis, 2000). More recent studies have stressed that women are more likely to run into obstacles than men because of unmet mental health needs or difficulties in rejoining employment (Visher et al, 2004), or because of issues with family and children (Bergseth, 2011; McIvor, 2007, 2009). Due to their limited access to resettlement services in prison and discrimination, the problems of minorities seem to be more acute. From the evaluation of the Pathfinders it appears that involving a member of the minority among the resettlement staff increases the continuity of services (Vanstone, 2008), encouraging thus personal relationships with offenders and the work 'through the prison gate' (Lewis et al, 2007).

EMPLOYMENT

In his meta-analysis of almost 400 studies, Lipsey (1995) concluded that the single most important factor that reduces re-offending is employment. This seems to be consistent with Sampson and Laub's (1993) theory of informal social control, which argues that developing strong social bonds with a spouse and employment commitment and stability can lead to conformity with law and mainstream values. In their Campbell systematic review on community employment programs, Visher et al, (2006) found only eight studies that met the evaluation criteria. The Baltimore Living Insurance for Ex-Prisoners (LIFE) was evaluated by Mallar and Thornton (1978), who concluded that job placement and counseling intervention had no impact on arrest in the first year, but those receiving also weekly cash payment of $60 had fewer arrests in the first year than the control group. The follow-up for this project was the Transitional Aid Research Project (TARP), which took place in Texas and Georgia in 1976 and involved either unemployment insurance benefit or job placement for the experimental group. The project was evaluated by Rossi, Berk and Lenihan (1980) and Berk, Lenihan and Rossi (1980), and their overall conclusion was that unemployment benefit had an effect on increased arrests, but that there was no statistical difference between the experimental and the control group. However, the ex-prisoners who had gained a job had fewer arrests.

As to the risk factor, Zweig et al. (2011) found out that transitional job programs were more effective in targeting recidivism for high-risk ex-prisoners, which stressed the necessity of assessing needs in order to both maximize successful reentry and optimize the use of resources. As to responsivity, the type of employment needed (temporary, regular, etc.) varied also between high-frequency chronic offenders and high-frequency desisters (Van der Geest et al, 2011; Schmitz et al, 2009). By covering various dimensions of work such as the quality of work, the job stability and the differences over age, it shows that employment solutions are effective if they are adapted to individuals.

Uggen (2000) evaluated another initiative, The National Supported Work Demonstration; he concluded that the employment program was effective in reducing re-arrests among ex-offenders above the age of 26. This conclusion brings into light other studies that stress the importance of treatment readiness (Serrin, Kennedy and Mailloux, 2005) or maturation reform (Maruna, 2001). Taken as a whole, an intermediate résumé shall consider employment as an important protection factor, but not as a 'magic bullet' when used and analysed isolated from other reentry tools.

STIGMA

Petersilia (2005) found that 65% of employers would not knowingly employ ex-offenders, regardless of their offence. State legislation in many countries increasingly denies the right to certain jobs for ex-offenders after they return home. While the controversies over the right to know for the public and the right for private life for the ex-prisoner are not settled yet, there are a few legal or administrative tools that can be employed to fight against stigmatization. One 'soft solution' could involve assisting ex-prisoners to explain to the potential employer their criminal history. Resettlement programs in England and Wales include a so-called 'disclosure session' in which prisoners are trained on how to respond to the question: do you have a criminal record? Another approach, perhaps to be considered a 'hard solution', has the state protect ex-offenders and grant employers only limited access to private information.

In France, for instance, there are three types of criminal record, called *bulletins* (Herzog-Evans, 2010): Bulletin 1 contains all the convictions based on the Penal Code. Bulletin 2 contains all the convictions except suspended sentences, juvenile records, contraventions (less serious convictions). Bulletin 3 includes only custodial sentences of more than two years, except where the court has barred certain professional activities. Only the courts can access Bulletin 1. Bulletin 2 can be accessed only by the administration and public services. In general, a private employer could ask the applicant to provide a copy of their Bulletin 3. The exception to this rule is when the job involves a high degree of trust (eg in banking, child protection, etc), or when specific positions require that candidates should have a clean record. This system may not be perfect but could create a context in which ex-offenders could have a fresh start based on a new identity.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

As diZerega (2010) clearly stated, families are a natural resource for the reentry process. Families are crucial to ex-prisoners for many reasons: they can provide understanding and emotional support, they can provide financial support, and they offer housing and childcare for the incarcerated parent. Another study with an important sample (N = 6,537) showed that family visits during detention were also a protective factor towards reimprisonment (Derkzen et al, 2009). Besides, early marriage turns out to be a protective factor against recidivism in comparison with later-married offenders (Theobald and Farrington, 2011). Parallel to family, the role of friends and peers is decisive since many would-be desisters adopt tactics of 'diachronic self-control' (Shapland and Bottoms, 2011; also Forrest and Hay, 2011), which means they would avoid possible criminogenic situations, to protect themselves from negative influence.

Research showed that informal networks play a substantial role in finding employment. For example, more than 60% of the ex-prisoners interviewed by La Vigne et al, (2006) indicated that they talked to their families, relatives and friends to find a job after release. The same research showed that 58% of the respondents indicated that family support was important in avoiding returning to prison, and half of the released prisoners interviewed were relying on their families for financial support (Visher et al, 2004). Families can also play an important role in the informal social control system.

According to Hipp et al, (2010), neighbourhoods seem to play an important role in the ex-prisoner's reintegration, too. They found that the presence of more social services providers within two miles led to a lower recidivism rate. This trend was more powerful in African and Latino parolees. They also found that parolees living in communities with concentrated disadvantages have a greater recidivism rate even after controlling for individual factors. These findings resonate with the conclusion of Haines (1990) that if a prisoner returns to a context where offending is acceptable or where there are few normative controls or too little rewards, there is a greater risk that he/she will reoffend.

CONCLUSION FOR PRACTITIONERS

From the research described above we can draw some important conclusions as to what works in terms of reducing reoffending after imprisonment:

- Resettlement work should start as soon as possible after the final sentence;

- A process should be designed to ensure continuation and consistency between in-prison activities and post-release services;

- The message that a prisoner needs to receive from staff is that he/she is responsible for his/her life and that change is possible;

- Motivation and agency are important ingredients for a successful reentry;

- RNR and good lives models are complementary and provide a solid base for desisting offenders (Ward et al, 2012);

- Prison programs should focus on developing human capital (e.g. education, problem-solving skills, vocational training, drug rehabilitation etc.) with a special focus on transition mechanisms (for a quasi-experimental study with positive results, see Miller and Miller, 2010);

- Pre-release and post-release programs should continue the work done in prison and should focus more on supporting motivation and developing social capital and legitimate opportunities (eg family, social network, employment, etc.);

- Multi-modal programs for pre-release should be created in order to cover the diversity of risks, needs and responsivity levels among offenders;

- A buffering zone between in-prison and post-prison work should be established to support transition (eg halfway houses, drop-in centers, step down programs etc);

- Communities should be made aware of the risks posed by social exclusion and they should be assisted to avoid concentrated disadvantages;

- Governments should be encouraged to take a more rehabilitative approach towards ex-prisoners rather than follow neo-liberal policies that enhance social exclusion and incarceration, for example the radical changes to resettlement of short-term prisoners currently proposed by the UK Government (i.e. statutory supervision for one year after release, provided by private and/or voluntary sector bodies paid supposedly by results – for previous criticism, see Maguire et al, 2000);

- The balance between the right to know and the right to private (or a new!) life should be settled in such a way that desistance is promoted and unnecessary and unfair stigmatization is avoided.

- Families should be more involved in pre-release and after release interventions since they represent a protective factor when they are trained to get back offenders in their community.

Although some knowledge is available from sound research, the transfer of 'what works' into real-life situations is still limited (Durnescu and Haines, 2012). As has been noted, most of

the initiatives or practices are simply based on service delivery, which is a serious threat to human dignity. In researching human beings, what is important is not only the nature of the interventions, but also when they are available, where they can be accessed, what is the right dosage, what is the most appropriate delivery style, what are the associated narratives, and so on. It is a truism but true: employing a mechanistic view of human beings as 'machines' oversimplifies the social and subjective contexts in which desistance occurs, thereby undermining them.

Apart from these learning points, we can also identify some limits to state-of-art resettlement research: there are too few studies on 'what works' which tackle the issues at hand in a heuristic and comprehensive manner. Many of them are not updated and thus only partly relevant for current penal systems, since both, penal legislation and the make-up of the population concerned, are constantly subject to change, leaving previous datasets and prerequisites obsolete. Furthermore, research most often focuses on different fragments of the process and therefore fails to provide a complete and coherent perception of the whole process. Finally, there investigations are mostly conducted in Anglo-Saxon countries, and it is difficult or even impossible to find similar studies undertaken for French- or German-speaking countries; and the ones that exist are based on ambivalent or restrictive methodologies (Décarpes, 2012; Herzog-Evans, 2012; Visher et al, 2005).

POLICY PERSPECTIVES

As others have noted (Petersilia, 2004; Byrne et al, 2002; Parent, 2004), when designing and implementing a new resettlement program its initiators are not always drawing primarily from the 'what works' literature. This is not to say that this literature is completely ignored, but in practice there are only a few examples from research of programs being implemented effectively exactly as prescribed. Research should become more available and more accessible for the policy makers and practitioners (see as a good example Hucklesby and Hagley-Dickinson, 2007).

Therefore, as Visher pointed out (2006: 301), 'the time is ripe for researchers and practitioners to work together to design and test innovative, research-based reentry programs'. To build new ways forward, one will have to follow these tracks in combination:

1.   Political and penal authorities ought to launch new independent studies with a transnational dimension (Dünkel, 2005; Padfield et al, 2010), starting with already existing recidivism studies such as Wartna and Nijssen (2006).

2.   Research should explore new methodologies based not only on quasi or experimental designs, but also on realistic evaluation (Tilley, see above; evaluation catalogue of UNODC, 2008).

3.   There is a need to develop models that take into account the interactions between individuals and structures (Farrall et al, 2010, 2011).

4.   A major issue of reoffending is to be found with the practice of recall, which happens too often through technical violations. The complexity and the constraints of recall mechanisms shall be assessed in order to reestablish a fair balance between responsibility and control (see the European Journal of Probation, 2012, 4(1).

5. The need to deconstruct and open the black box of treatment effects should be assessed since we know so little about the consequences of prison programs on the reoffending processes (eg criminal behavior) on the one hand, and on the prisoner´s social situation (health, employment, family) on the other (Nieuwbeerta and Dirkzwager, 2012).

6. More research should focus on effectiveness vis-à-vis minorities (Griffiths et al, 2007), women empowerment (Heidemann et al, 2008), and juveniles (for promising practices in Germany see, for instance, Simonson et al, 2008; Walter and Fladausch-Rödel, 2008; Stelly et al, 2010), not least because women and juveniles play an decisive role, sometimes a protective one, in the criminal process of regular mainstream male adult offenders (see the importance of getting married or having a child pointed out by the desistance literature).

7. Further research must emphasize the need of political leadership at all levels (Maguire and Raynor, 2006; Heseltine et al, 2011) in order to promote reentry concepts. Governments and public authorities should advertise and support their staff and programs dedicated to reentry since their commitment will benefit a strong perception among citizens and communities.

8. Finally, new studies should underline the importance of 'who works' that is the need of a committed staff (Stanley, 2009) and no imposed resettlement strategies on reentry staff since it is contra-productive towards offenders' reintegration. Indeed, even a good resettlement program relies on the support of the actors who implement and conduct it. Staff members are effectively attained when they are enabled to participate in the decision-making about what kind of resettlement strategies are used. Without their enthusiasm and, what's more, their commitment, the program results cannot be successful, as Vennard and Heddermann have shown (2009).

Moreover, employer networks are one example of facilitating a positive outcome in reintegration (Wirth, 2006; Webster et al, 2001). As such, both institutional and informal networks contribute to positive resettlement results. The dynamic and synergy of networks might compensate for structural weaknesses encountered in the formal reentry process, which entails an appeal for networking as opposed to a very general and static institutionalization (DBH, 2010). A network analysis, we argue, would especially highlight the important role played by the community (Travis et al, 2001) and promote the strength of restorative justice-oriented reentry models (Travis, 2000). Within the network and community framework, the model we propose shall focus on the aggregate impact of incarceration and resettlement on the neighborhood (Rose and Clear, 1998). Indeed, counting on social capital, and especially collective efficacy, defined as 'the combination of trust and cohesion with shared expectations for control' (Sampson et al, 1997), this concept encompasses the public actors, the offender and his/her environment. This triangular configuration has too often been neglected in lieu of a 'tête-à-tête' between the two official parts formally subjected to the sentencing pathway (the Justice and the Criminal). We suggest that a more integrated trans-theoretical model involving a holistic and practical approach to resettlement with a focus on all these aspects is apt to improve offender transition from prison into the community. As a matter of fact, the latter shall benefit from the tools and strategies developed above. Since the community is a social actor composed of individuals and structures with specific attitudes and proceedings, the offender cannot be expected to face these configurations without assessing beforehand whether they match together or not. As treatments and programs are designed to correspond to each type of offender, and to each and every offender, reentry

strategies must rely on a triangular collaboration between penal authorities, the offender as well as the community that aims at reintegrating him/her amongst its members. For the purpose of successful resettlement, community actors shall be as systematically involved in this process as probation and social services are, at least at discourse level. What social partners in the community already do in terms of prevention (youth clubs, neighborhood assemblies, micro-local democracy) – where public services and police forces are not considered as the only solution to prevent crime anymore, other actors have some experience and expertise to share with the classical resettlement authorities, and they could similarly provide mentors, for instance, who are aware of the context in which the offender is to be released.[1]

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[1] For a broader and more practice-oriented implementation approach, see Décarpes and Durnescu, 2012.

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