Surviving in a small island state prison. Analysing prison officer support and assistance as narrated by people in prisons.

Michela Scalpello

Abstract

This paper sheds light on male Maltese people in prison and their perception of support and assistance when incarcerated. Through thematic analysis, the viewpoints, thoughts, and feelings of 39 males incarcerated at Corradino Correctional Facility (CCF), Malta's only prison, were explored in relation to programmes aimed at helping incarcerated people in their desistance journey. Many people in prison spoke of the lack of support they felt within this institution. Themes emerging from this paper suggest that relationships between people in prison and staff are not supportive of any rehabilitative ideal. Incarcerated people speak of the lack of induction, information, and support, and of being mocked when requesting information or assistance. They state that support is conditional on who they knew, including direct references to corruption.

Keywords

Prison, prison officer, support, rehabilitation, prison programmes, induction

1. Introduction

When faced with a prison sentence, the transition from freedom to captivity is an extremely desolate time (Sykes, 1958/2007), where individuals must adjust to a new situation. This new world, a "total institution" (Goffman, 1961, p. 11), is an incomprehensively different world from the one just left behind (Farley & Hopkins, 2017). Sykes (1958/2007) asserts that an awkward balance between solidarity and alienation is present within a prison setting, with support being a crucial element for survival.

As the first, and most frequent, point of contact, prison officers are at the centre of any prison regime and therefore prison life (Liebling, 2011), to the extent that they are often synonymous

with a prison and its environment (Maycock et al., 2020). A prison officer is very much defined by the role they play, even though Hay and Sparks (1991) assert that there is a lack of clear theoretical and policy-oriented research on the finer aspect of the role. For the context of this paper, the prison officer is defined in line with what England and Wales's (E&W) HM Prison and Probation Service advertise for the role: an individual with frontline duty within a prison, working to reduce reoffending and transform lives. They are the keyworkers who strive to keep the prison safe and secure (HMPPS, 2022). However, prison officers are often erroneously and solely linked to the practical role of their job (Arnold, 2016), for example unlocking people in prison, and checking locks, bolts, and bars (Scott, 2006), perhaps because of this frontline duty (Steiner & Wooldredge, 2018). Yet, prison staff are also vital for support for rehabilitation (Akoensi & Tankebe, 2020). Therefore, relationships between people in prison and prison officers should transmit auras of both power and authority, as well as trust and respect (Liebling et al., 1999), acting as a 'strength' contributing to desistance (Maruna & LeBel, 2002), essentially playing a significant role in reducing the pains of imprisonment (Tait, 2012). Indeed, Braggins and Talbot (2005), looking at the perceptions of prison officers in E&W, highlight how prison officers identify three unique functions to their role: an enforcer, a carer, and a reformer. They stress that it was usually when under pressure that officers resorted to the default 'enforcement mode'. At other times, they were eager to partake in the caring and reformative roles. Care is personalised and approached from diverse angles and intensities by different individuals, at a range from what Tait (2011) calls "true carers" (confident and secure) to "damaged" (uncaring and disinterested) officers. When officers care, a stronger level of support is felt by the inmates, leading to a better adaptation to their new environment.

1.2 Prison officers supporting people in prison: through information and positive characteristics

Toch (1977, p.16) defined support as “a concern about reliable, tangible assistance from persons and settings, and about services that facilitate self-advancement and self-improvement.” Toch (1977) further illustrates two aspects of support: social support and human support. Social support comes from a group of peers who are on the same journey, support which is found in tasks and outputs. Human support takes the form of persons who recognise another’s difficulties, and coaxes and listens as needs be. This should be someone like prison officers who should recognise the need for the inmate to “make good” (Maruna, 2001), and facilitates this.

Within each aspect of support lie two main functions: emotional support and practical support (Hobbs & Dear, 2000). Emotional support is concerned with empathy, esteem, understanding and acceptance (Cohen & Willis, 1985), perhaps demonstrated through an officer taking an interest in making a positive change (Liebling & Krarup, 1993). On the other hand, practical support is providing the resources and services necessary to either resolve any problems or to maintain equilibrium in daily life (Bailey, et al., 1994), for example through consistent regimes and access to facilities. Accessing any form of support requires an element of trust between the prisoner and prison officer; the officer is a gatekeeper, be it of resources, information or services and a prisoner’s willingness to show a need for assistance is a decisive factor. Hobbs and Dear’s (2000) interviews with people in Australian prisons revealed that they are generally reluctant to seek any form of support. If they must, they are more likely to ask for practical, rather than emotional, support. However, even if only practical support is sought, the opportunity for emotional support is created through such interactions (Hobbs & Dear, 2000).

Support is a key factor in desistance from crime, and desistance is the main aim of a prison sentence. Desistance a referral to the cessation of criminal behaviour (Bottoms, et al., 2004). However, this ‘termination’ (Laub and Sampson, 2001) from crime does not happen overnight. Rather, desistance is a process ranging from crime-free periods to the stage when normal law-

abiding behaviour can resume (Maruna, 2001). Within this progression, the importance of prison officers and any significant others in helping to motivate the individual to not reoffend is always highlighted (Vennard & Hedderman, 2009). In fact, Bottoms et al., (2004) stress that when looking retrospectively at this process of change, individuals who have greater self-responsibilisation through social contexts with supportive others, show more favourable developments. Social contexts, both within prison and outside, provide individuals with social capital, which is the "productive value of social relations" (Scrivens & Smith, p. 8), seen as an "essential" part of the desistance process (King, 2014). Benefits of social capital weaved from professional alliances, in this case prison officers, have been proven to be high (Burnett & McNeill, 2005), since prison officers can better support individual efforts to change (McNeill, et al., 2012). Albertson (2021) defines this as the "intimate relational context", where, through support and communication, individuals create their own social capital building and in tandem, a plan, with the aim of desisting. However, when people in prison are undermined, isolated, and faced with goal frustration in terms of their plans for a pro-social future, their chances at desistance are damaged (Galnander, 2020).

Since social capital within itself is very relational in existence and desistance is a very individual process, all forms of support for people in prison should take on an individualised approach, in line with recommendations set in the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of People in prison (United Nations, 1955). An individual approach is a pillar to humane and decent treatment, since it gives proper regard to the person (Liebling, 2004). Such an approach leads the way to support in the form of "respect-as-consideration" (Butler & Drake, 2007), providing clear guidelines on any social interaction in a way which is accessible for all. For example, learning difficulties are profound within the prison population (Loucks, 2007), and require strong support both to adapt to prison and strive for desistance (Saunders et al., 2013).

Thus, individualised needs should be identified at the earliest possible opportunity (Lord Bradley, 2009); but where the prison regime does not screen or cater for differences (Loukes, 2007), it is up to the frontline staff, namely the prison officers, to provide the personalised support required.

To create such ambience, a principal trait for prison officers to portray is support towards people in prison, as an essential element to rehabilitation (Liebling et al., 2005). This level of support is not predetermined: within a Dutch study using data from both prisoners and correctional staff, Beijerberen et al., (2014), conclude that the age and time in service of prison officers influenced the level of support offered due to the positive attitudes adopted by time. On the other hand, Farkas (1999) asserts that this may just be a case of "mellowing with age", whereime seems to lead officers to a stronger belief in rehabilitation, therefore more optimism towards people in prison (Lambert et al., 2009; Kifer et al., 2003). Various studies have also illustrated links between personal attributes of prison officers and the level of support provided (Beijerbergen, et. al., 2015). For example, education is a deciding factor when it came to higher levels of tolerance and understanding, since education leads to more pro-social attitudes and therefore tolerance towards diversity and out-groups (Phelan, et al., 1995). A Nigerian study, surveying 120 prison staff by Lambert and colleagues (2019) has concluded that prison officers with a higher level of education held more positive attitudes towards rehabilitation and provided more support, showing more respect to people in prison, perhaps through the focus on human dignity (Kant, 1855) brought about by acceptance through education. In fact, respect is seen as another vital characteristic of support by people in prison. Hulley, Liebling, and Crewe (2012, p.20), looked at the concept of quality of life and respect in 7 prisons in England and Wales through interviews, surveys, and observation. They describe respect as having "blurred edges, which merge into other key concepts such as honesty, fairness, trust and care". This illustrates that the characteristics leading to support are varied. They focused on persistent

themes in what inmates considered to be respect, for example being spoken to politely and treated with courtesy. Inmates in this study also stated that organisational respect was just as important, which links back to elements of practical support and ideas of consistency.

Even through different semantics, the ideologies of what people in prison regard as supportive behaviour are very similar across studies. In line with Hully and colleague's (2012) characteristic of respect, Liebling's (2005) interviews on values and prison life with incarcerated people in five establishments in E&W sheds light on how support is perceived, and what motivates individuals to ask for help. She gives examples of people in prison stating feeling happy when officers show concern and interest and are honest and trustworthy. She takes on a positive approach to concepts and values and even though recognises that it is oftentimes easier to look at values for "what they are not" (pg. 206), it is important to also see them for what they are. Vieraitis, Medrano, et al. (2018) reach similar conclusions. Through interviews, they examine how people in a Texan prison assess prison officers as being 'good' or 'bad' based on three primary characteristics: consistency, humane treatment (physical and emotional) and respectability. They conclude that 'good officers' are consistent with their attitudes and behaviour regardless of what this looked like. In this way, people in prison always knew what to expect day after day. Treating people in prison with dignity and respect demonstrating humane treatment was another characteristic of the 'good officer'. People in prison include both physical and emotional treatment in this category and speak of instances where 'bad officers' commit direct physical harm and withhold medicine, as well as failuring to respond to cries of help. In relation to emotional humane treatment, people in prison mentioned that with a 'good officer' they could have a "normal conversation, like a human being" (Vieraitis, et al., 2018, pg. 10), where the officer had encouraging words to offer, rather than trying to provoke negative reactions. Finally, inmates stated that they had no respect for

officers who engaged in any form of unethical or criminal behaviour, listing corruption, contraband and misconduct as actions that lost officers the most respect.

1.2 Small Island State prison: Malta

Malta is the tenth smallest country in the world (World Population Review, 2021). Within its 124 square miles of land area, by the end of 2020 Malta had a population of 441,543 (Worldometer n.d.), making it a small island state. In 1814 Malta was taken over as a Crown Colony under British rule yet became a Republic in 1974. Presently, Malta runs on a mixed legal system, having roots in Civil, (continental) Law, with ingrained aspects of British Common Law (Attard, 2013).

Small states such as Malta are not singled out by policy makers on their differences to other larger states (Baldacchino, 2012). Rehabilitation and resettlement on the Maltese Islands are both very under-researched areas, with the relationship between prison staff and people in prison in terms of rehabilitation even more so. Therefore, the analysis of such a vital and unexpected theme is beneficial in terms of rehabilitation and resettlement, as well as an addition to the largely absent penological aspect of the Maltese prison service. Within the researcher's experiences, research within CCF has been near impossible to conduct and arguably actively discouraged – at times plain-out refused - by those who hold power, both within the prison and outside The author has not felt supported with the research project and was made aware that authorisation for this research could be taken away at any time. This was indeed the case a year into the project when ethical issues around data arose and permissions to collect data within the prison were revoked.

Physically cut off from the rest of Europe by the Mediterranean Sea, Malta's borders have oftentimes not exclusively served as physical boundaries, but also as barriers to movement and changes in administrative practices, public and private sector actions, as well as procedures of

control (Lemaire, 2015). Whilst parts of Europe have been moving towards a rehabilitative ideal (Martufi, 2018), Maltese authorities hand-picked an ex-army personnel as the prison director[1]. With a notice stating that 'it's our job to teach fear' which was visible for all inside the prison (Delia, 2021), his tactics are not concealed. Such instances illustrate how Malta's operational timeline is stuck decades behind its European partners. It shows a crime-control model which led to a decrease in sociological research in prisons worldwide (Jewkes, 2014). However, since any kind of prison research is absent in Malta, there is less opportunity of comparing and contrasting progress and what works, keeping in line with global counterparts.

Aggravated secrecy becomes normal, as evidenced by deaths in custody. Between June 2018 and December 2020 there have been eleven deaths (at a rate of 5 people in prison per 1,000), yet no details were provided under the "confidential in nature" guise. It was only affirmed that "the absolute majority of them - about 75% - were due to natural causes" (Calleja, 2020), though when most deaths were in the 25-50 age bracket, the 'natural causes' explanation is suspiciously odd. The prison officer role demands the protection of life, safety, and security; therefore, they are at the front of preventing unnatural deaths (Ricciardelli et. al, 2020). However, if all deaths are deemed to be 'natural' then prison officers will remain untrained in mental health issues and the prevention of prisoner suicide. It was only after more suicides in prison and public backlash that, in August 2021, the Maltese government finally opened an inquiry into correctional procedures at CCF, and a summary of the board of inquiry's report was published. The report, published solely in Maltese, calls for more humane treatment in CCF, which would be more in line with the prison's 2018 mission statement which focuses on safety, security, and rehabilitation. As a way toward this goal, more extensive and continuous training should be offered to prison officers, which focuses on the psychosocial wellbeing of

[1] He was officially discharged in December 2021

incarcerated individuals in addition to security (Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, 2021).

Malta has only one prison, called Corradino Correctional Facility (CCF) at time of interviewing[2]. The prison has a total capacity of 927 individuals and as at February 2021 it was operating at 88.6% of its occupancy level (World Prison Brief, 2022). The incarceration rate in Malta is 154 people in prison per 100,000 inhabitants, with a 9.4% increase in incarceration rate between 2010 and 2020, scoring as 'very high' in terms of prison population (Aebi & Tiago, 2020). There are no official statistics looking into recidivism or reoffending rates in Malta, however, a 2016 report (Formosa Pace, 2016) states that is holds at 66.2%. Despite concerning prison numbers, the prison only had 32 non-uniformed staff within the Care and Reintegration Unit by the end of 2021 (National Audit Office, 2021). The prison officer to incarcerated individual ratio is 1:2.6, with 301 prison officers employed by the end of 2020 (Aebi & Tiago, 2020). There is no formal and systematic performance assessment for prison officers in place at CCF, and officers are only informally monitored by direct supervisors. Furthermore, although training is offered to officers, this is not compulsory, and it was revealed that during 2021 only 39% of all officers attended training. Out of those who registered, just a mere 14% attended the full course (NAO, 2021). Data for previous years was not available.

Programmes available for prisoners at CCF are also few and far between. This deficiency might stem from the Maltese Prison Regulations (S.L. 260.03) themselves since the Act does not oblige the prison to offer any opportunities to the residents. It uses language such as "may" be drawn up "in appropriate cases" (Article 3), and just "encourages" people in prison to take up any opportunity (Article 43). This is reflected within the prison regime, starting from induction. Even though individuals should have the opportunity to enrol on programmes, most individuals

[2] It is now called Correctional Services Agency

were not engaged with such programmes but were instead secured in locked divisions all day (NAO, 2021). This meant that their regime was limited both in terms of activity but also in terms of information and know-how. In fact, the only way such incarcerated people would know the regime is through a Prison Handbook which, some individuals would be given upon reception to the prison. This handbook came with several challenges, which are discussed below.

Programmes within CCF are mostly delivered by outside agencies such as the Rehabilitation in Society Malta Foundation (RISe) for community-based programmes; Caritas Malta and Agenzija Sedqa, focusing on substance abuse; and Lifelong Learning Malta and Jobsplus focusing on employment. The prison employs a small number of prison educators to deliver specific courses on a part time basis. In terms of care and reintegration programmes, internal staff consisting of 6 psychologists and 5 social workers (as at 2021) deliver the programmes, when available. However, the effectivity of these programmes cannot be determined as no official evaluations have been conducted. Officers have no active part in programme delivery other than in terms of security and monitoring of participants.

The principal goals of CCF allegedly revolve around custody, safety, health, rehabilitation, and resettlement (Home Affairs, 2020). To achieve this, CCF's motto states that the prison is *suavis ex aspero*, which translates to 'firm but gentle'. Despite its architecture following a British panopticon ideology, CCF got its name from the American usage of the phrase *correction* rather than prison. However, people in prison are still referred as 'prisoners' and to the public the facility is referred to as a 'prison', which shows that some aspects of British culture have been cherry picked, with security and "populist punitiveness" (Bottoms, 1995, p.40) taking precedence. Reports and inspections on the prison are few are far between, with only three being published for the public in recent history, the first independent one being a rather damning report on the visit conducted by The Council of Europe's CPT in 2015, which found

poor general living conditions, no complaints' procedure, insufficient healthcare services and no mental health care. In addition to the 2022 inquiry (Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, 2021), a performance review was conducted in 2021 by the Audit General. This report concluded that the prison needs more satisfactory rehabilitation initiatives, since care and re-integration are "still not reaching the entire prison population" (NAO, 2021, p.7). To reach more individuals, staff levels and competency needs to be increased.

The current study concludes that the UK's 'rehabilitative culture', where the relationship between prison staff and people in prison is the foundation of successful desistance (Mann & Fitzalan Howard, 2018), has not yet reached the island's prison.

2. Current Study. Assistance to 'make good' as perceived by people in prison.

This study explored rehabilitation and resettlement at CCF through in-depth interviews with 39 people in prison. Data was collected in 2018 under a different director to the one in position at time of writing. However, once this director resigned, the acting director was not as forthcoming. She did not approve of data collection within CCF, and due to this and some additional ethical concerns,the study had to be cut short. The rationale for the study was that, keeping in mind other factors which directly affect the recidivism rate such as crime opportunities (Clark, 2012), drug problems (Pierce et. al., 2017) and peer pressure (Maruna, 2001), recidivism rates are also reflected in the rehabilitation programs that are in place at a prison. The hypothesis was that the less successful a program, the likelier it is that an ex-offender will re-offend. Data from interviews showed both generalised passivity and a sensitivity to the negative impact of custody that left them feeling that much more disabled rather than enabled. There was the primary pain of imprisonment caused by the sentence imposed, together with secondary punishment on the prisoner's family and then tertiary punishment where the prisoner's awareness of his (self-inflicted) predicament and lack of

options and support, made them that much less able to think positively about engagement with the rehabilitative process.

The theme of support was so strong it warranted an analysis of its own. Within the open-ended interview schedules, only one question specifically asked people in prison about the help and support they are offered by the prison and prison staff; but this theme was constantly emphasised during interviews, mostly asserting a lack of support and assistance.

3. Method

A qualitative methodology was adopted using semi-structured interviews with people in prison. A constructivist paradigm (Morris, 2006) has been loosely employed since this research welcomes the philosophy that individuals construct their own meaning and understanding of the world through experience and reflection. Therefore, this study analysed the subjective viewpoints of people in prison. In line with this paradigm, the data collected hold as much weight as any literature in the area (Morris, 2006).

Acknowledging the risk of focusing on, as Lucas (1980) puts it, "asymmetrical" conceptualisations, where focusing on a 'lack of' justice seems to be the default, a comparison of what literature suggests is a supportive prison and the practices in place in CCF as discussed in the findings is illustrated in the Table 1 below. The data showed a near total absence of positive narratives of support as perceived by people in prison.

SUPPORT	A SUPPORTIVE PRISON	FINDINGS OF LACK OF SUPPORT AT CCF
	Adequate information/ assistance given	No information /assistance given

Positive staff characteristics	Negative staff characteristics
Procedural Justice	Corruption, nepotism, favouritism

Table 1: comparison of a 'supportive prison' as seen in literature and support (not) found in CCF

3.1 Data collection

3.1.1 Ethics

Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 39 males in prison. However, gaining ethical approval for prison research is notoriously difficult, bureaucratic and security focused, with many obstacles to surmount along the way (Lucic-Catic, 2011). Prior to gaining entry to CCF, permissions needed to be granted from the then director of prison, correctional manager, the permanent secretary for the Maltese Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, as well as the University of Malta's Department of Criminology and Research Ethics Committee. This task was very long-winded and trying to make organisations understand the vitality of prison research was daunting. Academics at the university opposed the study on technical grounds like sample size, which was in line with similar research. Ultimately, this study was accepted and backed up by the University of Malta as a PhD study. For various reasons relating to permissions and ethics, this backing did not last long, and the full data collection was never accomplished, however the data set collected was nonetheless vast.

3.1.2 Data collection and Interviews

During the data collection process, participants were briefed and if they chose to participate a consent form was given. This was explained verbally, and they were given time to read through. If they were happy to proceed, it was signed. Throughout the whole study, pseudonyms were used, and no recordings, voice or otherwise, were taken. Due to the well-known problems within the prison, the researcher did not feel comfortable having participant voices recorded as these would be easily recognisable. Data was documented ad verbatim by the author on a personal laptop. Participants were given a code prior to the interview, and this code was the only link between their identity and their responses. All codes were kept as a hard copy in a safe. Furthermore, at no time were any CCF officials present in any interview, or privy to any of the researcher's notes.

The interview process followed a semi-structured format and was conducted by the author in Maltese, with quotations translated to English by the author. The research gave participantsthe opportunity to be flexible and spontaneous in their replies. By being flexible, understanding of individual needs and most of all respectful, a strong rapport was established with the participants throughout the interview. As stated in one interview: "I am in prison. I used to be around bad people, but I got away with it many times. I can read people; I know what is going on in their minds. You are genuine. You are not lying to me." A very honest approach to the interviews was adopted and a dialogue was kept going. The interviewer did not push for specific replies and listened when participants went off-track to discuss their personal pains of imprisonment, even though this resulted in interviews going over their allocated hour. The emotional demands on the researcher were great. This reflects Liebling's (1999) and Jewkes (2012) reflections on the emotional burnout and stress felt when researchers are confronted with such difficult emotions and situations felt by fellow human beings. Furthermore, as Sclosser (2008) point out, the fact that the interviewer was not uniformed, or part of the prison

system helped establish this neutral rapport since no affiliation with the state was felt. This generated the real symbolic value (Stevens, 2013) which resulted in the theme of support, or lack of.

3.1.3 Participants

This study had 39 male participants. Participation criteria included a prison sentence of between 1 and 4 years. Their offence was not taken into consideration in any way, and no prisoner was included or excluded on account of their index offense. No personal data, like age or nationality was collected. This was omitted for two reasons. The aims of the study were focused on more personal experiences and opportunities available to the individual and not subject to categorisations such as age, since desistance is focused on personal attitudes, narratives and identities which are separate from time and space, considering the right conditions are provided. Secondly, since due to the small population and high recidivism rate in the country the author was concerned that too much personal data would be an unnecessary ethical risk.

The participant criteria therefore were established because it was vital for the study that people in prison had a good recollection of their induction process, but also be able to attend any education or other prison programmes in preparation for their release. Therefore, the sentence had to be long enough for people in prison to be eligible for educational programmes, yet short enough for them to be preparing for release. On this reasoning, a sentence length of 1 to 4 years was established.

At the time of data collection, the total number of inmates at CCF was 587. Out of those, around 131 fit the criteria, and 39 were recruited as participants. This provided a sample of 30% of those eligible.

The study used a convenience and snowball sampling since all those within the given criteria who are willing to participate, were interviewed. Participants were mainly recruited through word-of-mouth. People in prison are not often given the opportunity to participate in research (Charles, et al., 2016) therefore, initially the study was seen as suspicious, and individuals assumed it was 'a trap'. The researcher was not allowed on the prison divisions but was located within a safe space within the prison, usually the psychologists' room, and a designated officer who worked in the wellbeing team would ask individuals within the wing if they would like to participate. Curiosity got the better of some individuals who then visited the researcher to ask for more information. If they did want to participate, then they could stay to participate. No officer was ever present during the initiation or interview process.

3.2 Thematic Analysis

Due to its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis was the primary method of analysis. It allows for rich and detailed data (Braun & Clarke, 2015) which acknowledges the complexity of prison research. Data was analysed in a semi-inductive manner where themes established are derived directly from raw data. After each set of interviews was concluded, all data was thematically coded and analysed.

3.4 Limitations

This study looks at the lived experiences of male people in prison at CCF and therefore did not feature any females. Women could not be included within the male sample since women naturally have needs that differ from those of men; most notably the effect that prison has on women when compared to their male counterparts (Scott & Hodd, 2010; Blackburn, Pfeffer & Harris, 2016). This study does not employ what feminist and criminologist Meda Chesney-

Lind (2006) dubbed 'equality with a vengeance' and will therefore focus exclusively on the male population so as not to generalise in any way.

Furthermore, Earle (2014) makes a distinction within penological studies between 'serving time' and 'spending time' in prison. The author's prison experience can never be the lived experience of the people in prison. Therefore, the conclusions reached within this study are solely the interpretation of the researcher and are liable to misunderstandings and miscommunication. The researcher did, however, ensure that the interview questions were not leading and that the methodology and data collection were rigorous. Furthermore, the interviewer confirmed facts and narrations by paraphrasing, when necessary, to mitigate misinterpretation as much as possible, and field notes were always added to the ad verbatim transcript. Since the themes for the research stemmed from the data, confirmation bias was also limited since at time of data collection, the work was a *tabula rasa* with no predetermined hypothesis on the themes of support.

1. Results

Participants housed at CCF did not view prison staff as being supportive; and their responses were significantly opposed to what the literature described as supportive. Using Tait's (2011) typology to care, prison officers within CCF seemed to shift between the 'conflicted' care group who express little empathy but expect a lot out of the people in prison, only trying to truly support those 'deserving' people, and the 'damaged' group. This group have given up on the care factor of their role, perhaps due to severe traumas they have experienced on the job. Interestingly, these findings are more in line with Hobbs and Dear's (2000) study with 187 people in prison who claimed that they would not seek any form of support from prison officers, than it does with any vision of a healthy and supporting prison. When speaking of support, and what it means to them, a link was made between feeling supported and being shown dignity

and respect. Courage and motivation were also basic forms of support as perceived by people in prison, even though such behaviours were very rarely experienced at CCF. Findings as to what 'support' behind bars is seen as strongly mirrored Liebling (2005)'s conclusions, however, unlike Liebling (2005), this was mostly narrated in an asymmetrical manner. For example, as explained by Lawrence:

> You would find some officers who respect you, but basically that's all they can do. You don't get much else out of them. […] all he can do is give you courage, telling you that life goes on and that this sentence is over one day, they cannot really give you more than that.

This bleak narrative seemed to take root from their induction into prison, throughout their sentence. Participants in this study claimed that no information about how the prison is run in terms of rules or regimes were provided to them at any time during their sentence. As explained by Mark and Martin:

> Mark: You enter the door, a search is done, you are taken upstairs, written into the system, you go back downstairs, and you are told in which division you're going to be put in. You are thrown in there and that is it. You are locked in the cell and at some point, a doctor would visit - because one doctor for 600 people is not always available. He is on call. And does not even understand Maltese!
>
> Martin: Nobody tells you nothing, what's right, what's wrong. Not even, for example, when the visits are, when my wife can come visit, my parents… what I can have in here, what I cannot. They'll only tell you when their back is against the wall. It's like having a dog in a kennel home all on his own.

1.1 The Green Book

As part of their 'induction' process, people in prison at CCF are purportedly given a handbook. Referred to quite bluntly as 'il-ktieb l-aħdar' ('the green book'), this pamphlet is The Prisoner's Handbook. It is a 10-page reference book, with 5 pages written in Maltese and the other 5 pages translated to English. The book aims to provide the new intake to prison with all the necessary information about the prison regimes, and the dos and don'ts of the facility. However, most

people in prison said that they were not given a copy of the handbook. In a closed and understaffed institution, such a practice of not giving individualised attention to new people would inadvertently leave them feeling lost, confused, and angry, increasing any mental health problems which peak at entry (Dean and Korobanova, 2017).

As narrated by the people in prison:

> Matthias: They had to give me a book, about regulations and the likes but nobody gave it to me. Everything was done by observation. Like a chicken.
>
> Ben: They didn't give me anything. I got the book after I had been in here for a good year and a half *laughs*, because there was [nickname] and he fought for it here, he wanted the old one though. Because that was a better version, before they fixed it.

Prisons who were given a copy of the book stressed that they did not find it helpful. One prisoner explicitly said he could not make sense of it, and another stated that all the book alleges is based in 'fiction', as none of it really happens anyway.

> Manuel: They did tell me something, and also gave me a book. But it is full of lies because things don't happen. Everything is down to preferences - for example because I know someone, I'll get something.
>
> Henry: They have given me a book, but I just discarded it as I cannot read.
>
> Paul: I was given a small book but it wasn't of any help and it wasn't organised at all. The other people in prison were of more help to me.

The author acquired a copy of this book, and regrettably, the reason why the people in prison did not find it effective became very understandable. The book is printed on glossy paper in a very small font, which makes it very challenging to read, especially if individuals had any learning or reading difficulties. As stated by participants, this book does not take into consideration any learning disabilities, or the fact that most people in prison do not have a high level of education. The wording and sentence structure used in the handbook is complex. Offering a one-size fits all handbook, which is fundamentally aimed at those with a higher literacy level gives credence to participants' statements that the prison does not cater for the

educational differences within the prisoner population. Arguably those who most needed help were the most are deprived of basic information. Equity did not seem to matter within CCF, as people in prison who could not read were still expected to get to know the regime through this pamphlet. More concerningly, officers did not seem to know if people in prison needed further assistance in terms of literacy and learning difficulties, even though the general prisoner comes from a lower educational background. Nor did they seem inclined to inquire. Without the individual needs-based knowledge, the officers will not provide individual support to individual needs (Bosick et. al., 2015), which meant that (at best) services were not tailored towards the individuals but focused solely on what is available at the time. People in prison' narratives around this 'green book' set the scene for what they experienced later. In addition, there was no evidence of prisoner assessment and sentence planning.

4.1 Negative staff characteristics: Distance between people in prison and prison officers

Even though people in prison did not have the necessary information needed to make sense of their surroundings, or for those who were accustomed to the environment to move forward towards rehabilitation, they were still reluctant to approach officers for fear of being mocked, illustrating a severe lack of emotional support and trust. People in prison claimed that prison officers were actively counterproductive to any form to rehabilitation and not susceptible to being approached, illustrating what participants in Vieraitis and colleagues' (2018) study saw as a 'bad officer':

> Eman: I have nowhere to go when I'm out, but I won't ask them because they'll take the piss right in my face.
>
> Alfred: The officer is so fed up, more than I am, that he must berate someone. Even if I say, 'thank you', they think I am taking the piss.

Liebling (2004) notes that the way authority is exercised has a profound impact on the totality of the prison experience. People at CCF felt that authority was imposed on them in a very mocking and sarcastic manner, which suggests that officers tend to resort to coercion and fear, using tactics found in cultures of violence (Scraton et. al., 1991), rather than attempt gaining respect through procedural justice. People in prison felt that they would rather risk homelessness when released than face up to the officers' sarcastic and hurtful comments. Within such cultures, obedience is secured through threat of, or actual use of, legal or illegal sanctions, for example isolation or neglect, both aspects which are clear from respondents. This use of force goes against cultures of support, and as argued by Kaufmann (1988), is not just inefficient but also counterproductive.

People in prison pointed to the absence of help, and harrowingly stated that the officers are only there because it is their job, a clear jab at the face-value practical role prison officers hold (Arnold, 2016):

> Oliver: Listen, the officer is only here as a job, he does his work by spending the day in here, but he doesn't do anything. He won't help you. Maybe one out of fifty you'll find someone who's good, who would try to enlighten me.
>
> Gorg: There is no help whatsoever here. I tell them [officers] - you are just here to get paid. There is no help. This attitude is ridiculous [...] [They're here] just for the number, no help at all. There are some good officers who respect you, but they cannot do much else.
>
> Manuel: Do you know what the role of the officers here is? Just to open and close doors. There is no interaction. The majority of them, they look down on you. They have to make it clear that they're the officer and you're the prisoner.

Participants clearly argued that the basic role of the prison officer was that of 'opening and closing doors'. They did not see officers as being more than "street-level bureaucrats" (Lipsky, 1980), responsible only for policy implementation without interaction or care. Such actions confirm Scott's (2006) finding that most prison officers do not join the service to support people. Rather, the reasons are more punitive and disciplinary, focusing on security,

supervision, and policing, where personal authority is dominating. When officers prioritise prison security within the prison regimes, a constant monitoring to maintain static and dynamic security is deemed to be essential (Arnold, 2016; Liebling, 2011). Therefore, time for other more rehabilitative and 'caring' aspects of their role becomes reduced or absent.

Despite seemingly withdrawing from their duties, participants stated that the officers expect them to see their officer status as being superior, recognise and accept this, and treat them with respect (Sykes & Brent, 1983), a form of prisoner deference which seems to be vital for prison officer self-esteem. However, people in prison also state that this respect is not a two-way street; officers expect reverence but would not show respect back, illustrating the absence of procedural justice.

This leads to inmates expressing indifference to the officers as being unworthy of being granted respect:

> Mark: *shrugs* They don't affect me at all. He's a person like me, just wearing a uniform. I don't give him the time of day. I call him 'sir' because I have to. Otherwise…
>
> Hubert: Eh, to be honest? I'll tell you I think they're overrated you know. I truly think – and don't take offence to that – but they're overrated.

4.1.1. Categorising officers

Akin to the way that Vieraitis and colleagues' (2018)'s participants categorised officers as 'good' or 'bad', people in prison grouped prison officers into two categories – 'l-antiki' (the 'old ones', i.e., those who have been part of the prison service for a long time) and il- ġodda (the newer recruits). However, there were mixed feelings regarding if it was the 'older' officers or the new recruits who offered the most help and support. The general view of people in prison was that the longer an officer has been exposed to the harsh prison conditions, the less empathy and aptitude to help they showed, which is contrary to the idea of 'mellowing with age' (Farkas,

1999). People in prison assert that the officers who had been working at the prison the longest, had the worst attitude, and passed this negativity and lack of empathy on to any new recruits:

> Philip: Officers, especially the 'old' ones, they have a very bad attitude. Then what happens? The 'old' ones ruin the new ones.

This mirrors conclusions on studies on stress, burnout, and prison staff, for example Gray-Stanley and Muramatsu (2011), who, among others, state that those officers who feel that they have no autonomy might be at a greater risk for burnout. Adding several years of occupational and environmental stressors to their daily lives would result in a heightened stress level (Andrews & Bonta, 2010).

At the other end of the career spectrum, the minority participants believed that new prison officers had little to offer, not least because of their demeanour:

> Charlie: The new recruits have practically no idea… if it weren't for the fact that their hands are where they are, and their feet are where they are, they wouldn't even walk and move. The way they talk is uneducated 'hey cow, hey dickhead,' their swearing never ceases, 24 hours. I do not want to sound harsh, but they can drop dead.
>
> Vincent: The new ones are the worst because they try to show that they are… superior, you know? There are some 21, 20, 18-year-olds… and you need to call him 'sir'. And he will correct you if you don't call him so!

Be their old-timers or new recruits, participants stated that high level training and education is absent for all officers, despite the knowledge that education makes a better officer.

> Martin: The officers didn't have the proper training to handle frustration. It usually ended up 'fuck you then' and people running everywhere.
>
> Mark: I don't really think they get the real training of being an officer. I say training but I mean they're not informed enough.
>
> Malcolm: I notice that those who do not show respect do not do it on purpose, they do it without a thought because they are uneducated people. Because there are many like that here. There are some who, goddammit, cannot even read and write properly. When you lack education, my attitude is like someone from the fields. Stupid we'd call him.

Literature has shown that education, empathy, and support go together (Phelan, et al., 1995), however, education is also a means towards a less corrupt environment (Komalasari & Saripudin, 2015), which is another negative aspect perceived as being contrary to support.

4.2 Corruption, nepotism, and favouritism

Rather than respecting officers through procedural justice, people in prison thought that receiving support was only conditional on 'knowing the right people', including nepotism and favours. Participants did not feel any respect, fairness and equality as would be expected from any form of procedural justice. Instead, responses were couched in terms of having the right contacts, with some framing this as institutionalised corruption:

> Paul: Nobody knows you and no one gives a shit about you. Unless you know some people.
>
> John: I believe that all the programmes that exist are gimmicks, offered only to those they want to offer them to because in here it's who you are and who you know here really.
>
> Vincent: Corruption is considerable here, big big big. For example, it would be my turn for a programme, there would be someone who knows someone, and he goes first. Only ministers can help you.

Some people in prison were complicit and saw no shame in 'knowing someone' and using nepotism as a feature of prison life to be exploited:

> Aaron: I went in and had already known people who work at the prison, and they told me how it works. In fact, as soon as I went in, they are supposed to lock you in so that the doctor can visit the day after and one [officer] and came and told me 'come for coffee'. I already knew the prison system and all, for the first six months you're supposed to stay in the division and after 15 days I was working in prison.

People in prison stated that by 'knowing someone' then you are duty-bound to get support, mirroring similar actions within the Maltese society. Maltese culture is deeply entrenched in politics, so much so that political loyalties are rooted in both social and family contexts (Hirczy,

1995). Favours are granted in a very Biblical manner, favours which some might refer to as comparable to a Faustian pact. Aaron's experience did not come as a surprise; he is a well-known individual with a family history of loyalties to the government, and in the same way that the family used their connections in society, so too did Aaron behind bars.

Such discriminatory behaviour by prison officers is wholly at odds with fair and transparent treatment. Such favouritism and nepotism are challenging to identify, investigate and counter, yet individuals who are not part of the 'favourite' group continuously feel like they are receiving second class treatment and less support and assistance than others (Edgar & Tsintsadze, 2017).

Moreover, people in prison insisted that the officers were more concerned with their own agendas then supporting the people in prison and giving them time and assistance. They narrate that they get away with it because they 'know the right people':

> Mark: A senior officer told [prisoner A] to beat up [prisoner B], because [prisoner B] stole his mother's handbag. Nothing happened to the officer. Obviously.
>
> Saviour: Nobody helps here, it's too political. There is no coordination or cooperation between anyone, even to the detriment of the people in prison.

Even though the practice of "peacekeeping" (Liebling & Price, 2002, p.2), whereby officers utilise their power though various negotiations, such as in this case, giving extra privileges, rewards, and personal authority to 'buy' compliance, is very clear within CCF that officers are operating above the rule of law. However, within the Maltese prison, it is not just a case of compliance. A clear aura of corruption is felt, where privileges are reserved for those who are 'with us' (magħna: 'in our club'). This exclusive club is joined by being a strong supporter of a particular political party, at time of writing the Labour government, or by knowing the right people in power. Just as privileges can be awarded, officers, as "caretakers of punishment" could resort to the other end of the spectrum, were extra-legal discretionary and informal

punishments are given (Scott, 2006). A foreign national prisoner explicitly stated that is can take a very serious take at CCF:

> Jan: X, the guy responsible for prison records, hinders people's lives. He always say he make a mistake, [inputted the] wrong release date, he always get away with it.

Therefore, albeit strong literature clearly illustrating what a fair, supportive and healthy prison looks like, CCF does not follow suit, instead creating its own micro-society mirroring the greater society.

2. Conclusions and Recommendations

Most inmates pointed to a lack of support from uniformed prison staff at the point-of-entry to prison, with many thinking they were treated with indifference or contempt; and where there was support, this came in the form of what might be called 'political patronage' (or corruption) rather than meeting the people in prison's right of access to information and sentence planning. The uniformed officer was not seen by people in prison in a flattering light. Crewe (2012) rightly observes that uniformed staff find themselves in the middle of the prison hierarchy, cruelly caught between management and incarcerated individuals, leaving them unloved by the latter and unsupported by management. In this situation, the likelihood is that mistrust and suspicion and lack of helpfulness will consolidate and deepen. The problem may not lie in the supposed immoral character of prisoners or the perceived brutishness of the prison officer, but in the absence of sound management – with top-down, enabling mechanisms that ensure safe fulfilling roles for prison staff, together with a proper regard for people in prison and meeting their needs for rehabilitation, as required by law. This lack of management at CCF has been reported by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) in their 2015 report:

> 'However, during the September 2015 visit, the CPT's delegation once again observed a lack of established management and the absence of a clear

> operational strategy for CFA. This had a negative impact in a variety of fields.'

Inmates seemed to understand that support whilst incarcerated is not uniform and automatically given by CCF. Furthermore, desistance is difficult to achieve. It is not a sole event and relapses are common. What helps offenders stay on track is motivation and support, both areas meant to encourage them to make better use of what is available to them. Despite this, a good number of people in prison felt that this area of motivation is lacking from the prison. Moreover, the prison officers do not seem to encourage the inmates to get the necessary help they need.

As Murdock (2020) states: 'Anything goes in Malta, from murder to money laundering to drink driving. As long as you're connected to the right people, you will never be held accountable.' This impeccably sums up the prison situation on the island. Nobody seems to be held accountable for the dire conditions in CCF, or for the lack of support and solid rehabilitative programmes.

The results presented in this paper have illustrated that a certain change is vital within the prison and its administration for inmates to feel more supported within their sentence. This support will give them a better chance at 'making good', therefore decreasing re-offending, recidivism and potential victims.

Based on the results, the author recommends that:

1.More information should be provided to inmates, especially during their induction period This could take the form of one-to-one information sessions, or, ideally, through an induction unit. An induction unit would provide two strands of information sources – official information provided by prison staff, and peer support. An induction unit would alleviate the stress of the complete change in environment, since induction units would be less intimidating when compared to standard prison landings (Jewkes, 2016). Induction units are only a temporary

accommodation and individuals who have settled in and collated the required information are moved to the general divisions. In an evaluation of three first night centres in E&W, Jacobson and colleagues (2007) reveal that people who were newly sentenced to prison emphasise five factors effecting how they settled into their new environment: peer relations; prison officer attitudes; first night environment; healthcare information; and prison information. They stated that being given too much information all at once within a short period of time added to their feeling of anxiety and confusion, which highlights the need for a slower paced and longer-term unit to allow new people in prison to acclimatise. As general good practice into induction units, Liebling and colleagues (2005) emphasise that such spaces should address feelings of safety, be well structured and delivered by trained and motivated staff, focus on identifying and meeting needs and have very good access to information within a structured routine, including support from both staff and peers. Furthermore, The Penal Reform International's (2001) Making Standards Work, state that everyone should be given written information about such regulations, disciplinary requirements, and complaint procedure of the institution. It also stresses the importance of knowing the channels to go through to collect further information when needed. This is in adherence to Rule 30 of the European Prison Rules (Council of Europe, 2006) which stresses the importance that all information pertaining to rights and duties are clearly communicated to all people in prison. This would alleviate some of the uncertainties and extreme stress which results from the transition from freedom to captivity.

2.Within this induction unit a sentence plan, which is a preliminary plan for managing and monitoring individual needs, should be drafted for each person. Preliminary tests (focusing on education, mental health, and criminogenic needs) should be offered to determine individual needs. Based on this, a strong set of goals should be established with the individual, to be completed during their time in prison. There are two aims to this: the reduction of reoffending and the resettlement back into society. In theory, E&W's National Offender Management

Service, in PSI 19/2014 give strong instructions on how a sentence plan should be composed. It states that the plan should clearly define the outcomes, the activities and how these will be delivered, what is expected of the individual and who will have overall responsibility for the continued review of the plan. Within each area, the person in prison has an active involvement so that they are kept motivated and on track. Furthermore, it is vital that this plan is reviewed and, if necessary amended, throughout the sentence. With such clear tasks in place, full support is provided to the individual and there is a clear path to desistance to follow. A requirement for this is found within the Laws of Malta. Article 11(a) of the Prison Regulations Act (1995)[3] states that soon after admission, a report on the background of the prisoner should be compiled. Article 11(b) requires a 'suitable training programme in preparation for ultimate release' to be drawn up for people in prison with longer sentences; and this should be done jointly between people in prison and officials. The introduction of the Restorative Justice Act[4] in 2012 brought sentence and care planning to the fore. As expected, for such high-level reports, tasks, and evaluations to be in place, an equally large and motivated workforce needs to be present. This is not the case at CCF, and at the time of data collection sentence planning was deemed to be ineffective, even absent. Data for that period was not kept and shared by prison officials, however, the number of staff recruited was lower than the 11 non-uniformed and 301 uniformed staff (Aebi & Tiago, 2020) employed at time of writing. Yet what is seen as best practice in terms of prison staffing is quite elusive. The European Prison Rules (Council of Europe, 2006), Rule 89 for example, only speaks of external staff, requesting that "as far as possible, the staff shall include a sufficient number of specialists", however this "sufficient" number is left open to interpretation. Despite this, CCF was clearly understaffed since the current staff cannot provide adequate care. In relation to such understaffing, The Prison Officer Association in England and Wales stated that one officer per 3.6 people in prison led to "poor

[3] http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=9674&l=1

[4] http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=11813&l=1

living conditions and fewer opportunities for rehabilitation" (Foresight, 2019). Such low prison staff numbers would mean fewer opportunities for sentence plans since staff would need to focus their time on 'getting by', by targeting the practical aspects of the job as opposed to the 'personal officer' role. This low number of prison staff is very similar to the situation within CCF at data collection, therefore similar results were expected.

When considering that the numbers for wellbeing staff were even lower than prison officers, with less than one non-uniformed staff member per 100 prisoners, it is not surprising that a thorough sentence plan was not available for everyone. This deficit at CCF was also commented on by the European CPT delegation on their visit to Malta in 2015 (Council of Europe, 2016), who noted that these plans were only compiled for people in prison applying for parole. Individuals had no active involvement in their sentence plan, and a copy of this plan was not provided. The CPT was due to revisit Malta in 2020, however this has not happened. Yet, the importance of having a clear sentence plan, drafted *with* the prisoner cannot be stressed enough.

3.Offering a simple and structured handbook for people in prison is vital and, with the right approach, quite simple to achieve. The Prison Reform Trust, a charity in E&W offer some exceptional information sheets and handbooks aimed at people in prison on several different circumstances they might be faced with. They are simple and concise to read, within a very organised framework. Rather than printed on glossy paper with a very small print, a prison handbook should be graphic and written in large print, in simple language. It should give basic information, for example what a normal day in prison looks like, as well as information about education programmes and other activities the people in prison can participate in. More importantly, it offers the prisoner advice on who to talk to should they need further information. In this way, the prisoner is never left stranded.

4.More staff training is essential. This should move away from the sole aspect of security and into rehabilitation, to abide by Rule 81 of the European Prison Rules (2006) which states that prison staff should have the opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills, including any specialised training. Substantial literature (e.g., Kois et al., 2020 in the US; Lavoie, et al., 2006 in Canada) has pointed to the need for more specialist training in health and well-being related aspects of the job, since such training aimed specifically at such specific needs have led to more positive perceptions and therefore support. Despite this, Musselwhite and colleagues (2005) revealed that officers in the UK were not confident with dealing with individuals with mental health issues. This seems to be the case in Malta. Furthermore, more training on co-morbidity, and risk to life, within closed institutions and suicide prevention training are also essential. One training programme, "Skills-based Training On Risk Management" (STORM), aimed at giving staff the essential skills needed to assess and manage suicide risks. When evaluated by Hayes and colleagues (2008), 182 participants over five prisons stated that such training has had a positive impact on their attitudes, knowledge and confidence when dealing with suicide prevention. However, as it stands, the official job description of a correctional officer in Malta does not mention any form of positive or active relationship focusing on such vital communication between officer and prisoner, nor does it mention any formal training. Instead, terms such as 'guarding', 'inspecting', 'observing' and 'escorting' are used (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2017). This does not indicate the two-way communication channel between staff and incarcerated individuals necessary to allow for a high level of cooperation and a successful sentence plan. It does not take account of what Liebling, Price and Elliott (1999) call the 'peacekeeping' role officers hold, which is achieved through dialogue between staff and people in prison. It could be argued that if this positive relationship is not even mentioned on something as basic as a role descriptor, then there is little hope that it will be a priority in training. If training is based on the above security-focused characteristics, then the vicious

circle of security rather than communication and rehabilitation is put in force. Training within CCF should not consist of solely in-house training, mentioned (or not) on any job specification, but also as part of personal development, through a collaborate with outside agencies, such as Sedqa, Caritas and the University of Malta, so that through a multi-agency approach more expertise and specialist training is provided. A core change needs to be present within the role of prison officers, and this needs to be reflected from the introduction and assessment of the role itself.

Concluding remarks: Although this study was conducted within a small island state, the grander penological sphere has as many similarities as it might have differences. Therefore, insights from the participants and analysis of this study could be applicable to other prison environments.

References

Aebi, M.F., & Tiago, M.M. (2020). *Space I – 2020. Prison Populations*. Council of Europe.

Akoensi, T.D., & Tankebe, J. (2020) Prison officer self-legitimacy and support for rehabilitation in Ghana. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 47*(1), 22–38.

Albertson, K. (2021). *Social capital building supporting the desistance process.* HM Inspectorate of Probation Academic Insights. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.

Andrews, D.A., & Bonta, J. (2010) Viewing offender assessment and rehabilitation through the lens of the risk-needs-responsivity model. In F. McNeil P. Raynor & C. Trotter (Eds.), *Offender Supervision: New Directions in Theory, Research and Practice*. Willan Publishing.

Arnold, H. (2016) The prison officer. In: Y. Jewkes, B. Crewe & J. Bennett (Eds.), *Handbook on Prisons*. (pp. 265–283). Routledge.

Attard, E (2007). *Il- ħabs: L-istorja tal- ħabsijiet f'Malta (1800-2000).* Malta: P.E.G. Ltd.

Bailey, D., Blasco, & Simeonsson, R. (1992). Needs expressed by mothers and fathers of young children with disabilities. *American Journal of Mental Reterdation, 97*(1), 1-10.

Baldacchino, G. (2012) Meeting the tests of time: Small states in the 21st Century. *Current Issues in Comparative Education, 15*(1), 14-25.

Bastow, S. (2014) Transforming rehabilitation: Evolution not revolution. *Criminal Justice Matters, 97*(1), 10-11.

Beijersbergen, K., Dirkzwager, A., Molleman, T., van der Laan, P., & Nieuwbeerta, P. (2015). Procedural justice in prison: The importance of staff characteristics. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology, 59*(4), 337-358.

Bosick, S.J., Bersani, B.E., & Farrington, D.P. (2015) Relating clusters of adolescent problems to adult criminal trajectories: a person-centered, prospective approach. *Journal of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology, 1*, 169–188.

Bottoms, A.E. (1995) The philosophy and politics of punishment and sentencing' in C. Clarkson & R. Morgan (Esds.), *The politics of sentencing reform.* Clarendon Press.

Bottoms, A., Shapland, J., Costello, A., Holmes, D., & Muir, G. (2004). Towards desistance: Theoretical underpinnings for an empirical study. *The Howard Journal, 43*(4), 368-389.

Braggins, J., & Talbot, J. (2005) *Wings of Learning: the role of the prison officer in supporting prisoner education.* The Centre for Crime and Justice Studies.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2008) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2): 77-101.

Butler, M., & Drake, D. (2007). Reconsidering respect: Its role in Her Majesty's Prison Service. *The Howard Journal, 46*(2), 115-127.

Burnett, R., & McNeill, F. (2005). The place of the officer-offender relationship in assisting offenders to desist from crime. *Probation Journal, 52*(3), 221-242.

Calleja, C. (2020) AG will not give details on prison deaths inquiries. The inquiries are 'confidential in nature'. *Times of Malta.* https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/ag-will-not-give-details-on-prison-deaths-inquiries.836246

Clark, R. (2012). Opportunity makes the thief. Really? And so what? *Crime Science, 1*(3), 1-9.

Charles, A., Rid, A., Davies, H., & Draper, H. (2016). Prisoners as research participants: current practice and attitudes in the UK. *Journal of Medical Ethics, 42,* 246-252.

Cohen,S., & Willis, T. (1985). Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin, 98*(2), 310-357.

Council of Europe (2016). Report to the Maltese Government on the visit to Malta carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 3 to 10 September 2015. Report, CPT, CPT/Inf (2016) 25.

Crawley, E. (2006). *Doing Prison Work. The Public and Private Lives of Prison Officers.* Willan Publishing.

Crewe, B. (2011). Soft power in prison: Implications for staff -prisoner relationships, liberty and legitimacy. *European Journal of Criminology, 8*(6), 455–468.

Crewe, B. (2012). *The Prisoner Society. Power, Adaptation, and Social Life in an English prison.* Oxford University Press.

Dean, K. & Korobanova, D. (2017). Brief mental health screening of prison entrants: psychiatric history versus symptom screening for the prediction of in-prison outcomes. *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology,* 1-12.

Dear, G., Beers, K., Dastyar, G., Hall, F., Kordanovski, B., & Pritchard, E. (2002) People in prison' willingness to approach prison officers for support*, Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 34(*4), 33-46.

Delia, J. (2021). 'It's our job to teach fear': prison notice signed by director revealed. *Times of Malta.*

Earle, R. (2018). Being inside: Masculine imaginaries, prison interiors. In M. Maycock & K. Hunt (Eds.), *New perspectives on prison masculinities* (pp. 43-64.) Palgrave.

Edgar, K., & Tsintsadze, K. (2015). *Tackling discrimination in prison: Still not a fair response.* Prison Reform Trust.

Elisha, E., Shoham, E., Hasisi, B., & Weisburd, D. (2017). For people in prison, "work works": Qualitative findings from an Israeli program. *The Prison Journal, 97*(3): 342-363.

Elliott, L. (2007). Security, without care: Challenges for restorative values in prison. *Contemporary Justice Review: Issues in Criminal, Social, and Restorative Justice, 10*(2), 193-208.

Farkas, M. A. (1999). Correctional officer attitudes toward inmates and working with inmates in a "get tough" era. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 27*, 495-506.

Fitzalan Howard, F., & Wakeling, H. (2019). Prisoner and staff perceptions of procedural jutice in English and Welsh prisons. *HM Prison & Probation Service, Analytical Summary 2019.* HMPPS.

Foresight (2019, August 12). *Prisons in crisis: The effect of staff shortages on prison conditions.* https://www.foresight.expert/news/prisons-in-crisis-the-effect-of-staff-shortages-on-prison-conditions

Formosa, S. (2021) *CCF. Prison and People in prison*. http://crimemalta.com/ccf.html.

Galnander, R. (2020). 'Shark in the fish tank': Secrets and stigma in relational desistance from crime. *The British Journal of Criminology, 60*(5), 1302-1319.

Goffman, E. (1990). *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other People in prison.* New York: Doubleday.

Gray-Stanley, J.A., & Muramatsu, N. (2011). Work stress, burnout, and social and personal resources among direct care worker. *Research in Developmental Disabilities, 32*, 1065-1074.

Hayes, A. J., Shaw, J. J., Lever-Green, G., Parker, D., & Gask, L. (2008). Improvements to suicide prevention training for prison staff in England and Wales. *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior, 38*(6), 708–713.

Hirczy, W. (1995). Explaining near-universal turnout: The case of Malta. *European Journal of Political Research, 27*(2): 12-272.

Hay, W., & Sparks, R. (1991). What is a prison officer? *Prison Service Journal,* Spring, 2-7.

HM Prison and Probation Service (2022). *Life as a Prison Officer.* https://prisonandprobationjobs.gov.uk/prison-officer/life-as-a-prison-officer/

Hobbs, G., & Dear, G., (2000). People in prison' perception of prison officers as sources of support. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 31*(12), 127-142.

Home Affairs (2020). Correctional Services Agency. Available at: https://homeaffairs.gov.mt/en/MHAS-Departments/Correctional-Division/Pages/CCF.aspx (accessed 3 December 2020).

Homles, D. (2020). *From a Cage, on a Rock, in a Puddle… A Memoire from Malta's Prison*. Lovin' Malta.

Hulley, S., Liebling, A., & Crewe, B. (2012). Respect in prisons: People in prison' experiences of respect in public and private sector prisons. *Criminology and Criminal Justice, 12*(1), 3–23.

Jacobson, J., Edgar, K., & Loucks, N. (2007). *There when you need them most: PACT's first night in custody service.* Prison Reform Trust.

Jewkes, Y. (2012). Autoethnography and emotion as intellectual resources: Doing prison research differently. *Qualitative Inquiry, 18,* 63-75.

Jewkes, Y. (2014). An introduction to "doing prison research differently". *Qualitative Inquiry, 20*(4)

Kant, I. (1855). *Critique of pure reason*. Henry G. Bohn.

Kauffman, K. (1988) *Prison Officers and Their World.* Harvard University Press.

Kifer, M., Hemmens, C., & Stohr, M. K. (2003). The goals of corrections: Perspectives from the line. *Criminal Justice Review, 28*, 47-69.

King, S. (2014). *Desistance Transitions and the Impact of Probation*. Routledge

Kois, L. E., Hill, K., Gonzales, L., Hunter, S., & Chauhan, P. (2020). Correctional officer mental health training: Analysis of 52 US Jurisdictions. *Criminal Justice Policy Review, 31*(4), 555–572.

Komalasari, K., & Saripudin, D. (2015). Integration of anti-corruption education in school's activities. *American Journal of Applied Sciences, 12*(6), 445-451.

Lambert, E., & Hogan, N. L. (2009). Exploring the predictors of treatment views of private correctional staff: A test of an integrated work model. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 48,* 504-528.

Laub, J.H. & Sampson, R.J. (2001). Understanding desistance from crime', in. M. Tonry (Ed.). *Crime and justice: A review of research*. University of Chicago Press.

Lemaire, L. (2015). Malta: *A new border of the European Union. The social construction of an island-prison.* European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Conference, Montreal, Canada, 26-29 August 2015.

Liebling, A. (1999). Doing research in prison: Breaking the silence? *Theoretical Criminology, 32,* 147-173.

Liebling, A. (2004) *Prisons and their moral performance.* Clarendon Press.

Liebling, A. (2005). *Prisons and their moral performance. A study of values, quality, and prison life.* Clarendon Press.

Liebling, A. Tait, S., Durie, L., & Stiles, H. (2005). *An evaluation of the Safer Locals Programme final report.* Institute of Criminology Prisons Research Centre.

Liebling, A. (2011) Distinctions and distinctiveness in the work of prison officers: Legitimacy and authority revisited. *European Journal of Criminology, 8*(6), 484-499.

Liebling, A., & Karup, H. (1993). *Suicide attempts in male prisons*. Home Office.

Liebling, A., Price, D., & Elliott, C. (1999) Appreciative inquiry and relationships in prison. *Punishment and Society, 1*(71): 71-98.

Liebling, A., Tait, S., Durie, L., Stiles, A., & Harvey, J. (2005) *An evaluation of the safer locals programme*. Home Office.

Lipsky, M. (1980) *Street-level bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the individual in public services*. Russell Sage Foundation.

Lord Bradley (2009). *The Bradley Report.* Prison Reform Trust

Loucks, N. (2007) *No one knows: Offenders with learning difficulties and learning disabilities. Review of prevalence and associated needs*. Prison Reform Trust

Lucas, J.R. (1980). *On justice.* Clarendon Press.

Lucic-Cactic, M. (2011). Challenges in conducting prison research. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Security, 5-6*, 59-73.

Mann, R. & Fitzalan, H. (2018) What is a rehabilitative prison culture? *Prison Service Journal, 235*, 3-9.

Martufi, A. (2018) The paths of offender rehabilitation and the European dimension of punishment: New challenges for an old ideal? *Maastricht Journal of European and Comparative Law, 25*(6), 672–688.

Maruna, S. & LeBel, T. (2002) Welcome home-examining the reentry court concept from a strengths-based perspective. *Western Criminology Review, 4*(2), 91-107.

Maruna, S. (2001) *Making Good. How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives.* American Psychological Association.

McNeill, F., Farrall, S., Lightowler, C., & Maruna, S. (2012). *How and why people stop offending: discovering desistance.* Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services.

Maycock, M., McGuckin, K., & Morrison, K. (2020) 'We are "free range" prison officers', the experiences of Scottish Prison Service throughcare support officers working in custody and the community. *Probation Journal, 67*(4), 358-374.

Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security (2021). *Injkesta dwar l-eżami indipindenti tas-sistemi, policies, u regolamenti kurrenti operati mill-aġenzija tas-servizzi korrettivi. Sumamrju tar-rapport tal-bord ta` l-inkjesta.* Gvern ta Malta.

Morris, N. (1995) The Contemporary Prison. 1965-Present. In N. Morris & D. Rothman (Eds.), *Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society* (pp. 226-259). Oxford University Press.

Murdock, R. (2020). A corrupting island in a corrupting sea. *The Shift.* https://theshiftnews.com/2020/02/13/a-corrupting-island-in-a-corrupting-sea/

Musselwhite, C., Walsh, E. C. L., & Freshwater, D. (2005). *Evaluation of mental health awareness training: A Case Study at HMP High Down*. Bournemouth University

National Audit Office Malta (2021). *Performance audit: A strategic overview on the Correctional Services Agency's operations at the Corradino Correctional Facility. Report by the Auditor General.* National Audit Office.

Phelan, J., Stueve, A., Link, B. G., & Moore, R. E. (1995). Education, social liberalism and conservatism: Attitudes toward homeless people. *American Sociological Review, 60*, 126-140

Pierce, M., Hayhurst, K., Bird, S., Hickman, M., Seddon, T., Dunn, G., & Millar, T. (2017). Insights into the link between drug use and criminality: Lifetime offending of criminally-active opiate users. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence, 179*, 309-316.

Reisi, M., & Mesko, G. (2009) Procedural justice, legitimacy, and prisoner misconduct. *Psychology, Crime and Law, 19*(1): 41-59.

Ricciardelli, R., Idzikowski, M., & Pratt, K. (2020) Lives saved: Correctional officers' experiences in the prevention of prisoner death by suicide. *Incarceration, 1*(2): 1-17.

Scott, D. (2006) The caretakers of punishment: prison officer personal authority and the rule of law. *Prison Service Journal, 168*, 14–19

Scott, D., & Codd, H. (2010) *Controversial Issues in Prison.* Open University Press.

Scraton, P., Sim, J., & Skidmore, P. (1991) *Prisons Under Protest.* Open University Press.

Scrivens, K., & Smith, C. (2013). *Four interpretations of social capital: An agenda for measurement. OECD Statistics Working Paper 2013/06.*

Sparks, R., Bottoms, A.E., & Hay, W., (1996) *Prisons and the problem of order.* Clarendon Press.

Steiner, B., & Wooldredge, J. (2018). Prison officer legitimacy, their exercise of power, and inmate rule breaking. *Criminology, 56*(4), 750-779.

Stevens, A. (2013) *Offender Rehabilitation and Therapeutic Communities.* Routledge

Sykes, G. (1958/2007) *The Society of Captives. A Study of a Maximum Security Prison*. Princeton University Press.

Sykes, R., & Brent, E., (1983) *Policing: a social behaviourist perspective.* Rutgers University Press.

Tait, S. (2011). A typology of prison officer approaches to care. *European Journal of Criminology, 8*(6), 440-454.

Toch, H. (1977). *Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival.* Free Press.

Tyler, T. R. (2008). Procedural justice and the courts. *Court Review, 44*, 26–31.

United Nations. (1955). *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of People in prison.*

Vennard, J., & Hedderman, C. (2009). Helping offenders into employment: How far is voluntary sector expertise valued in a contracting-out environment? *Criminology and Criminal Justice, 9*(2), 225-245

Vieraitis, L., Medrano, J., & Shuraydi, A. (2018). 'That's a damn good officer any day of the week': inmates' perceptions of correctional officers. *Criminal Justice Studies, 31*(2), 143-159.

World Prison Brief (2021). *Malta*. https://www.prisonstudies.org/country/malta.

Worldometer (n.d.). *Malta Population*. https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/malta-population/.